The sustainable or unsustainable territorial consumption, suburbanisation problems with the example of social conflicts

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Content

- Metropolitan conflicts – from a geographical research aspect
- Determining factors of the urban-suburban conflicts
- Theoretical and practical importances
- The main results – example from the Hungarian urban regions
- Summary
Metropolitan conflicts – from a geographical research aspect

- Definition of conflicts ‘... as a situation of competition in which parties are aware of the incompatibility of potential future positions and in which each party wishes to occupy a position that is incompatible with the wishes of the other’ (Boulding, 1962, p. 5).
- Difficult to define in the urban geography, but they reveal and have to deal with them and solve them.
- Why is it important to solve the conflicts?
  - These processes are modified both the cities’ and the suburbs’ everyday life.
  - Conflicts are the barriers to develop cooperation which help to be a successful urban area.

Urban-suburban conflicts in Hungary

- There are conflicts before the Transition (due to the unequal development patterns caused the redistributive state and political grounding)
- Several form of conflicts connected to different settlement type, e.g. conflicts between the commuters and local inhabitants, different working class.
- Conflicts public appearance, strengthening were more visible after the Transition; main factors of their developments are the following:
  - Rapid suburbanization, especially around Budapest! (population decrease: 300ths people in the last 20 years, while suburb:+150ths). But: differences between the Western European suburbanization: not only the middle class move out, but the poorer class too: Changing demographical and social character of the settlements: income, ethnicity, age.
  - Gap of the demands and needs in the suburbs (public services)
  - Strengthening of the NGO’s – who try to present the local interests
  - Political contrasts between the settlements!
  - The interdependencies between the urban-suburban zones are becoming more complex and dynamic.
**Why is important to deal with this question?**

- If we know the problems, actors, best practices it is easier to find solution which helps to the stakeholders and settlements to develop cooperation, common application – so it is important for urban policy too and we know also that the urban regions is the main places of regional competitiveness.
- Different actors participating in the conflicts.
- The inhabitants experience the conflicts!

**Main empirical results**

- This presentation is based on 2 research project:
  - 2) “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” (2009-2011) supported by the Norwegian Financial Mechanism, organised by the Corvinus University Budapest.
Research methods

- Different methods were used from different science: geography, sociology, political science, statistics, history:
  - Theoretical background: literature and document analysis (development plans, strategy plans)
  - Press analysis
  - **Empirical survey sample**: 5248 people questionnaire in the 9 large cities (more than 100ths inhabitants) and their surrounding settlements
  - Statistical analysis and mapping
  - Combining the methods!

Sample areas of the survey

And their complex development (by Faluvégi A. 2004)
Conflict between the residents in the cities and in the suburbs
(%, experiences the conflicts)

Conflicts between the inhabitants in the cities and in the suburbs
(NRDP survey, % of the respondents experienced conflicts, by residential zones)
Which social groups experience the conflicts?
NRDP survey, % of the respondents experienced conflicts, by educational level

NRDP survey, % of the respondents experienced conflicts, by working position
Summary

- Conflicts revealed by the different social groups
- After the change of residence and the passage of time, for the newly inmovers’ group the benefits have reduced importance compared to what was expected before, because of:
  - the infrastructural deficiencies of the surrounding settlements,
  - the discrepancy of the increased demands and opportunities,
  - the deployed commercial service network,
  - these elements are aggravated by the difficulties of commuting and the traffic problems.
- The feeling that “the town comes after us” 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.
Differentations is the settlement structure due to the suburbanization (developed and underdeveloped urban peripheries)

Short term developments and interest were revealed by the municipalities (because they have to reach benefit)

Transport conflict is the most visible: the infrastructure development did not follow the increase of the traffic; typical: M0 motorway circle.

Land use conflict: commercial area increased, forests degraded (unsustainability problems)

Weakness of the cooperation of the municipalities – last years formed the Development Council of the Budapest Agglomeration (in the countryside large cities: microregions, who try to cooperate some sectors)

The common development of this new regional and ecological structure were not combined.

Examples of the different unsustainable or sustainable territorial consumption models in Hungary

Thank you for Your attention!

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Zs. Váradi – Sustainable or unsustainable territorial consumption