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## THE DIMENSIONS OF PERIPHERIZATION FROM THE VIEWPOINT OF THE DEVELOPMENT POLICY THROUGH THE EXAMPLE OF A HUNGARIAN PERIPHERY, THE ENCS DISTRICT

During the last decades many financial and other typed supports were spent for the rise of the peripheries by both the international (European) and the state development policies. However, these efforts actually are often unable to reverse the backwardness of the most disadvantaged districts. Thus the issue of peripherization is an appreciating subject of also the contemporary geographic studies. In this article we aim to analyse the different faces of the peripherization (the spatial marginalization). It is a key question what kind of factors hide behind the reproduction of the peripheries.

According to some critical, neo-Marxist approaches, the peripheral existence is not a predestined situation, 'periphery as destiny' (Kühn, M. 2014), but a resultant of dynamic processes, the peripherization, which is reversible. The peripheries should not remain necessarily as peripheries. According to our experiences based on the example of a real Hungarian periphery, the Encs district with a typical pathway development, we would like to call the attention for the area- and dimension-specific character of the peripherization. It is argued that there are two types of peripherization; processes originated from spatial (potential) and local causes. The previous one is inevitable due to its geographic frames, the development policy can hardly do anything with it, only trying to reduce, compensate the initial handicaps through e.g. infrastructural investments, which have huge social costs. Nevertheless, the regional policy can do something with the latter, the local causes! Even a relative small district could be heterogeneous at intraregional level from the viewpoint of the peripherization. Furthermore, the lagging behind varies in different dimensions too. The success of the de-peripherization depends on some local factors (e.g. creative utilization of the supports and systematic settlement policy by the local mayors). However, the structural mismatches (e.g. not an adequate development policy for the ability for absorption of the supports) plays also a crucial role result in the reproduction of the peripheries.

**Keywords:** peripherization, periphery, regional inequalities, development policy, Encs district.

### *Ágnes Varga, Dávid Karácsonyi, László Jeney. РОЗМІРИ ПЕРИФЕРІЗАЦІЇ З ТОЧКИ ЗОРУ ПОЛІТИКИ РОЗВИТКУ НА ПРИКЛАДІ УГОРСЬКОЇ ПЕРИФЕРІЇ, ОКРУГ ЕНКС*

Протягом останніх десятиліть багато фінансової та інших видів підтримки були витрачені на відновлення периферії як для міжнародного (європейського), так і для державного політичного розвитку. Проте ці зусилля насправді часто не можуть повернути назад відсталість найбільш неблагополучних районів. Таким чином, проблема периферії є важливим предметом сучасних географічних досліджень. У цій статті ми прагнемо проаналізувати різні грані периферізації (просторова маргіналізація). Це ключове питання, які особливості приховуються за відновленням провінцій.

Згідно з деякими критичними неомарксистськими підходами, периферійне існування – це не визначена ситуація, «периферія як доля» (Kühn, M. 2014 року), а результат динамічних процесів, зворотна периферізація. Периферія не повинна обов'язково залишатися периферією. Відповідно до нашого досвіду, заснованого на прикладі реальної угорської периферії, округу Енкс з типовим шляхом розвитку, ми хотіли б звернути увагу на характерні особливості площі і розмірів периферійного простору. Стверджується, що існує два типи периферізації; процеси, породжені просторовими (потенціал) і локальними причинами. Перше неминує через його географічні рамки; політика розвитку навряд чи може з цим щось зробити, тільки намагаючись зменшити, компенсувати початкові недоліки, наприклад інфраструктурні інвестиції, які мають величезні соціальні витрати. Проте регіональна політика може вплинути на друге – місцеві причини. Навіть відносно невеликий район може бути неоднорідним на внутрішньорегіональному рівні з точки зору периферії. Крім того, відставання варіюється і в різних вимірах. Успіх де-периферізації залежить від деяких місцевих факторів (наприклад, творче використання підтримки і систематична політика врегулювання місцевими мерами). Однак структурні невідповідності (наприклад, неадекватна політика розвитку як здатність поглинати підтримку) також відіграють вирішальну роль у відтворенні периферії.

**Ключові слова:** периферізація, периферія, регіональні нерівності, політика розвитку, округ Енкс.

*Агнеш Варга, Давид Карачони, Ласло Дженей. РАЗМЕРЫ ПЕРИФЕРИЗАЦИИ С ТОЧКИ ЗРЕНИЯ ПОЛИТИКИ РАЗВИТИЯ НА ПРИМЕРЕ ВЕНГЕРСКОЙ ПЕРИФЕРИИ, ОКРУГ ЭНКС*

В течение последних десятилетий много финансовой и других видов поддержки были потрачены на восстановление периферии как для международного (европейского), так и для государственного политического развития. Тем не менее, эти усилия на самом деле часто не могут обратить вспять отсталость наиболее неблагополучных районов. Таким образом, проблема периферии является важным предметом современных географических исследований. В этой статье мы стремимся проанализировать различные грани периферизации (пространственная маргинализация). Это ключевой вопрос, какие особенности скрываются за восстановлением периферий.

Согласно некоторым критическим неомарксистским подходам, периферийное существование – это не предопределенная ситуация, «периферия как судьба» (Kühn, M. 2014), а результат динамических процессов, периферизация, которая обратима. Периферия не должна обязательно оставаться периферией.

Согласно нашему опыту, основанному на примере реальной венгерской периферии, округа Энкс с типичным путем развития, мы хотели бы обратить внимание на характерные особенности площади и размеров периферийного пространства. Утверждается, что существует два типа периферизации; процессы, порожденные пространственными (потенциал) и локальными причинами. Первое неизбежно из-за его географических рамок, политика развития вряд ли может с этим что-то сделать, только пытаюсь уменьшить, компенсировать первоначальные недостатки, например инфраструктурные инвестиции, которые имеют огромные социальные издержки. Тем не менее, региональная политика может повлиять на второе – местные причины. Даже относительно небольшой район может быть неоднородным на внутрорегиональном уровне с точки зрения периферии. Кроме того, отставание варьируется и в разных измерениях. Успех де-периферизации зависит от некоторых местных факторов (например, творческое использование поддержки и систематическая политика урегулирования местными мэрами). Однако структурные несоответствия (например, неадекватная политика развития как способность поглощать поддержку) также играют решающую роль в воспроизведении периферии.

**Ключевые слова:** периферизация, периферия, региональные неравенства, политика развития, округ Энкс.

**Introduction.** Though regional policy regards the reduction of the spatial inequalities, the maintenance of the position of the rural peripheries as emphasized in the agendas, with a special regard to the structural and cohesion policy of the EU, in practice the lagging behind and the peripherization of the remote regions is still observable. Thus the issue of the peripherization is getting more and more into the limelight of all international scientific observers. Being located on the northeast part of Hungary, consisting partly of the Cserhát Hills and the Hernád Valley, bordering Slovakia, steadily reproducing historically as a periphery, the Encs district serves as a case study of this paper, which due to its disadvantageous position is a target area of the different development policies for a long time.

