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**Spatial and Social Inequalities in the Hungarian Large Urban Regions, the
Impact of Globalisation and Urban Sprawl on the Social Dichotomy
between Cities and Suburbs**

By Viktória Szirmai

Professor, DSc.
Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.
Address: Úri utca 49, Budapest 1014, Hungary
Phone: 00-36-1-224-67-42
E-mail: szirmai@socio.mta.hu

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Abstract

The objective of the paper is to present the main social inequalities of the large Hungarian urban regions between the different urban zones, especially between the city cores and the peripheries, regarding the impacts of modern suburbanisation processes and globalisation. The presentation would like to verify the creation of a certain new territorial dichotomy, more exactly the formation of the new dual structured core-periphery model, concerning the regional localisation of urban population, determined by the change of the historical regional situation and contemporary mechanisms. Besides these, the aim of the paper is to formulate a few hypotheses concerning the main similarities between the different European urban development models characterized by social inequalities.

In order to explain the reasons for the creation of territorial dichotomies it is relevant to point out, firstly that the social inequalities depend on the impact of urban sprawl, and they also depend on the social structural mechanism as well. Secondly, it is necessary to indicate the significance of urban cooperation, which is not characteristic between the different territorial actors, the city, and the suburban local governments. Basically, it is due to the limitations of regional planning and administration systems, the problem of the local budgets and the individual competitive attitudes of the settlements. The analyses and the evaluations of the paper are based on two representative empirical surveys. The first survey was carried out in the large Hungarian urban regions, among them in the Budapest metropolitan region. The second representative survey was carried out in the Budapest region. .

Introduction

The spatial manifestation of the alienated atmosphere, the shallow human relationships, the failure of the ‘American Dream’ and American family model in the American middle-class suburbs is beautifully presented in Edward Albee’s plays written in the 1960s (*Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*, *A Delicate Balance*, *Everything in the Garden*). The problems of certain types of European and among them French suburbs, namely the suburban crime and violence, the fear, are excellently reflected in some French films like “Hatred” (La Haine) directed by Mathieu Kassovitz or in Luc Besson’s film titled “District 13” (Banlieue 13).

European suburbs are naturally different from the American ones, partly because of their urban development specificities, differences in their social structures, and partly because of

the characteristics of the social tensions. In the American suburbs the main social and political issues are created by the middle-class lifestyle, its isolation and individualization, whereas in Europe the problems are caused by the concentrations of the disadvantageous population and social exclusion, although the middle-class suburban phenomena and the individualization are also present here. However, the process of urban sprawl and its social effects, which result in the spread of suburbs and the so called “peri-urbaine” areas is definitely a common feature.

Urban sprawl is strongly criticized in the international literature. The criticisms emphasize the problems of the urbanized and at the same time uncontrollably growing territories, the decrease of rural areas, farmlands, forests and green areas. Nearly all the criticisms point out the environmental effects of dynamic motorization, the health hazards of the time consuming commuting and the negative consequences of the radical lifestyle changes in connection with the change in the place of residence (*Frumkin, 2002*). They also mention the unfavourable economic effects, the costs of meeting the requirements of infrastructural development, which also decelerate the pace of economic dynamism (*Williamson-Imbroscio-Alperovitz, 2005*). The environmental hazards of inner cities, city dwellers who escape to the suburbs because of the visible traces of poverty, radically decreasing population in large cities and the disappearance of the traditional compact city are also listed among the issues. (*Munoz, 2003*).

The new structural specificities of societies in metropolitan areas which are being transformed due to urban sprawl, the segregation of residential parks populated by higher- and middle-class people and their unfavourable effects (*Le Goix, 2004*), as well as the suburban social exclusion are seriously criticised. In Europe a new kind of spatial social dichotomy was formed, the conflict between cities and provincial areas was replaced by a conflict between centre and periphery, cities and suburbs, which causes problems (*Vieillard-Baron, 2008*). The most extreme examples for social exclusion can be found in the third world, in Africa, South America, Brazil, India or China with its incredibly huge and uncontrolled city growth, where the slums in the outskirts and peripheries are populated by the poorest people (*Davis, 2007*).

Not everybody disputes the significance of urban sprawl. They appreciate the social requirements for a suburban environment and consider the growing number of those who prefer a suburban area when choosing their place of residence. Many experts think that urban sprawl is a tool to improve areas outside city boundaries and this tool could help the urbanization of rural areas (*Fishman, 1990; Le Goaziou-Rojzman, 2006, 10*).

In order to solve the problems both parties offer tools. The opponents propose to strengthen the centralized urban development models, to develop the inner districts of cities, and they promote higher and denser building up. The supporters of urban sprawl urge the dynamic improvement of the public transport system, and firmer intervention into planning.

Neither the debates nor the suggestions are new. Out of the numerous historical examples, perhaps Howard's garden city theory is the most significant. It offers 19th century intervention into planning, which many people think is valid even today. The garden city, built next to a large city but separated from it, as a compact settlement offers its inhabitants the facilities to live, work and spend free-time, it completely integrates the people who live here, attracts those who originally wanted to move into large cities, thus preventing the uncontrolled growth of the original centre settlement (*Howard, 1902*). The satellites cities, the new towns, the garden city suburbs, whose creations were inspired by the garden city theory, never really succeeded in restraining extreme growth, orientating people's settling into certain directions, although several attempts were made in many European large cities. In the case of Europe the relevance of the garden city theory, the realization of plans, that is the formation of spatial communities based on the unity of the place of residence and the place of work and their long-term sustainability were overridden by the new processes which meanwhile transformed economy. The dynamic growth of the service sector in the cities, which was not perceptible at the beginning of the 1900s, attracted masses of people, the lifestyle requirements and forms were transformed, their local character decreased, global trends appeared and they all contributed to this failure (*Szirmai, 1998*).

Another example includes the debate going on between 1929 and 1931 between two groups of avant-garde Russian architects who represented two different points of view: the urbanists and the anti-urbanists. Supporters of the first group wanted to relieve contemporary urban problems by concentrated city development, while supporters of the other view intended to do the same by a deconcentrated, that is, by a dispersed city development model (*Kopp, 1979*).

