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The Social Impacts of Urban Sprawl on Regional Development.

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What is the mission of this lecture?

The aim of the lecture is to present:

I. Why is it relevant to analyse the urban sprawl phenomena in Europe, and in Hungary?

II. What kind of urban sprawl processes and social impacts characterise the Budapest metropolitan region?

III. What are the consequences of urban sprawl concerning the development of the Budapest region?
What methodological tools were used?

The lecture is based on several research results:

"The social mechanisms and interests determining territorial consumption models", carried out by the Institute of Sociology of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, within the project titled „Sustainable Consumption, Production and Communication” supported by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, organised by the Corvinus University.


Empirical survey: Sample: 5000 persons, 9 large cities and outskirts zones.

„Modification of the regional plan of the Budapest Agglomeration.”
PESTTERV Spatial, Urban and Environmental Planning and Consulting Ltd. 2010

The 9 large Hungarian urban regions, and the Budapest metropolitan region

Source: edited by Károlyi, J., PESTTERV Ltd.
I. Why is it relevant to analyse urban sprawl?
The general issues

1. Urban sprawl is a worldwide contemporary phenomenon. The vast consumption of territories and the dispersed residential production are present worldwide and in the European cities as well.
2. Urban sprawl, contemporary territorial consumption models create more and more unsustainable ecological and social issues,
3. New social spatial structures appeared, in connection with the social mobility and segregations.
4. The disappearance of compact cities and the dispersion of cities.

I. What kind of social and ecological issues can we list concerning the impacts of urban sprawl?

- The new types of the residential landscapes, and
- the new models of production of built space resulted in:
  - the decrease of green areas, forest degradation, environmental damages, pollution, and
I. What kind of social and ecological issues can we list concerning the impacts of urban sprawl?

- Health problems (related to motorways, ring roads, traffic, lifestyles as well),
- Rising consumption of energy, water, and the special infrastructural requirements related to the construction of new housing forms.

I. Contradiction related to the dual type of city forms

**The compact cities:**
- Dense and compact built environments.
- Intensive development.
- Public transport.
- Public services.
- Social cohesion, relationships.
- Social and urban diversity.
- More open social space.
- Efficient use of the infrastructure.

**The dispersed „cities“:**
- Newly built single family houses, (new gated communities).
- Low density residential areas.
- Extensive development.
- Standardised (simplified) American landscape.
- Lack of urban diversity.
- Private transport and facilities.
- Private lifestyle (gardens, swimming pools, security services).
- Place for consumption and not for habitation!!!
## I. Social contradictions between social groups of different interests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social gap between the different residential territorial units</th>
<th>Social conflicts between the different residential territorial units:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are social groups who are interested in urban sprawl, (because they manage these, because they do not want to live together with the disadvantaged urban strata)</td>
<td>➢ Conflicts during the usage of urban areas (traffic and infrastructural conflicts).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Groups who are against it, (because they are excluded from decision making and from the positive effects of the modernisation processes).</td>
<td>➢ Conflicts related to the distribution of the social costs of the new outskirt developments.</td>
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<td>Who wants and who can pay for these?</td>
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## II. What are the determining reasons of urban sprawl in Hungary?

The globalisation, the modernization processes reconstructed the Hungarian regional and social structure.

The main Hungarian regional trend is the concentration of economic activities, global capital resources and population in large urban regions, especially in the Budapest region.

- The population of Budapest is 1.7 million people,
- 791 thousand people live in the outskirts.
- In this region we can find not only significant population, but also a concentration of economic potential,
- More than 40% of the national GDP is produced here.
II. What are the determining reasons of urban sprawl in Hungary?

There is a concentration of wealth and upper classes in the city areas.

There is significant gentrification in the cities.

The lower classes are located in the outskirts and the city centers.

The proportion of the elite groups in the Hungarian urban zones (%, 2005) (source: HNRP project)

II. What are the determining reasons of urban sprawl in Hungary? (example of Törökbálint)

There is another important trend also, the deconcentration:

Concerning the economy and the population: that is the suburbanisation involving the out-migration of middle classes and the lower strata from city centres to suburbs.