Within the frame of an empirical study we are tending to discover the local realization of the regional policy from the viewpoint of the commended supports through the example of the Encs district. We are seeking the answer to the question whether the supports are able to slow or possibly reverse the further lagging behind of the peripheral areas on the given merits, or the flawed policy perhaps amplifies the inequalities. Whether the districts between the territorial levels of the counties and the settlements could be treated as unique geographic, development entities from the viewpoint of the peripherization or the different local underdeveloped areas' processes connected to the geographic and social circumstances i.e. further peripherization within the peripheral districts could be detected at intraregional level. In so far as these processes could be detected, how do they affect the position of the settlements of the districts for the development and access for the development sources?

**Appreciating significance of the peripherization.**

We can more and more often meet the fashionable research trend of the concept of the periphery–peripherization among the papers dealing with the rural areas. Undoubtedly the majority of the rural areas are really underdeveloped territories, which could be regarded as an almost general tendency from the crisis of the late 2000's.

Besides the ever widening crisis symptoms, the role of the metropolitan areas is more and more appreciated in the global world, while the rural areas come hardly in for the results of the development. The management of the world economy is linked to just a few cities, thus the dynamically developing city-network itself is also differentiated (Jeney L. 2007; Lang, Th. 2015). The peripheries had been identified basically as the areas of the villages in former research projects, however, the cities could be parts of the peripheries, too (Kühn, M. – Sommer, H. 2013). Thus it is perhaps better to use the denomination of the rural area, which includes also the towns in the countryside (Csatári B. 2004).

In Central and East Europe, the situation is further complicated by the privatization launched under the neoliberal political course dominating the early 1990's. However, the countries get through the crisis of the socialist planned economy, the economic growth does not ensue until the transformation has resulted in the improvement of the living conditions for the broader society (Lang, Th. 2015, Tímár J. et. al. 2015). Furthermore, after the crisis of the late 2000's the political decision makers focused on the support of the dynamic city regions expecting that the peripheries can also profit from the economic bloom, although this could also result in the further increase of the territorial inequalities (Lang, Th. 2015). Thus the regional policy reflecting increasingly liberal elements after the crisis, will not be really able to reduce the inequalities within the countries in the near future (Lang, Th. 2011).

That is why the higher increase of the polarization between the cities and the rural areas, according to the West observers, dating back to the transformation in

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Central and East Europe, has even further intensified from the beginning of the global economic crisis (Lang, Th. 2015). Although the professional literature is shared in this, some say (Benedek J. – Moldovan, A. 2015) that the socio-economic inequalities among the member countries have also begun to increase since the crisis, and what is more, they could be more and more remarkable at every territorial level (Kühn, M. 2014). The Bertelsmann Report (Social Justice in the EU) also call attention to the deepening and increasing inequalities, too (Váradi M.M. 2015).

These growing tendencies of inequality founded, mainly in the German geography, the issue of the so called peripherization, which is a sort of dynamic shift according to the static concept of the periphery (Lang, Th. 2011; 2015; Kühn, M. 2014; Bernt, M. – Liebmann, H. 2013; Bernt, M. et al 2010). We can meet the peripherization in synthetic works (Lang, Th. ed. 2015), or even in a special issue of the Hungarian Geographical Bulletin (Nagy E. 2015). Thilo Lang (2011, 2015) that sums up the emphases of the study of the peripherization as the following: evolution, reproduction of the periphery, political deal of the centre-periphery, adaptation, strategies and potentials. Among the named emphases in this study, we are going to stress the practical issues of the development policy on the example of a characteristic Hungarian periphery, the Encs district.

The concept of the peripherization is very close to the marginalization, usually used by sociology. The question asked by Stefan Rettberg (2014) among others, is involuntarily raised: is the peripherization only an alternative word for the spatially structured socio-political marginalization? Nagy Erika and her peer authors (2015) unfold that marginalization also means a sort of edge situation and dependency referring to the peripheral existence, however, they do not use the concept of peripherization, similarly to the majority of the Hungarian authors. Nevertheless the marginalization is studied rather at micro level and identified with poverty in the sociology while geographic and spatial elements could be found in the concept of peripherization with its broader scale. So the peripherization is none else than spatial marginalization (Kühn, M. 2014). Joan Nogurea és Adrew Copus (2016) reveal that the concept of spatiality is used for social analogies by a great many, thus the concept of periphery separates itself from the geographic space. It is also confirmed by André Torre and Alain Rallet (2005) with emphasizing the non-spatial elements of the concept of distance deriving from the socio-political structures. The explanation of geographic (outer) and socio-economic-political (inner) space could fit into the above concept (Nemes Nagy J. 1998). So the peripherization could accordingly be defined in outer space, while the marginalization in inner space. Within the geographic (outer) space, outer and inner peripheries could be separated in connection with the geographic location. The outer periphery reckons as the edge or border area, while the inner periphery is centrally located within a spatial unit, a larger region or a country (e.g. slums of a US city, Werra-Meißner Kreis on the former inner-German border, see ESPON 2013). The usage of concept of inner periphery is very popular in EU regional policy documents, although its clear definition is not really laid

down – in international professional literature (Nogurea, J. – Copus, A. 2016), as it is underlined by the ESPON report (ESPON 2013), too which made efforts to define even the inner peripheries. Furthermore according to Nogurea és Copus it is very difficult to distinguish the difference between an inner periphery and an area in peripherization, thus they prefer to use this concept only for the ‘plums’ with bad accessibility. The ESPON report, unlike Nogurea and Copus, identify inner peripheries as socio-economic constructions, changing over time and place and usually located close to development centres.

In accordance with Lang (Lang, Th. 2011; 2015) the peripheries are the products of complexity of different social processes. Similarly it is widely highlighted that the existence of peripheries derives from the own, inner logic of capitalism, the asymmetry of the power relations and the territorial appearance of the social unfairness (Fisher-Tahir, A. – Naumann, M. eds. 2013). That is why the spatial inequalities are studied as a social construction, the ‘products’ of processes of the neoliberal capitalist economic system (Nagy E. et al 2015). However, it is important to mention that the differences between central (core) areas and peripheries have been being present all the time at historical scale (Wallerstein, I. 1974; 1991).

Thilo Lang (2011; 2015) sees the spatial dimension of the process of the peripherization as the following: some rural regions cannot find their new position in the globalizing world, the migration destinations are exclusively the central areas, the population number is decreasing on the peripheries, and what is more, the social stigmatization plays a huge role in the peripherization. Thus Lang argues the peripherality originating in a somewhat physical cause, e.g. the result of the bad accessibility, but in a geographic projection of the social interactions, the spatial mobility and the political-economic decisions where they do not come from the structural conditions of the space. Against this approach, besides Joan Nogurea and Andrew Copus (2016) József Nemes Nagy (1998) also emphasizes that the geographic location and the accessibility could be the factors of the social rim situation, i.e. we should not aside totally from the role of geographic space interpreting the spatially appearing social processes.