The current applicability of the early propositions is doubtful considering the new processes. Since Howard and the avant-garde architects raised the problems and proposed some solutions, urbanization processes and their effects have radically changed, partly due to dynamised global processes. The historical debates took place in the first phase of

urbanisation, during the period of city growth, the accelerated migration into cities, or the just unfolding suburbanization. Naturally the spatial social problems of the above mentioned period were also serious, but different from today's processes, from the effects of the advance of globalization. In the economically advanced countries of Western Europe (as well as in the USA and Japan) since the 1960s and '70s an economic and social centralization process has been going on with the urban concentration of skilled labour, the domination of multiregional, interregional and later on multinational and transnational firms with an intensive development of cities and their urban peripheries as an impact (*Veltz 1996, 33*).

The metropolitan regions and global cities are getting more and more important for world economy by their functioning as innovation, manufacturing and service centres (*Hall 1996, 19-31*). It is mostly big metropolises that can guarantee the dynamic operation of post-fordist economy, the growth of services, the quaternary sector. These growth poles are the steering wheels of economic development. They are the main locations of international capital, of skilled labour force, of the development of informatics, of organising international relations and of the diversity of social cultures (*Sassen, 1991*)

In economically advanced industrial societies the growing concentration of economy and population in the large and global cities has produced an increasing spatial separation between the location of residential and work areas and a quicker expansion of residential areas than workplaces moving towards urban peripheries. It determines the spatial direction of capital investments, infrastructure development projects, the siting of commercial and other services from city core areas towards urban peripheries (*Hall, 1996*). This will generate a quick spatial expansion of urban peripheries consuming up free territories with the increasing trend of short- and long-distance commuting, an increasing demand and capacities of transport, the expansion of environmental damages, decreasing territories of green areas and the transformation of urban socio-spatial structure. The out-migration of urban middle classes from the city centre into the suburb areas, into the urban periphery is already a part of this trend.

In the 1950s in the USA 30 million people, that is 19% of the population lived in the suburbs. This number kept growing in the 1970s and 1980s and the trend is still going on, today about half of the American population lives in suburbs. Between 1990 and 2000 in the big American metropolises the proportion of the suburban population grew further while the population of cities decreased. The proportion of the population in the peripheries is much higher than that

of the city population, the great majority of the population living in urbanized areas lives around the cities.

However, the European trends are different. In the case of the big European metropolises the proportion of the city population is much higher in several cases than the population of the suburban areas (for example in Berlin, Vienna, London, Prague, Rome, Warsaw and Budapest). There are exceptions like Copenhagen, but especially Paris, where the proportion of the suburban population is much higher. While there is a change in the distribution of the population in several European large urban regions, between 1996 and 2004 we can observe a few percent rise in the proportion of the suburban population, for example in Madrid, Berlin, Rome, Vienna, Warsaw, Prague and Ljubljana. In the studied period the most significant increase happened in the Budapest area. That is why it is important to examine the Hungarian processes of urban sprawl. Another reason for this examination is that while urban sprawl is becoming more and more characteristic in the world, we know little about Hungarian urban sprawl processes, we do not know what is happening in the Hungarian large urban regions. Does urban sprawl exist, and if yes, what are its consequences? In connection with it, how is the social structure of large cities transformed, have segregation patterns changed? The aim of the study is to answer these questions.

The analyses and the evaluations of the paper are based on two representative empirical surveys. The first survey was carried out in 2005 in the large Hungarian urban regions, among them in the Budapest metropolitan region¹. The second representative survey was carried out in 2010 in the Budapest region. The project was developed in the framework of the large project titled 'Sustainable Consumption, Production and Communication' supported by the Norwegian funds, coordinated by the Corvinus University of Budapest, and carried out by the Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.²

10. 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. The research was based on primary and secondary research methods: for the adult population a representative questionnaire interview of 5248 persons which was followed by an elite deep interview of 108 persons and a statistical data analysis. Nine large cities of Hungary were selected as the sample areas of survey namely Budapest and its agglomeration zone and eight Hungarian cities with over 100 thousand inhabitants: Debrecen, Győr, Kecskemét, Miskolc, Nyíregyháza, Pécs, Szeged, Székesfehérvár and their urban areas.

² In this research 1000 people were interviewed. Nóra Baranyai sociologist, Szilvia Kovács economist-sociologist, Ildikó Laki sociologist, Júlia Schuchmann geographer, Zsuzsanna Váradi geographer participated in the empirical data analysis that based the study.

I. The impacts of globalization on urban areas in Hungary

The socio-economic restructuring of Hungary in the 1990s, its integration into global economy fostered the (regionally differentiated) development of major urban areas only. This has been originated partially from the historic past and partially from the mechanisms of global economy. The spatial structure of the Hungarian economy was historically big city oriented, although in the state socialist regime the development of big cities – by various instruments according to the changing interests of the political system - was restricted by political interventions (administrative regulations, regional policies). Following the political and economic reforms of the 1960s the socio-economic positions and the influential power of major cities and county seats have significantly strengthened. A governmental decree issued in 1970 made large and medium-sized cities the driving forces of economic development and in this way the industrial plants with modern technology and highly trained labour requirements were sited in these central areas. The decisional centres of industrial companies of strategic importance in economic development were located in urban and metropolitan sites, while their different branches and affiliates were settled in small towns and rural areas (*Barta, 2005.*). As a result of these economic development projects large cities won significant financial funding resources and planning support for their development due to successful political lobbying processes.

The inflowing foreign direct investments from Western Europe in the 1990s were almost exclusively targeted at joint ventures, stock companies and even small enterprises seated – by regional determinations – in core areas. These core areas (their management and societies) received them not only with a warm welcome but granted several benefits (including tax benefits), and provided them with labour culture of historical traditions, good infrastructure and skilled labour force. Global economy generated a quick growth in the Budapest region, on the Budapest-Vienna axis, in the cities of Western Hungary (Győr, Tatabánya, Székesfehérvár and their surroundings). The development of other big cities of Hungary (Pécs, Szeged, Debrecen) was less spectacular but still continuous (*Enyedi, 2005*) North-Hungary, the eastern regions, the rural areas of the Hungarian Great Plain and urban regions with strong energetic sector (coal mining, metallurgy) and the settlements of the East Hungarian border zone - once prospering from the benefits of Hungarian-East-European economic relations - were facing a socio-economic crisis. The crisis was an outcome of the collapse of Eastern European markets, of the bankruptcy of plants which had sold their products on these markets, of the

massive redundancy of workers, of high unemployment and of the absence of capital resources standing in the way of economic restructuring. However, there were some cities even in the crisis areas that were able to attract and settle down private businesses and industrial plants that although were unable to save them from the crisis but at least could stabilize their economy to a certain extent. In some cases this was achieved by the foreign direct investments of Eastern or Western European firms.