See spatial social localisation processes
The proportion of population by educational level in the different urban zones of the 9 urban regions (% 2005) (source: HNRP project)

The spatial distribution of population by educational level in the 9 Hungarian large urban region (% 2005)
The spatial distribution of population by educational level in the different urban zones of Budapest region (%, 2005)

II. What are the determining reasons of urban sprawl in Hungary?

- In the socialist regime urban sprawl was mobilised by industrialisation and mobility from rural to urban areas.
- After the transition it was mobilised by suburbanisation (by the new residential requirements, new housing market effects).
- In the socialist period suburbanisation was less dynamic in Central European cities than in Western European cities.
- The suburbanisation process started to develop only after the transition.
- These periods created new gated communities, not only in the suburbs, but in the city centres as well.
Examples of new gated communities in the outskirts (Telki, Üröm, Veresegyház, Kecskemét)

Examples of new gated communities in the inner cities (Budapest)
II. The change of the population in the capital

The characteristic trend is the decrease of the population:
- Until 2007 continuous decrease
- Touched bottom in 2007: 1 million 696 thousand
- After that slow increase (by 6-10 thousand per year)
- At the beginning of 2009 the population of the capital was 1 million 712 thousand.

So we can state:
In the years between 2007 and 2009 the number of the inhabitants of Budapest started to grow again.

II. The change of the population in the outskirt area

The characteristic trend is the increase of the population:
- After 2001 the population increased by 15 thousand per year on average,
- In 2009 the population of the outskirt area was 791 thousand.
- The increase of outskirt population continued but with territorial differences.
- The dynamism of the population development concentrated in specific regions, particularly in settlements with good accessibility.
The change of land use patterns in the Budapest metropolitan region (hectare, 1996-2008)
Source: edited by Károlyi, J., PESTTERV Ltd. based on data of Land Registry in Pest county, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Residential Area</th>
<th>Commercial Area</th>
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III. What are the regional development consequences of urban sprawl in the Budapest region?

Positive effects:
- Urban sprawl processes are at the same time the conditions and the results of modern regional development,
- Urban sprawl contributed to the realisation of economic, political, and social functions of the modern Central European capital region,
- By the social and economic suburbanisation (the historically disadvantageous) outskirt areas developed rapidly, especially the middle class suburbs.
- Construction of new residential areas in the suburbs and in the centers as well.

The results: more balanced regional situation.
There are neither ideal-typical compact nor dispersed cities. The compact and the dispersed cities co-exist in Hungary at the same time creating large regional systems, with different territorial units.
III. What are the regional development consequences of urban sprawl in the Budapest region?

**Negative effects:**
- territorial development processes are unmanageable by public actors, and planning tools,
- necessity of reforming the planning tools,
- lack of regional social cohesion,
- increase of social inequalities, and segregation (but for other reasons also),
- increase of social dissatisfaction concerning the realisation of residential requirements not only among the outskirt dwellers, but also among the population of cities.

Finally: what can we think of the future of urban sprawl in Budapest?

**What can we predict?**
- The continuity of the urban sprawl?
- The dynamism of the city development?
- The development of the whole region?

Based on the facts:
- The Hungarian population is decreasing,
- But the population of the analysed region is growing,
- The most characteristic dynamism is in the inner sectors of the Budapest region.
- The economic and the residential suburbanisation is continuing in the case of Budapest, but with less intensity and in different ways in the different parts of the region.
Finally: what can we think of the future of urban sprawl in Budapest?

Will the suburbanisation continue? YES

- Greenfield investments are cheaper,
- Because of the dwellers’ demands for garden suburbs,
- 15% of the respondents of Budapest city will definitely move to the Budapest outskirt,
- In the case of other Hungarian urban regions the proportion of people who will move is less (10%).

We do not know:
Who wants and who can pay for the outskirt development? And for the solution of the social issues?

References

F. Munoz (2003) Urban sprawl in Mediterranean cities,