According to some critical, neo-Marxist approaches, the peripheral existence is not a predestined situation, ‘periphery as destiny’ (Kühn, M. 2014), but a resultant of dynamic processes, the peripherization, which is reversible. The peripheries should not remain necessarily as peripheries. According to Kühn, the peripherization is a temporarily extant phenomenon, as opposed to the deperipherization, or ‘recentralization’ (even the author himself use the concept with quotation marks). Nevertheless the ‘recentralization’ is delusive (it could not be associated with the concept of decentralization), on the other hand it supposes that peripheries used to be centres, furthermore they may become centres if they are able to act as centres (Lang, Th. 2015). The study describes the rearrangement of the centre-periphery relationship (e.g. in a Hungarian case, the area of Alpokalja, border region to Austria after the collapse of the Iron Curtain) and the territorial equalization, which means

essentially the cease of the centre–periphery relation.

For the case of some socio–economic dimensions, the transformation into a centre could really happen (e.g. if the central area of rural tourism or organic farming, becomes a part of the ‘sunbelt’ of the high-tech industry), however, the elimination of the centre–periphery relation is possible just in historic scale. According to Karl-Dieter Keim (2006; 2007) under an adequate regional policy rightly utilizing the inner potentials and the outer resources, coming from city regions, the peripheries should develop. In 2013, Váradi and her contributors (Kovács K. – Váradi M.M. ed. 2013) studied with the help of field interviews in the frame of a broader project whether the projects realized from EU and Hungarian sources are able to reduce the poverty and segregation, and if they are, to what extent, under what circumstances. They found that in the frame of a single project the complex problem of the reproduction of the poverty lasting throughout several generations is impossible to be dealt with. Furthermore the results of the projects get hardly in a tangible form to the poorest, partly due to the decantation, because the recipients of the social supports usually have no chance to know their way around the complicated bureaucracy, i.e. the application system itself is behind the conservation of the problems (Váradi M.M. 2014).

So in deed, it is not the close-up, but the reproduction of the peripherality, the poverty and the marginal social situation is characteristic (Váradi M.M. 2015; Nagy E. et al 2015). Namely the so called pathway development that is to say the historic definiteness of the peripheral situation plays a crucial role in the peripherization of the rural areas. The Encs district is one of the most typical example of those rural areas in Hungary where the historic reproduction of the peripherization is observable.

**Reproduction of peripherization in the Encs district.** The Encs district and the surrounding villages appeared as a disadvantageous, peripheral, lagging behind area within most of the Hungarian typologies (Lettrich E. 1976; Enyedi Gy. 1977; Beluszky P. 1979; Beluszky P. – Sikos T. T. 1982; 2007; Csatári B. 2000a, 2000b; Csatári B. – Farkas J. 2006; Kovács A.D. et al 2015) where the process of peripherization could be traced back to the past. The Encs district suffered series of losses throughout history, their imprints influence the contemporary socio–economic situation and the probable results of the development initiatives too.

The Encs district is divided to two separable landscape in physical geographic sense: to the Cserehát and the Hernád Valley (Marosi S. – Somogyi S. 1990; Dövényi Z. 2010). Due to its physical geographic aptitudes the Cserehát is a hilly area outside the main transportation axes, while the Hernád Valley is situated on the axis of main northwest–southeast natural transportation corridor of Miskolc–Kassa/Košice leading further towards the Eastern territories of Slovakia and Poland. The connections towards the transversal direction spanning the hills are underdeveloped in the road network following the valleys with the line of northwest–southeast bearing which basically determines the space structure of the district too.

The contemporary surface of the district became pe-

riphery for the first time in political sense when it reached the border of the Hungarian Kingdom and the Turkish Empire expanding from the south. Later the area getting under the supremacy of the Austrian emperor could be conserved because on one hand it situated far from the 19. Century centre of the industrialization of the country, Budapest. On the other hand the settling of the population basically changed the socio–economic structure of the area, namely the less skilled grain-growing farm became dominant against the former profile of stock-raising and viticulture. Moreover it had not such local resources which would have served the evolution of the production of agricultural goods or the local industry or mining.

The unfavourable situation was just escalated by the change of the border at the end of WW I. The southern part of the former Abauj-Torna county, including the contemporary Encs district was separated by the state border from its traditional gravity centre, Kassa/Košice, getting to Czechoslovakia (Kovács Z. 1990). And what is more the centres of the former Cserehát and Torna districts – Szepsi/Moldava nad Bodvou and Torna/Turňa nad Bodvou – got to the Czechoslovakian side too (*Figure 1*). So the Encs district artificially created in 1920, came into existence from two well separable parts, from the southern remainder of the Cserehát and Torna districts without centres, and from the parts along Hernád Valley surrounding Encs and the Szikszó districts, also lacking towns.

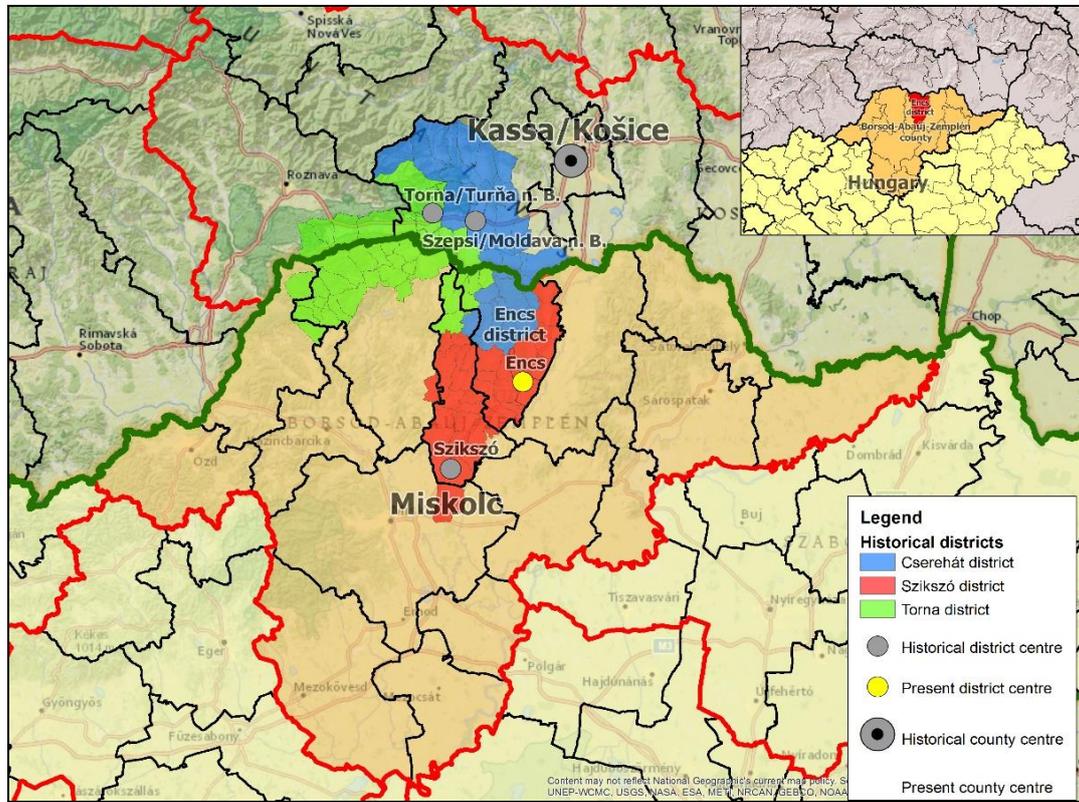
Due to the socialist settlement-network development and industrialising policy the peripherization, lagging behind in development of the area further intensified. Although in 1984 Encs became a town as one in the areas without centres, the villages in the Cserehát began to decline. On the one hand a robust commuting and final emigration started towards the ambient heavy industrial centres, the so called socialist industrial towns (Miskolc-Diósgyőr, Kazincbarcika, Ózd). On the other hand the long lasting development restrictions, prohibitions resulted in the chronicle depopulation of the small villages, for the period of 1970–1990 the population number of the area fell with almost a half percent annually below the average (Jeney L. 2014).