The spatial demands of global economy polarized the interaction between cities and their regions in a specific way. On the one hand - by breaking up the hierarchical structures of the past - they changed and equalized the historically asymmetrical relationship between cities and rural areas and between core and peripheral areas. One of the reasons for these changes is that global economy reached not only city centres but urban peripheries as well. During the mid-1990s for example industrial plants which were built as green field investment projects in the urban areas of Budapest and in Pest County preferably selected the agglomeration zone or the satellite cities of Budapest, such as Budaörs, Gödöllő and Dunaharaszti, for their site. The site selection strategies of transnational and multinational firms increased the value of land in the urban peripheries of big cities and Budapest as well .

The spatial demands of global economy create new dependencies as well in the interaction between cities and their urban peripheries. The competitive, top firms and financial centres with global positions and their regional (including Central European) branches are favouring urban centres, capital cities and major cities in their site selection policies while companies engaged rather in regional or national markets are more inclined to site their headquarters in the urban periphery of big cities or in small towns. The site selection policy of foreign companies is determined by their economic importance and this trend can clearly be seen in Hungary as well. The new researches are verifying that corporate management, the organisation of production and decisional functions are rather linked to big cities of central role, while the routine and physical processes of manufacturing are concentrated in their affiliates located in small towns and rural settlements. *This* kind of spatial division regenerates the economic disparities between core areas and peripheries, too.

The spatial impacts of global economy are reflected by the new trends of urban growth in Hungary, urban sprawl, the dynamic growth of suburbanization, the decrease of population in city centres and the increase of suburban population as their consequences. 66% of the Hungarian population lives in cities. The majority of Hungarian citizens – following the major trends of Central-European urban societies – does not live in big cities.

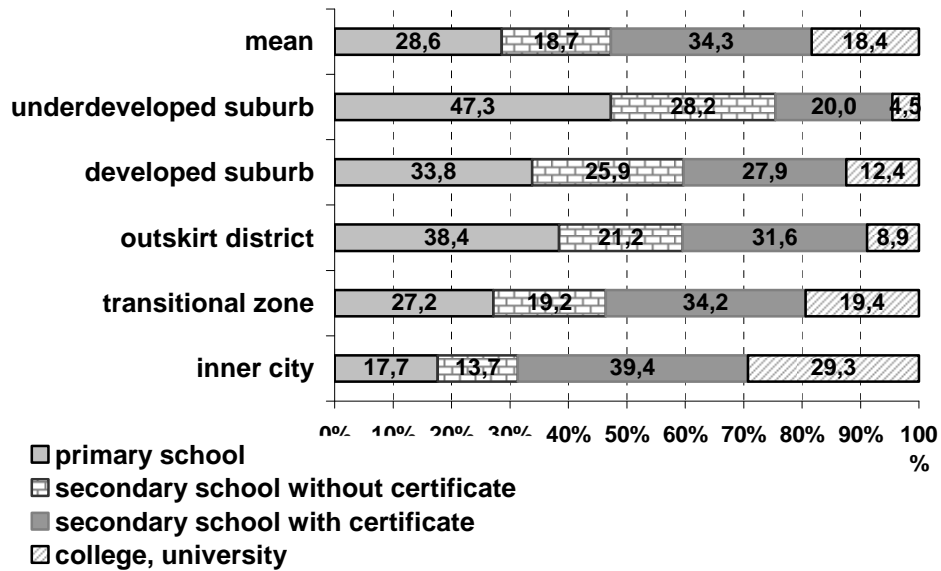
II. The Dichotomy of Cities and Suburbs in the Hungarian Large Urban Regions

The findings of the representative survey carried out in the 9 Hungarian large urban regions (including the Budapest metropolitan region) in 2005 revealed the spatial social structures of the examined urban regions, the inner inequalities of the centre areas and the social dichotomies between cities and suburbs and the social dichotomies between suburbs. (Szirmai, 2007,a).³ The data showed that in the cities, in their centre areas the presence of the higher social status strata (with higher level of education, better job position and with higher income) is more characteristic, while in the outer districts and in the suburbs the proportion of the lower status inhabitants (with lower level of education, in lower positions at work, with lower income) is more significant (see Figures 1 and 2 for examples by educational level). An important trend is that going outward from the city centre towards the suburbs the spatial social structure has become clearly hierarchical. On the spatial ecological slope, which also shows the infrastructural and institutional situation of the cities and their regions, the proportion of the higher status strata decreased while the proportion of the lower status strata increased as we gradually move away from the centre areas of urban regions. However, this hierarchy was broken by the higher proportion of higher social status people living in the more developed suburbs of more favourable geographical position and with better

³ We defined the different urban zones by site visiting and based on maps and the propositions of urban regional experts, using unified criteria (accepted by professional literature) valid for the 9 urban regions. First we distinguished fifteen types of urban zones, then in order to create further types we distinguished the following parts: *The inner city zone*: in other words the (historical) city centre, the city or the first work zone, where the characteristic workplaces of the city centre can be found (e.g. administrative institutions, institutions of money and banking, specialist shops catering for luxury demands, educational and cultural institutions, offices, etc.), but mainly it is the part of the city where the institutions of business and commerce and entertainment facilities are located. It is densely built in with multi-storey buildings and the residential function is less characteristic here (the population is high during the daytime and low at night), although it has its own inhabitants. *The transition zone*: it consists of two parts, the industrial and commercial units which are located near the city centre and the surrounding residential areas which also have two parts. The inner parts of the residential areas are characterized by several-storey buildings (some of them are former tenement houses) and by small green areas. The people who live here spend little on flat maintenance so a gradual deterioration can be observed. In the outer parts of the residential areas we can mainly find detached houses with larger gardens but hotels and apartments are also present here. *The outskirts zone*: they maintain close functional contact with the city, they lie right next to the city, although they are clearly distinguishable, formerly they might have been administratively autonomous settlements which have merged into the city. Their main role is the residential function (mainly with detached houses, or housing estates and recently with residential parks), the majority of the population works in the city centre. Finally *the background settlements, the suburbs, developed or underdeveloped peripheries* were selected by ranking method, considering the criteria of accessibility, the housing situation, educational possibilities, health services, entrepreneurial activity, tax payment, income, employment, unemployment, mobility, and social care. Based on the resulting indicators we ranked the settlements according to their development level and chose the three most developed ones (Törökbálint, Százhalombatta, Gödöllő) and the three least developed ones (Tök, Tinnye, Szigethalom).