The socio–economic peripherization of numerous settlements of the Encs district kept going on after the end of communism, too. Due to the transition to market economy the North Hungarian industrial areas got into a crisis, the effect of which also reached the area of Encs, while the commuters from its small villages to the larger industrial centres (e.g. Miskolc) were a masse laid off, thus the former possibilities for work seized. In market circumstances, in case of many public services (transport, public utilities, communication, education or health care) the sparsely populated rural areas were neglected with reference to the viewpoints of the ‘rationalization’, which worsened further the living conditions of the small villages, strengthening their peripherization. The pinch of the employment facilities, so the decay of the walk of life in village induced a new wave of emigration phenomenon.

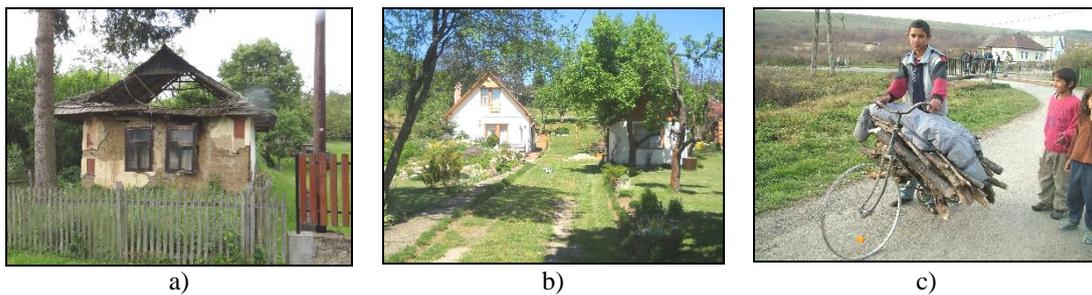
The wandering confined to special social groups, which changed the socio–ethnic compound of the settlements of the area. Primarily the younger, more skilled

and more ambitious population went away. Predominantly the older residents remained in the small villages, that is why the population of a few villages dramatically aged (*Figure 2a.*). Due to this process mainly the unskilled, usually unemployed people stayed there, who were less innovative, active, so they could not adapt themselves flexibly to the employment conditions of market economy (G. Fekete É. 2001). Another specific

group of the depopulating peripheral small villages started to become resort villages due to the systematic settlement policy of the mayors, trying to avoid the cessation of the settlement (*Figure 2b.*). It undoubtedly resulted in an attractive, aesthetic living environment, however, it could neither prevent the settlement from depopulation, or maintain the classic ‘living’ village in a functional sense.



**Fig. 1. Historical districts on the territory of the current Encs district**  
 Source: edition of Varga Á. 2016



**Fig. 2. Three characteristic types of the evolution of the small villages in the Hungarian peripheries:**  
 a) depopulation (*Percse*), b) becoming a resort village (*Gagyapáti*)  
 and c) social transformation towards the majority of young local Gipsy community (*Csenyété*)  
 Source: photo of Jeney L. 2016, Ocskay M. 2011 and Karácsonyi D. 2005

For the third characteristic type of the settlements affected by the emigration, the dramatically falling property prices led to a radical ethnic change, while the villages became migration target area for the Gypsy living in poverty (*Figure 2b.*). The difficulties of the social integration of the Gypsy communities launched a further

emigration wave from the group of the original population, nevertheless the emigration loss in the studied area was compensated by the higher birth rate of the Gypsy (Kovács K. 2013). Due to this process, in case of this third type of the villages instead of depopulation rather the social problems, deviances concomitant with the

change of the socio-ethnic structure became important. Since the transition in the Encs district – even if in a small compass (annually 0.2 percent at the average) – the population number is increasing, which is worthy of note as the shrinking of the population number is manifested nationwide and especially in Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county. However the studied periphery lags behind the Hungarian average in any dimensions except for the demographic one, due to the above mentioned processes it belongs to the most disadvantageous districts<sup>2</sup> of the country.

We measured the development state of the contemporary socio-economic space structure of the district with a multidimensional development index. The com-

plex development index used for the 2007 official definition of the most disadvantaged Hungarian districts (so called LHH beneficiary districts) was taken as a basis of the choice of the set of indicators and the methodology with small modifications. Similar to the methodology of the LHH classification the crude indicators were transformed into an interval between 1 and 5 with the normalization of the original values. In case of the reverse interpreted indicators (e.g. values of the transportation accessibility, the rate of emigration and death, density standard of dwellings, ratio of the recipients of supports and assistances, ratio of minors at risk and the indicators of jobseekers) the minimum of the dataset got certainly the '5' and its maximum the '1' value.

Table 1

**Datasets used for the calculation of the complex lag behind/development indicator of the Encs district in 2013 and its change**

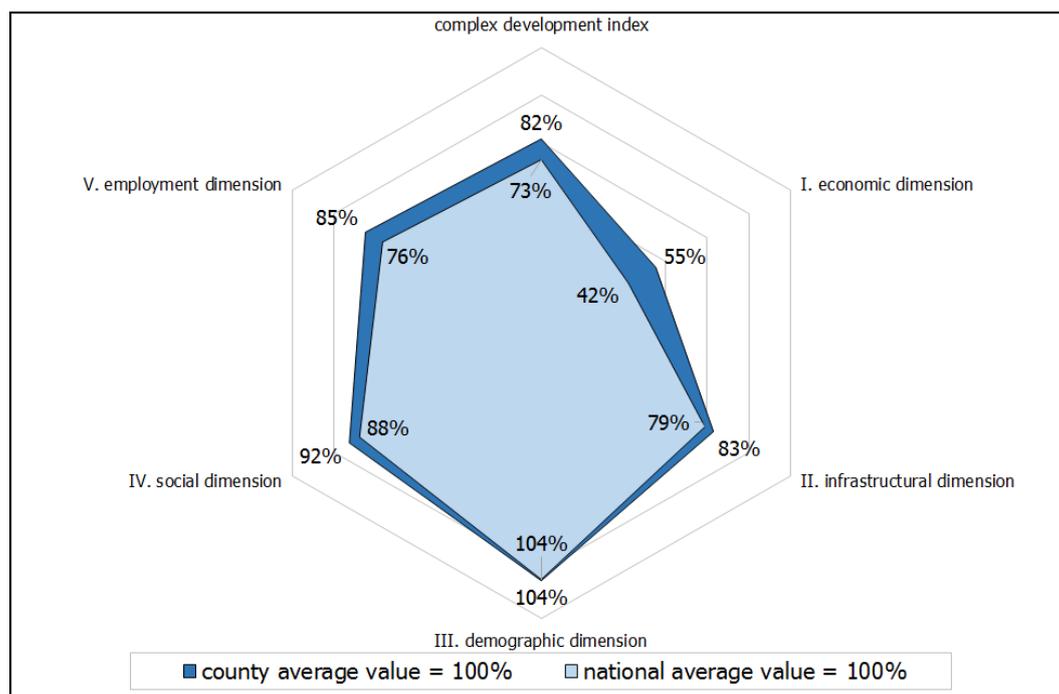
Source of data: Hungarian Central Statistical Office (KSH) T-Star, Regional Development and Spatial Planning, Information System (TeIR), National Tax and Customs Administration (NAV) and the National Employment Service (NFSZ)

Dimension	Indicator
I. Economic	1. Registered enterprises / 1000 inhabitants
	2. Tourism nights spent in public and private accommodation / 1000 inhabitants
	3. Retail shops units / 1000 inhabitants
	4. Catering units / 1000 inhabitants
	5. Local-government revenues from local taxes / capita (average for last 5 years)
II. Infrastructural	6. Rate of dwellings connected to public water conduit network
	7. Length of public sewerage network / 1 km public water conduit network
	8. Household gas consumers / 100 dwellings
	9. Indicator for everyday accessibility
	10. Indicator for access of the nearest motorway junction
	11. Rate of pupils using computers at primary school task units
III. Demographic	12. Rate of built-up roads and public squares
	13. Rate of immigration / 1000 midterm inhabitants (average for the last 5 years)
	14. Rate of emigration / 1000 midterm inhabitants (average for the last 5 years)
	15. Rate of birth / 1000 midterm inhabitants (average for the last 5 years)
	16. Rate of death / 1000 midterm inhabitants (average for the last 5 years)
	17. Youth index (population aged under 15 years old / aged over 60 years old)
IV. Social	18. Rate of active aged population (between 15–59 years old)
	19. Annual rate of 3 or more room dwellings built (average for the last 5 years)
	20. Passenger cars by residence of operator / 1000 inhabitants
	21. Earning constituting the personal income tax base/ 1000 inhabitants
	22. Density standard (inhabitants / 100 dwellings)
	23. Annually built dwellings / 10 000 inhabitants (average for the last 5 years)
	24. Average floor space of dwellings built (in the course of the last 5 years)
	25. Rate of recipients of regular social support / 1000 inhabitants
	26. Rate of tax-payers
	27. Rate of public medical treatment card holders
	28. Rate of recipients of home maintenance support (in cash or in kind)
	29. Minors at risk / 100 inhabitant aged under 15 years old
	30. Discovered crimes / 100 000 inhabitants
	31. Perpetrators discovered (by residence) / 100 000 inhabitants
V. Employment	32. Average rate of registered jobseekers / 100 population in employment age
	33. Long-term registered jobseekers / 100 registered jobseekers

<sup>2</sup>According to the Government Decree No. 311/2007. (XI. 17.) (on the classification of beneficiary areas) the area of Encs was the 8<sup>th</sup> most disadvantaged Hungarian subregion in 2007, and as per the Government Decree No. 106/2015. (IV. 23.) it reckoned still on the district in 8<sup>th</sup> worst position in 2015.

The 33 indicators used for the examination – fitting to the 2007 LHH definition in accordance with the possibilities – were classified into 5 groups (dimensions): economic, infrastructural, demographic, social and employment dimension (Table 1). The values of the dimension are calculated from the simple unweighted arithmetic average of the indicators belonging to them, the complex development index itself is the same average of values of the five dimensions. Depending on the prohibitive factors the complex index was calculated for every year between 2008 and 2013.

The complex index elaborated for measuring the socio-economic development state of the area (for the detailed description and results of the complex index see: Jeney L. – Varga Á. 2016) proved our assumption that the average development state of the whole Encs district significantly falls away from the average level of both Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county and the country. In 2013 the studied district reached about four fifth of the average development of the county and three quarter of that of the country (Figure 3).



**Fig. 3. Differences in the development/lagging of the Encs district in the five examined dimensions, 2013**

Source of data: calculation of the authors based on the data of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (KSH) T-Star, Regional Development and Spatial Planning. Information System (TeIR), National Tax and Customs Administration (NAV) and the National Employment Service (NFSZ)

The extent of the lagging behind from the average level of the county and the country remarkably differs in dimensions. The district lags behind from the averages of the county and the country with only one exception in all the surveyed dimensions. It is generally characteristic that the backwardness of the peripheral districts is more and more serious from the human features to the economic indicators. Even the studies prior to the 2007 LHH definition revealed that lagging behind in the Encs district is observable in the most remarkable extent in case of economy, that is why the economic development funds were appropriated in higher proportion for the area. Its reasonableness is confirmed by this study (the district reach 55 percent of the average of the county and 42 percent of the average of the country). Ideally the cognition of the more significant backwardness in case of economy should also reflect in the development policy aiming at the territorial equalization, however, we immediately must add to this that the economic, cultural and social capital represented by the really poor communities living in the villages of the district disables the

effective absorption of the economic development supports. So the required short-term acute interventions (e.g. development of local community) might not necessarily have to tend to deal with the most important problems (e.g. economic development).

The backwardness of the Encs district is moderate in case of the infrastructural and employment dimensions at both county and country levels. It is worth of note that in the relation of the country, the lagging behind is more serious in case of employment, while from the county-average the backwardness is more remarkable from infrastructural point of view. Evaluating these dimensions it should be taken into consideration that the Encs district as a rural periphery from the Abaúj part of its county is outside from the more industrialized areas of Borsod part (e.g. Kazincbarcika, Miskolc, Ózd or Tiszajváros) of the county. The industrialized areas were better equipped with infrastructure even during the decades of socialism, however, currently these are struggling against the depression of the structural transition. So the Encs district has more significant lagging behind

from the county-average in infrastructural dimension while its backwardness is not so remarkable in the employment dimension.

The Encs district performs better only in demographic dimension compared to the country and even the county averages. This relative advantageous position related to the values of the vital indicators (rate of net natural increase, rate of immigration) are higher than that of the country and especially the county averages (pre-

dominantly due to the local Gypsies).

The spatial differences of the values of the complex development index describe the intraregional differences (Figure 4). Besides the leading role of the district centre and its neighbourhood, the historical hereditary north-south division could also be detected at the expense of the northern minor villages with a relative worse position.