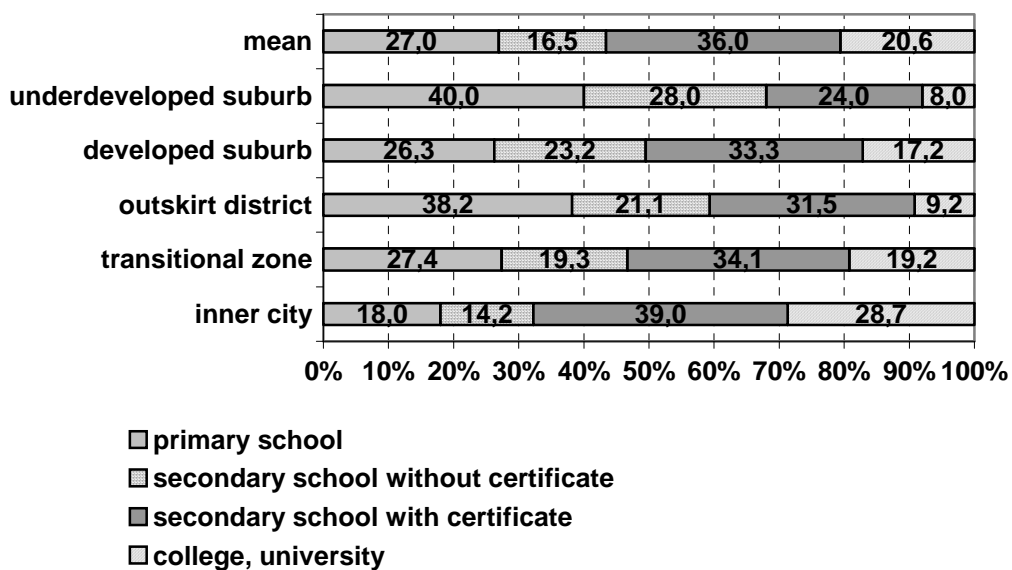
infrastructure. I called this phenomenon dual spatial social hierarchy, in other words, the transformed system of centre and periphery.

Figure 1
The distribution of the population living in the different zones of the 9 Hungarian large urban regions by educational level (% , 2005)



Source: Data from the questionnaire of the HNRDP (Hungarian National Research Development Program)

Figure 2
The distribution of the population in the different zones of the Budapest metropolitan region by education (% , 2005)



Source: Data from the questionnaire of the HNRDP (Hungarian National Research Development Program)

II.1 The changing core-periphery model⁴

The social structure of Hungarian metropolitan spaces has historically been formulated by the high-ranked core and low ranked periphery model. (In the period following the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries until the 1950s high social classes with high incomes lived in the inner city quarters of Budapest while suburban zones, industrial districts and peripheral settlements were inhabited by low social classes).⁵

The state socialist regime significantly changed the social inequalities of the historical core-periphery model. These changes were initiated by the functional and social transformation of city centres and by the suburbanization process of that time.

Since the 1970s Hungary has been struggling with the problems of inner cities: the physically eroding houses and flats, the increasing number of slums and the damage to the environment. Deteriorating cities became more perceivable in the 1980s. The concentration of the poor, the old-aged and the Roma population in large cities was significant even in the periods mentioned above (*Musil, 2002*) but the massive outmigration of middle classes from urban peripheries did not start at that time, though the distribution mechanisms of state housing provision, the building of new housing estates created opportunity for some ‘quasi-suburbanisation’. In several cases the society of housing estates was originating from the outmigration of the wealthy, socially high-positioned classes from city centres with better political chances for the enforcement of their interests. Within the framework of a redistributive state housing provision system⁶ the modern, new housing estates built in the outer belt of city centres or in urban outskirts equipped with all comfort and amenities were considered as an acknowledgement of social and political position and a bonus for the loyalty

⁴ I used core-periphery model in socio-geographic and sociological sense. In socio-geographic sense the core should be interpreted as the spatial centre of a certain geographic unit while periphery means the outer space of the geographic unit. Between core and outer space there may exist economic, infrastructural, functional and social differences or disparities. These disparities are marking out the spatial centre of the geographic unit and the periphery's ecological and social positions. In sociological sense core and periphery are marking out the social rank of the geographical unit's population in the social hierarchy and the social position of population living in core and peripheral areas. In my ‘traditional’ core-periphery model the inhabitants living in core areas have the highest social rank gradually lowering as moving out of the city centre.

⁵ In Hungarian large cities the core-periphery model has never followed directly this pure analogy. City centres always had residents from the lower classes as well. This goes back to architectural reasons on the one hand and to the traditional structure of urban societies resulting from the low percentage of upper and middle classes.

⁶ The redistributive housing provision system was an organic component of the housing policy of the socialist regime until the late 1980s. It was characterized by the state's dominance in the provision of flats. The system was originally targeted at reducing social differences in the state's welfare services. However in most cases the provision of flats – by eliminating the rules of market and social aspects - was driven by different political motivations and by certain elite groups in power.

to the state. The less preferential middle-class and lower middle classes, positioned at a lower level of the social and political ranking system, had no chances for leaving their homes located in urban centres within the framework of the state housing provision system.

The above-described processes changed the linear downward tendency of physical environment and social position indicators as moving out from the city centre towards the peripheral zone. The ecological position of city centres has deteriorated, the social reputation of transitional urban zones has increased as a result of building new housing estates and the social classes settled down there. At the same time the social reputation of urban peripheries remained low.

The 1990s was a period of fundamental changes. These changes took place in a very contradictory way with a rapid and spectacular development at certain spots of urban centres while other parts were lagging and gradually perishing. The advantages of urban restructuring are originating from 'big city life'-styled development processes, from the domination of business and commercial functions. This assigns characteristic features for metropolitan centres: the building of financial centres, banks, office quarters, the building of new or the rehabilitation of urban economic and commercial centres, the construction of their servicing infrastructure, building or renewing hotels, shopping centres and business or market oriented real estate developments. The elegant shops, the new restaurants, bars and cafeterias, pedestrian streets, tourist spots create a modern urban environment in city centres. The above-described changes have partially improved and partially spoiled the city centres' ecological positions in the traditional core-periphery model.

Since the 1980s an increasing number of people have out migrated from city centres into urban peripheries. The years of the 1990s further increased the dynamics of suburbanization. Suburbanization processes were further encouraged by the economic demands of spatially expanding residents and by the spatial decentralization of economy. The new housing market positions, the increasing salaries of (mostly high class) citizens, the widening selection alternatives and demands for suburban residential areas are further catalysators of suburbanization. These new demands were correlating with urban environmental problems too, such as air pollution, noise and the missing rehabilitation of central urban quarters.

Based on the evaluation of research data we can declare that in Hungarian urban spaces the traditional core-periphery model cannot be identified in its original form any more: the social

structure of advanced urban peripheries is firmly breaking up the monotony of the downward line of the ecological-spatial slope of social hierarchy between the 'two endpoints': the core and the periphery.

As a consequence of transition and globalisation the social structure of Hungarian metropolitan spaces and the social content of the core-periphery model have significantly changed. The social processes of the past years through the differentiated - partially high, partially low social contents of the core-periphery model created a dual socio-spatial hierarchy. The first type of socio-spatial hierarchy contains a high-ranked core and a low ranked periphery model. The second type of socio-spatial hierarchy shows a formation of low-ranked core and a high-ranked periphery model. Both hierarchies are simultaneously present in urban spaces. (*Szirmai, 2007,a*)

The main objective of the research which was carried out in 2010 in the Budapest metropolitan region was comparability⁷. Based on the analyses important changes can be observed in the spatial distribution of the population between 2005 and 2010. An important result of the comparisons by educational level, by job position and by income is that on one hand spatial hierarchy seems to be rearranging, and on the other hand that the significant differences appear in the differences between the city center and the suburbs and between the city centre and the underdeveloped suburbs. The strong hierarchical arrangement between the inner zones of cities, which was observable in 2005, has become less characteristic. In 2010 the distribution of the population in the different urban zones is relatively more balanced according to the inhabitants' educational level, job position and income. The former inner city concentration of higher social status people is now more moderate, they inhabit other inner districts as well. However, a significant difference is that while the research in 2005 revealed

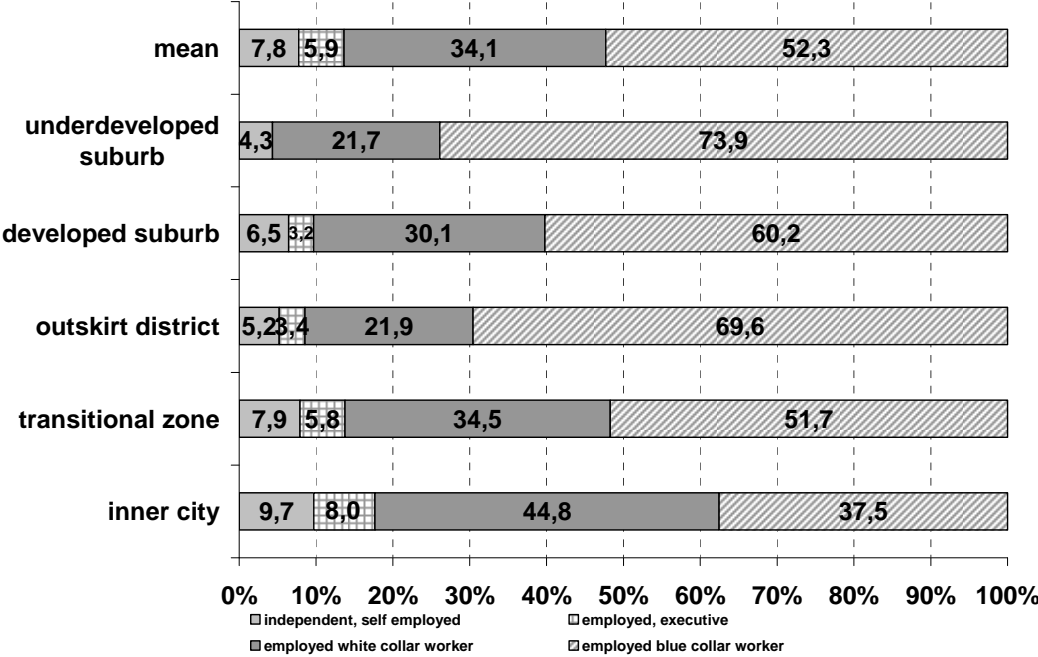
⁷ The most important methodological tool was working out the aspects of sampling. In 2005 the sample area of the research included the 9 Hungarian large cities and their regions. The sampling process was in proportion in each studied area, it was representative by gender, age and level of education and it was based on the data of the 2005 T-STAR database and the data of the municipalities, which called attention to the demographical specificities of the areas and helped us to select the respondents. With respect to the population proportion within the settlements and among the settlements which were selected as sample, a non proportional stratified probability sampling method was used.

The sample for the 2010 research of the Budapest metropolitan region was created by using the aspects of the former research. The areas within the capital and the number of respondents in Budapest were the same as in the former research, in the peripheral subsample we took samples from 2-2 settlements – they were the same as the ones asked during the former research - instead of 3-3, due to the decrease of the number of elements. (In 2010 Törökbálint and Gödöllő were selected as developed peripheral settlements, and Tinnye and Szigethalom as underdeveloped settlements). The database of the census of 2010 served as the basis of the quota made by setting out the representative criteria by age, gender and level of education. During the analysis these three variables were weighted based on the 2005 data recordings.

that only their inner city concentrations exceeded the proportions of the sample, in 2010 their urban proportions are higher. The distributions by income are different from this. While in 2005 people with the highest income appeared in higher proportions in the inner city compared to the mean of the sample, in 2010 we can find them in higher proportions in the developed suburbs compared to the sample.