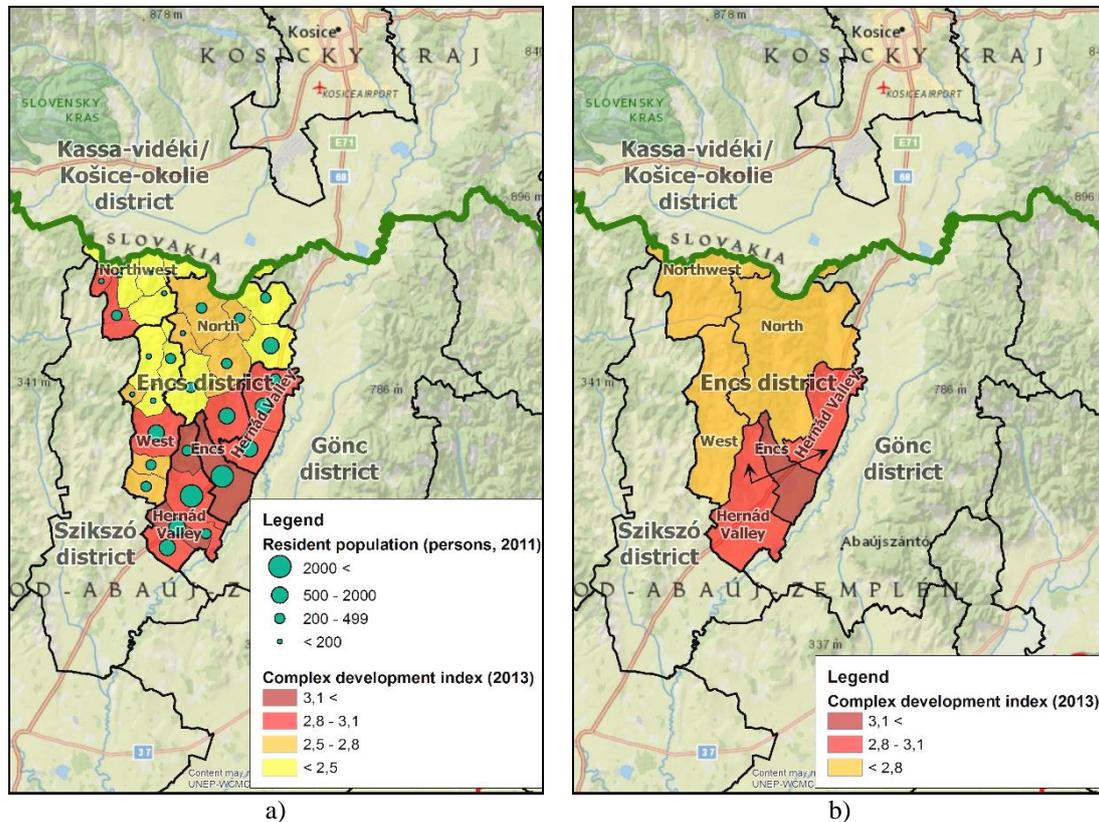


Fig. 4. Development pattern in the Encs district at a) settlement- and b) micro regional level based on the complex development index, 2013

Source: edition of Varga Á. 2016

The villages of the northern part of the geographically Janus-faced Encs district – the hilly Cserehát (and in a minor part the Valley of Rakaca) – are traditionally less developed. The peripheral character of the area was further intensified by the impact of the only important main line connecting Budapest with Kassa/Košice and Eastern Poland that touches just the edge of the district in the direction of northeast-southwest, while the Cserehát area – partly due to orographic causes – is avoided by the main national economic arteries. The less developed transportation network, the location in ‘traffic shadow’ and the insufficient community transport facilities contribute even nowadays to the disadvantaged geographic situation of the Cserehát area.

The district centre, Encs, and the villages in its neighbourhood are in the relatively most advantaged position within the district. The state of the settlements in Hernád Valley is close the average of the district (2.92), only some small villages with conscious and active settlement policy stand out from among the villages of the Cserehát. Nevertheless, the settlements in the

proximity of the mentioned ones lag behind at a more remarkable extent from the district-average. The hardly accessible villages of Inner Cserehát and the settlements on the northeast periphery having significant Gypsy population belong to the most disadvantaged settlements.

**Role of the geographic allocation of the development political support in the peripherization of the Encs district.** In certain cases, the development policy due to its regulation and operation principle and structure might be selectively effective in the rural areas, it might conserve and moreover deepen the existing gaps (Balogh P. 2012). It is no wonder that some studies concerned with the countryside and the assessment of the rural processes make attempts to the quantification of these processes and the examination of the efficiency of the development policy (Fertő I. – Varga Á. 2015). In the disadvantaged areas the geographically different ability for absorption of the supports might even enhance the lagging behind or result in the reproduction of the peripherization. Studying just the poorer norther part of the Encs district (Kegyetlen microarea) Tibor Farkas notes: ‘The

misspent support results in a heavier problem than the lack of the support' (Farkas T. 2002 p. 62.). It is a gripping question whether the incoming supports contribute to the prevention of the reproduction of the peripherization in case of the Encs district having been a priority target area of the development policy for a long time due to its disadvantaged position.

The capacity for support utilization and fund allocation of the Encs district was examined through the territorial analyses of the awarded supports within the frames of the National Development Plan (NFT) and the New Hungary Development Program (ÚMFT)<sup>3</sup> on the basis of the data of the Unified Monitoring Information System (EMIR)<sup>4</sup>. The settlements of the Encs district realized supports amounted 14.16 billion Ft (46.45 million €) within the frames of the two development plans.

The geographic distribution of the awarded supports is opposite to the inner space structure of the district. The bulk of the supports was allocated to Encs and to the settlements surrounding Encs, on the southern part of the district, originally in even better position, while six – typically northern – small villages were not awarded supports at all. The over-represent share of the district centres in the awarded supports is a general Hungarian phenomenon, where the power for the fund allocation depends primarily on their population number rather than on their population share within their districts (Jablonszky Gy. 2011). In the view of this it is surprising that Encs reckoning on a district centre with a relatively small population number (6500 residents) concentrate the NFT and ÚMFT supports awarded for the whole territory of the district in a quite remarkable extent (55.14 percent, 7.8 billion Ft i.e. 25.57 million €) of the

awarded supports. The distribution of the funds is more equitable among the other settlements of the district (the settlement awarded the second largest support engaged just 8.3 percent of the supports). It is verified by the Hirschman–Herfindahl index value of the supports calculated for the whole district (0.32) and its territory without the district centre (0.17), too.

We classified the supports based on their target areas and the expected effect (economic–employment, human and infrastructural supports) to be comparable with the main tendencies of the complex index characterising the peripherization processes. (Thus, as a result of the classification, the supports belonging to different operative programs, but with the same objectives got into one category.)

The EU development supports followed just partly the pattern of the socio–economic problems of the settlements. The heaviest lagging behind is observable from the national average in the economic dimension for the whole district and each of its micro areas (*Figure 5*). However, the proportion of the supports for economic and employment development could not reach the necessary level (13.63 percent of all supports) due to the low enterprise density of the district, and its low ability for support absorption.

Both the number and the effects of the economic and employment development support represent a larger weight in the southern areas with better transportation condition and in the West micro area. There are mostly such potent local entrepreneurs who can also have an effect on their environment (employment, supplying etc.) due to their developments, as it is exemplified by some good practices (*Figure 6*).