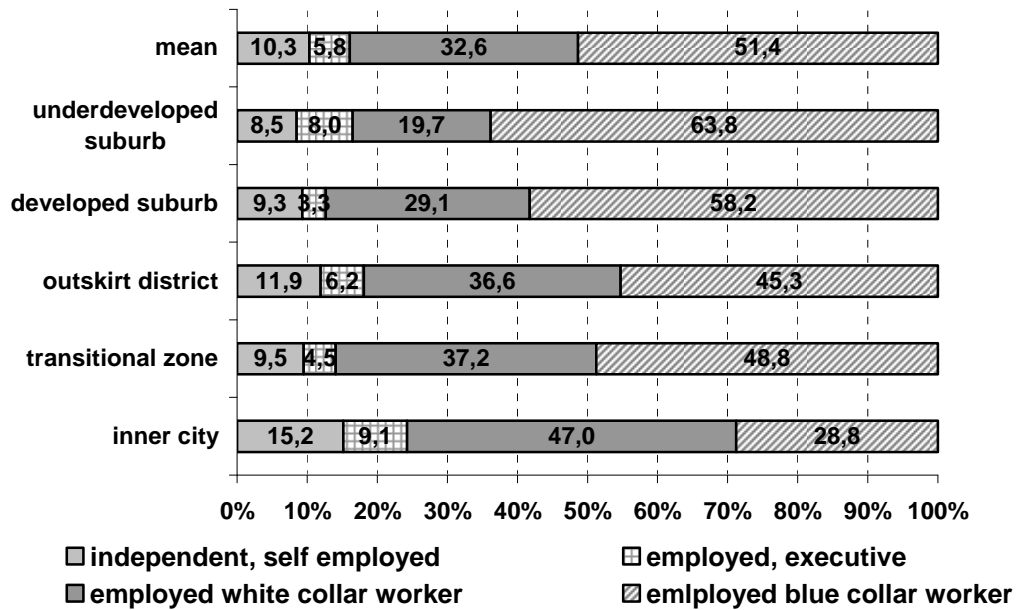
From the inner city towards the outer districts we can experience a relative equalization in the case of the hierarchically increasing lower status proportions. An important difference compared to 2005 is that in 2005 the urban proportions of low status inhabitants were higher compared to the mean of the sample, the same proportions in 2010 are lower, whereas they are higher in the underdeveloped peripheries. (See figures 4, 5, 6, 7).

Figure 4
The distribution of the population in the different zones of the Budapest metropolitan region by job position (% , 2005)



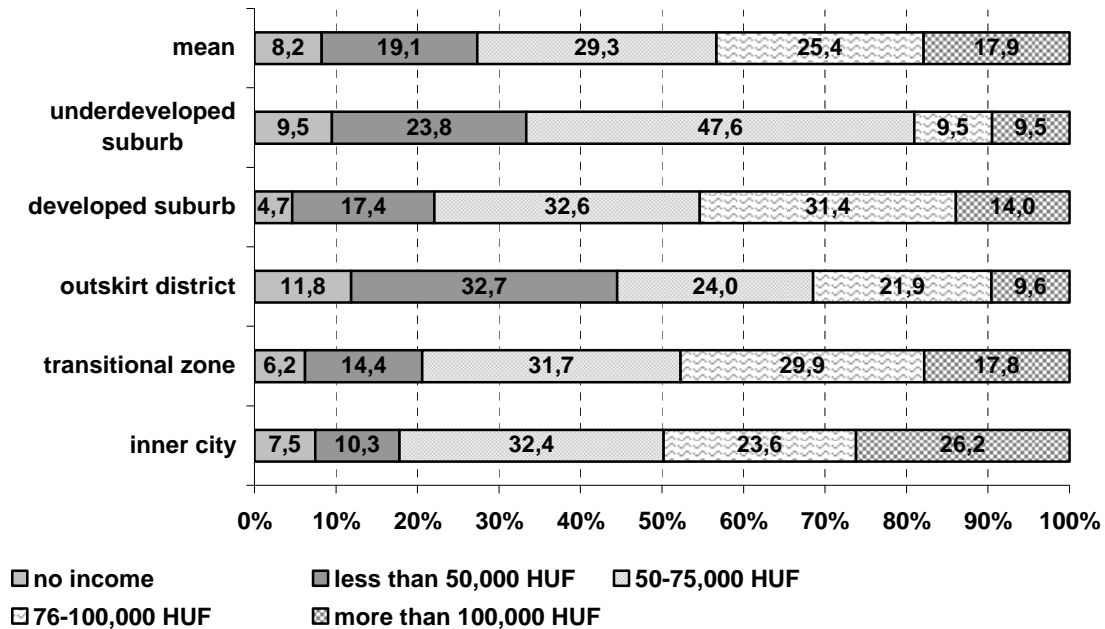
Source: Data of the questionnaire of the HNRDP

Figure 5
The distribution of the population in the different zones of the Budapest metropolitan region by job position (% , 2010)



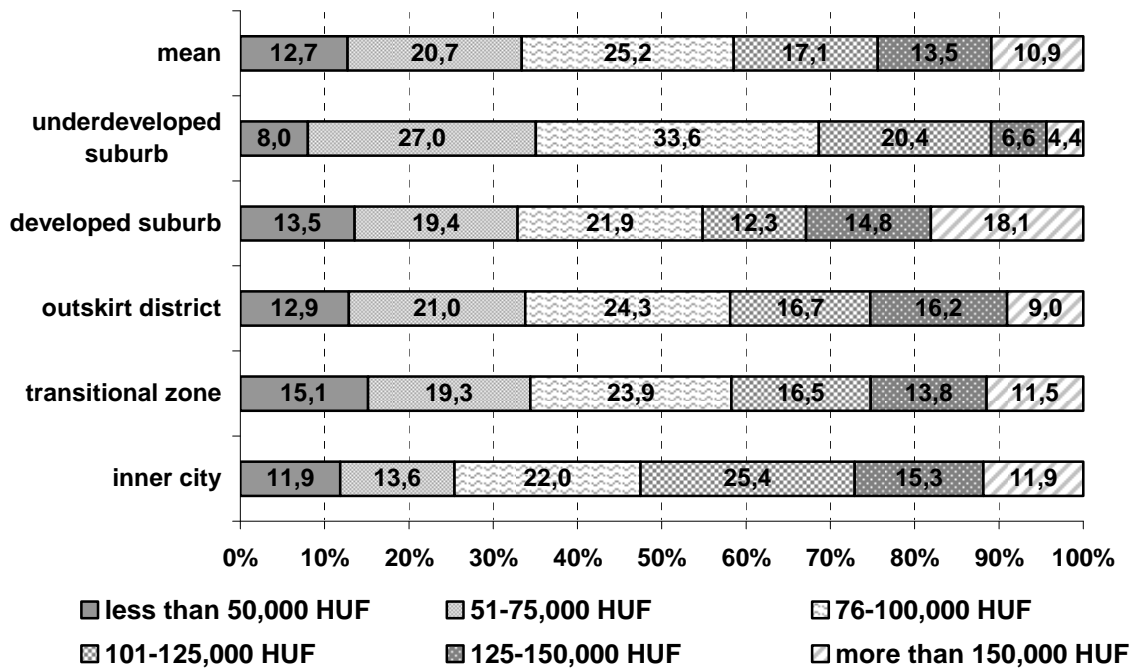
Source: Data of the Norway Grants questionnaire

Figure 6
The distribution of the population in the different zones of the Budapest metropolitan region by net income (% , 2005)



Source: Data of the HNRDP questionnaire

Figure 7
The distribution of the population in the different zones of the Budapest metropolitan region by net income (% , 2010)



Source: Data of the Norway Grants questionnaire

Based on the comparison of the 2010 results regarding the Budapest metropolitan region and the research experiences of 2005 and 2010, the concentration of the high social status population seems to be getting stronger in the city (and no longer only in the inner city) and also in the developed peripheral settlements. On the other hand, it is more characteristic for the lower social status groups to settle down mainly in the underdeveloped urban peripheries. They show the dichotomic arrangement of the social structural location of the city and its surrounding settlements. Furthermore, they also suggest that the order of the spatial location of those who live in the Budapest metropolitan region is gradually following the Western European models. This hypothesis seems to be verified by the results of the studies realized in the framework of the Norway Grants research program, which reveal the process of urban sprawl in the French, Austrian and Danish capital. (Cattan-Huet, 2011 Görgl et al, 2011, Reeh-Zerlag, 2011;)⁸

⁸ The results, together with the Hungarian case study will be published in 2011 in the book titled 'Urban Sprawl in Europe' by Aula Publishing House

Relationships of Cities and their Outskirts

In the state socialist redistributive system local authorities, settlements had very little independence regarding planning and development. The legal conditions and possibilities which could have provided independence were missing. That is why the social and political changes of the 1990s intensified the efforts of outskirt municipalities to become independent. The legal conditions of these aspirations were provided by the new municipal law, although the provision of financial resources necessary for the different kinds of development mostly failed. These factors were consistent neither with the theoretical possibility of independence nor with the requirements of transition.

The global economic effects and the fact that big foreign companies chose outskirt areas for their investments and developments began to relieve the historically established economic inequalities between centres and outskirts. Among these the mainly greenfield shopping centres which were built firstly at the beginning of the 1990s in the Budapest agglomeration (subsequent to Budapest) and after that in the other large cities and their surrounding areas were especially important. The new enterprises established in the outskirt areas also contributed to the decrease of the economic advantages of the centre areas.

The contradiction between the increase of the economic potential of outskirt areas and the insufficient resources for development from the state partly generated conflicts and partly encouraged local aspirations for independence, mainly in the more developed outskirt areas. These aspirations were fostered by suburbanization processes realized by the middle-class, which gained strength during the change of regime. The problems of the inner city, the lack of urban rehabilitation programs on one hand and the new housing market opportunities and the requirements for a house in the countryside on the other hand also accelerated the process of outmigration⁹. Besides gentrification and the growth of welfare, green values also contributed to the increasing middle-class desire for a rural natural environment. The values of consumer society had similar impacts. The increased and renewed motorization, which took place in the 1990s and the desire for the lifestyle (can be called American in its aspirations) which is based on it dynamised outmigration as well.

⁹ The population of Budapest between 2001 and 2007 decreased by 81,793 people (the average decrease of population was 13,632 people per year) and it touched the bottom in 2007 with 1,696,128 inhabitants. However between 2007 and 2009 there was a slight increase in the number of the population. On 1 January 2009 the population of the capital was 1,712,210. The population of the outskirts increased by 35,885 people (17,942 people per year) between 2007 and 2009.

Settlements around large cities had been open for suburbanization for a long time. Outskirt settlements were looking for and found tools to offer new homes and the possibility to build new homes. Basically every settlement wanted to increase their population, although in varying degrees, because they expected increasing income from it. They subordinated their allotment policies and development projects to this goal.

It resulted in the fact that outskirt settlements gained tax-paying citizens and in addition to this during the 1990s housing and residential infrastructure in the outskirts remarkably developed. In several cases the new outskirts residents set up enterprises or found jobs locally, thus the local resources of municipalities were enlarged.

There has always been a contradiction in the evaluation of suburbanization between the capital and the surrounding settlements. The capital (and certain professional groups) opposed the gradually accelerating outmigration in the 1990s. The reason for this was the spatial distribution of income revenues; furthermore they worried about the accelerated decrease of city population.

Due to the different factors that hindered economic growth, and also because of the gradual removal of the part of the income tax that was supposed to remain at local municipalities, opposition began to appear regarding suburbanization in the outskirts, too. It became more and more evident for local municipalities that they were no longer able to provide the necessary infrastructure for the increased population, they cannot meet the requirements for childcare institutions and health services. Many of the municipalities of the settlements around Budapest believe that moving in has become excessive, bigger than they expected so it is not desirable to increase the population any further¹⁰.

Among the inhabitants there are more and more people who are against growth and their main goal is to protect the values that they moved here for, and they are silence, isolation and tranquillity. Although we cannot talk about movements¹¹ against urban sprawl there are local conflicts in almost every settlement against increasing the population.