**Fig. 5. Three examples for the successful applications of supports for the local employment:**  
**a) an organic farm managed by the local government (Hernádszentandrás),**  
**b) a quality restaurant utilizing primarily local raw materials (Encs)**  
**and c) extruded organic millet ball producing firm with more locations (Baktakék and Encs)**

Source: photo of Jeney L. 2016

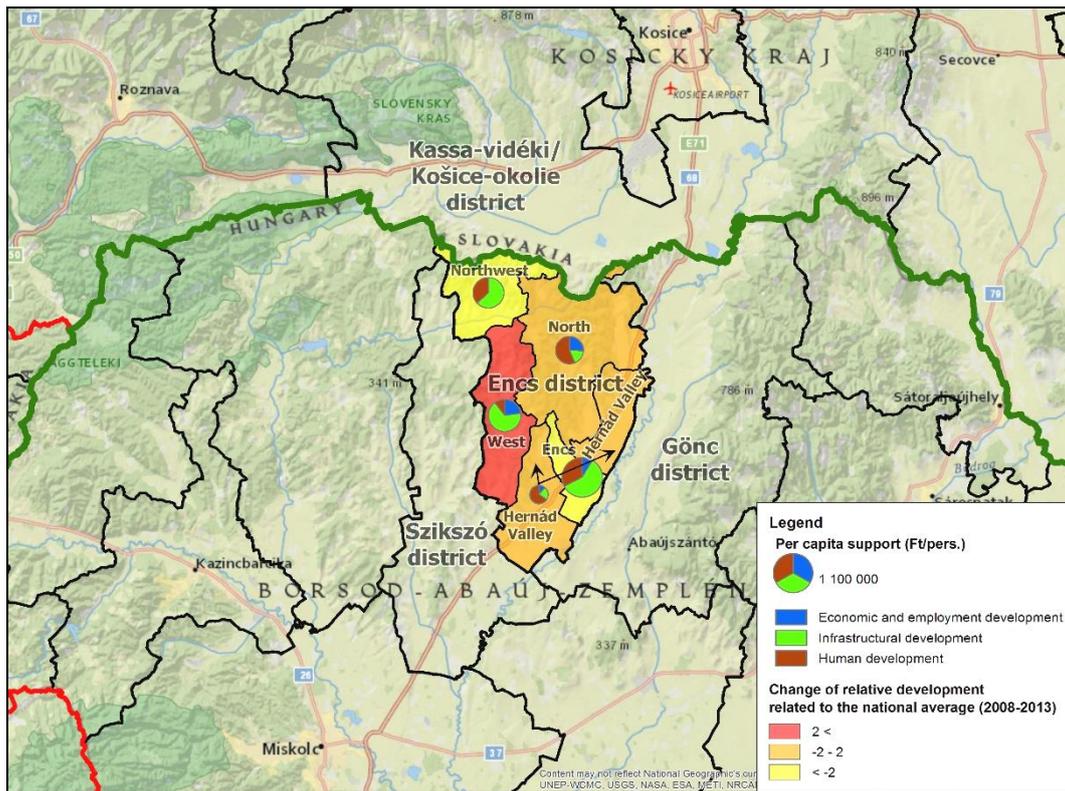
The economic and employment development supports figured in a higher proportion in the support portfolio of the North micro area (*Figure 6*).

<sup>3</sup>The NFT is a national development plan for the period of 2004 and 2006, and the ÚMFT for the programming period of 2007–2013.

<sup>4</sup><https://www.palyazat.gov.hu/> – 2016.03.30.

<sup>5</sup>The development of the one and only luxury hotel meant 82 percent of the support for economic and employment development, which affected the local employment or the quickening of the local economy just to a limited extent up to now.

Nevertheless in the micro area basically characterized with low investment potential, basically mostly only the immigrants from outside the district, having better economic capital could take the advantages offered by the supports<sup>5</sup>. At the same time the economic and employment developments are totally missing in the Northwest micro area. In this micro area the proportion of entrepreneurs having investment capital, so being able to ensure the self-effort is lower.



**Fig. 6. The pattern of the per capita supports awarded to the micro areas in the Encs district, distribution of these supports among the target areas and the change of position of the complex development index related to the national average between 2008–2013**

Source: edition of VARGA Á. 2016 based on the data of Unified Monitoring Information System (EMIR), Hungarian Central Statistical Office (KSH) T-Star, Regional Development and Spatial Planning. Information System (TeIR), National Tax and Customs Administration (NAV) and the National Employment Service (NFSZ)

Based on our studies we experienced that the geographic concentration of the applications for infrastructure development (Table 2) were by far larger than the applications concerning with the economic and employment development. The large volume projects related to the functions of the district centre, were registered at Encs, but were also concerning other settlements of the district hidden partly in the background of the surprising high value of the Hirschman–Herfindahl index. Thus the infrastructural developments concentrating mainly to the

district centre, Encs according to the statistics, actually affected the other settlements of the district, too. However, the Hoover index value calculated between the distributions of the supports and the population pictures well that phenomenon we can find such application among both the economic–employment and the infrastructural developments where some project partook in large support in a small village. Based on our experiences, the social effect of these developments is often out of mesh with the extent of the support.

Table 2

**The features of the spatial distribution of the applications**

Source: calculation of the authors based on the data of the Unified Monitoring Information System (EMIR)

Target areas	Hirschman–Herfindahl index	Hoover index
Economic and employment development	0,21	42,83
Human development	0,22	32,28
Infrastructural development	0,50	48,51

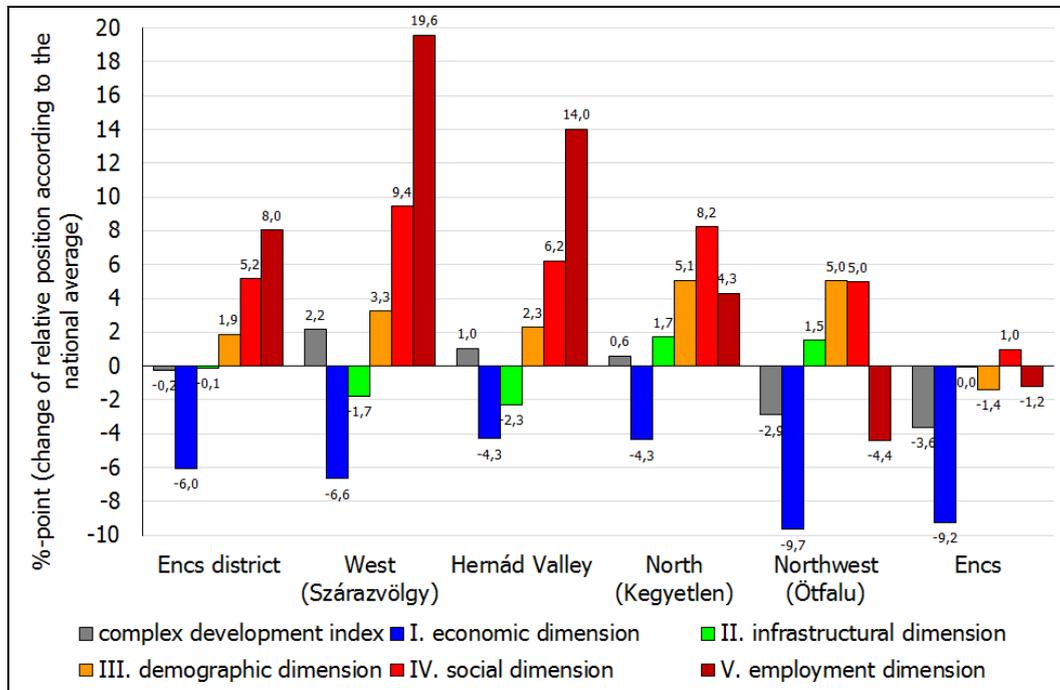
Due to their characteristics, the human supports (e.g. supports concerning school network, health projects) distribute more proportionately with the population and they are spatially more balanced. Some local administrative or connecting organizations are responsible for