The new property developments also generate several local conflicts. The participating social actors are usually the same. The social and residential groups who are interested in conserving isolation and the already existing values come mainly from the original inhabitants and from

¹⁰ The described phenomenon is the consequence of the uncertainties of development policies in the 1990s regarding urban sprawl in the outskirts of Budapest.

¹¹ At the end of the 1990s in America urban movements were created against urban sprawl, the officials of several cities and counties and the opposing citizens took action to protect their city boundaries, the green areas and voted for the provision of the necessary resources. Several states bought the free land around the cities, the rights for land development thus creating an obstacle for further growth. They enjoyed full support from the citizens in these matters.

those newcomers who have already integrated into the settlement, and who would not like more newcomers, because they feel that they will push them out of the local institutions, workplaces and that they will disturb their established suburban lifestyles. They sometimes feel this way about people who live in other settlements but use the infrastructure of the examined places of residence. There are contradictions regarding lifestyle between the original inhabitants and the new inhabitants as well. The former rightly feel that the latter refuse those elements of the existing lifestyles which disturb them, as for the old inhabitants the outskirts is not only the place of residence but also the place of work, the surroundings and the garden of the house is the scene of production. However, the newcomers mainly looked for a place of residence and they expect peace and quiet for this.

The economic (among them commercial) developments in the outskirts are not free from conflicts between the city and the outskirts, as there was strong competition to acquire the different kind of enterprises (among them the sites of multinational or transnational firms) or the location of shopping centres. In this competition the former and current advantage of the capital is evident, and they do not want to share these advantages with the surrounding settlements (partly because there are few divisible advantages). As a result many of the surrounding settlements began to seek isolation, first implicitly but now they more and more declare this wish as well. The today characteristic competitiveness, the lack of resources at every level suggest that individual participation is more effective than community participation.

The Future of Urban Sprawl

It is evident that the future of urban sprawl depends not only on the population's intentions to move but also on the demands of economy, on demographic processes, on the concerned population's prospects of life, on the spatial migrational movements resulting from national regional inequalities. This last factor cannot be neglected either, that is why we decided to include it into our research. The research examining the 9 large Hungarian urban regions has already revealed that a great majority (nearly 80%) of city dwellers does not intend to move, only 13 % of them said that they would definitely move, 7.3% said that they would move but they do not have the possibility. The 2005 trend was similar in the case of the Budapest metropolitan region, 79.4% did not want to move, 13% wanted to move, 7.1% mentioned their intention to move but mainly its obstacles.

The surprising finding of the 2010 research in the Budapest metropolitan area was the further decrease (to 10.1%) of the already low proportion of those who want to move. In addition, the proportion of those who want to move but cannot afford it fell back to 3.3%. One of the factual reasons for this is the current economic crisis, the debts which prevent many people from moving, especially among the strata living in underdeveloped outskirts areas, being in disadvantageous situation and having a lower level of education.

Another factor that held back moving out of the city was the fact that between 2003 and 2006 35,000 new flats were built in Budapest, 6,000 of which were built in the form of residential parks (Cséfalvy, 2008. 23). It is likely that the new residential parks which were built in the capital accommodated those who were dissatisfied with their flats located mainly in the inner districts or on housing estates and who wanted to live in a clean, safe, in other words in a suburban environment, which offered the advantages of city life and suburban life at the same time¹². It also saved them the difficulties of commuting and the undeveloped conditions of outskirts settlements.

Debt problems affected mainly the lower social status groups, while residential park developments decreased intentions to move out of the city centre among higher social status inhabitants. Obviously not only for this reason, but there has been a decrease in the dynamics of outmigration since 2007 and a slow increase can also be observed in the number of the population of the capital¹³.

The condition of roads linking the capital and the surrounding settlements, the congestion due to the increased car traffic, the constant traffic jams, the underdeveloped public transport system which is lagging behind the dynamics of city development both quantitatively and in its quality all contribute to both the fall in residential intentions to move and also to the requirements to move back.

The above mentioned processes suggest that in the near future we do not expect drastic urban sprawl in connection with the outmigration of city dwellers. According to our data those who are planning to move, mainly the majority (nearly 69%) of higher social status people living in the inner districts want to remain in Budapest; whereas the proportion of those who choose the agglomeration is nearly 19%; the proportion of those who choose other settlements is 6.5%. They further strengthen the earlier verified social dichotomy organized between the centre and the outskirts; higher social status groups are partly concentrated in the centre,

¹² Flats in the residential parks were bought not only by Budapest citizens but also by higher status people from the countryside either for their children or as an investment.

¹³ We have earlier mentioned that on 1 January 2009 the population of the capital was 1,712,210. Based on the data of 1 January 2010 however, 1,721,556 people live in Budapest and 803,141 live in the agglomeration.

partly in the developed outskirt areas. At the same time they also strengthen the social similarities between the centre and the developed outskirts and the differences between the centre and the underdeveloped outskirt areas.

Summary

Instead of the dichotomy of the compact or dispersed city the contemporary processes of urban sprawl created new structures, models of different kinds of spatial-social dichotomies, their current changes. Based on the results of the research of the Budapest region the contradictions between cities and outskirt settlements seem to be strong, several of its symptoms can be observed. The social structure of the region is hierarchical, uneven. Settlements of higher and lower ecological and social position were created in the outskirt areas as well. Although the differences do not correspond to the western type of strong dichotomy of the high- and middle-class or the socially more sensitive low status settlements and the centres, processes to organize dichotomies are already perceptible. The population of the developed outskirt settlements has higher income, better education (the inhabitants are somewhat older, mostly married). People living in the underdeveloped outskirt areas have a lower level of education, their income is lower or medium (they are younger, they are mostly present on the labour market, too). The relationships between the municipalities of the settlements (that is the municipalities of the centre and the outskirts) are historically various, the current relationships and interests, cultural aspects tend to stimulate closure. This can be interpreted as the suburban criticism of urban sprawl.

The Hungarian processes, the Hungarian and the European suburban social similarities, the dichotomies of high and low status settlements show that the historical ways of urbanisation cannot be bypassed, the less developed countries follow the way that the more advanced ones set out or have already completed, because the main rules of urbanization prevail, although in various social and historical contexts and at differentiated economic development levels.

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