the execution of these. Numerous local civil organizations with different efficiency also apply for a part of the applications relating to the human development. It arises as a question in their case that how the money awarded from the applications, serve the whole community repre-

sented by the organizations, whether the support get to the level of the marginalized, often Gypsy people (Farakas T. 2001).

The district developed more rapidly than the national average in the period of the study for the employment, demographic and social dimensions, thus a close-up could be experienced for this area, although the picture is a little bit nuanced looking behind the values (Figure 7). The reforms in the public work program hide behind the

catching-up for the employment and social dimensions, which induced positive change in the case of some indicators for both of the dimensions. Namely the rise of the number of persons employed (employment dimension) implied the decrease of the number of recipients of the social supports and the increase of the proportion of the tax-payers (social dimension), which participate to an outstanding extent to the changes experienced.

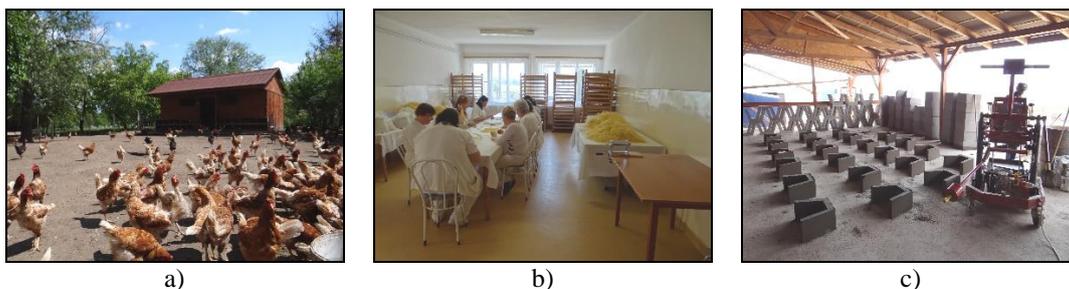


**Fig. 7. The change of the relative development related to the national average by dimensions in the Encs district and its microareas, 2008–2013**

Source of data: calculation of the authors based on the data of Hungarian Central Statistical Office (KSH) T-Star, Regional Development and Spatial Planning. Information System (TeIR), National Tax and Customs Administration (NAV) and the National Employment Service (NFSZ)

For certain cases the poverty requires a very creative application of the available tools of the development policy from the local executives of the small settlements. Even some local governments provide samples for the value-adding application of the public work for other settlements of the country, such as the evolvement of the vertical building on each other of certain activities under the public work in one of the villages. One part of the

food produced by the public work is utilized by the local mass caterers, and another part as forage by the local animal husbandry, the locally produced chicken egg is processed partly by the local pastry factory (Figure 8). Public work panels of concrete are also fabricated not only for the local planning and constructions, but for other settlements, too.



**Fig. 8. Different activities connected to each other in public work in peripheral small villages: a) chicken farm, b) pastry factory processing the chicken eggs and c) fabricating elements of concrete (Ináncs)**

Source: photo of Jójárt K. 2016

Although the public work program have an appreciably positive effect on the participants and the members of their families, and the income deriving from it might be even crucial for the households living in the poorest territories, however, these can still not ensure a solvent demand for the settler service providers. The Janus faceted economic influence of the public work appears in it, although the resulting products could lighten the local governmental burdens (e.g. raw materials produced for the mass caterers, manufacturing of pavement elements, maintenance of horticultures etc.), certain activities might crowd out the entrepreneurship being able to show up on market terms unfavourably affecting the close-up of the area on the long run.

The catching-up in the demographic dimension, the juvenile age structure might be attractive for the enterprises suffering from the shortages of labour supply, nevertheless the increase of the population number means even the reproduction of the social groups being unable to enter the labour market.

It is revealed from the foregoing that the district belonged to the priority target area of the development policy over the past years, its close-up could neither be realized at country or county levels, nor its further lagging behind could be detected. Significant and definite shift in the value of the complex development index calculated for the period of 2008 and 2013 had not occurred, thus it could be stated that against the beneficiary development political status, this district could not considerably improve its position over the past years.

So on the whole, the peripheral character of the district did not changed actually despite the support from development policy after the turn of the millennium, thus the de-peripherization could not be diagnosed. These processes reveal that the extent, dynamics and direction of the peripherization could be different even within a smaller district. In case of the poorest villages with a disadvantaged location in Cserehát Hills (Northwest and North) the reproduction of the peripherization is demonstrable, which could not be changed by the supporting system. By contrast, a slow close-up of the West micro area and the settlement of the Hernád Valley is observable. A further lagging behind could be experienced in the economic dimension, the convergence lies primarily in the improvement of labour force and social issues attached to the public work. Simplifying the picture: the poorer small villages hardly benefit from the success of the southern villages. The lack of the cohesion between the northern and the southern parts of the district holds the whole area, together with the town of Encs, back. Despite the greater support, the district centre in a relative better situation is losing from its position within the district resulting in a fine inner convergent tendency.

**Conclusions.** The peripherization could be defined not only along the duality, the centre–periphery system, but it means a multilevel process, as it is indicated by the example of one of the most disadvantaged areas, the Encs district. The sub-peripheries within the periphery might show even oppositely the marks of the lagging behind or close up as compared with each other.

The Encs district well exemplify those debates on the peripherality whether the periphery is just a construc-

tion or it is a real out-of-the-way peripheral place due to geographic causes? In a peculiar way, both of the viewpoints must be agreed. On one hand the secluded Cserehát is geographically peripheral compared to Encs and the Hernád Valley, making originally disadvantaged situation in a number of areas. On the other hand the villages are differentiated within the Cserehát, too, however, mainly along the existence or the lack of local resources or the social composition.

We guess thus there are two types of peripherization; processes originated from spatial (potential) and local causes. The previous one is inevitable due to its geographic frames, the development policy can hardly do anything with it, only trying to reduce, compensate the initial handicaps through e.g. infrastructural investments, which have huge social costs. Nevertheless, the regional policy can do something with the latter, the local causes!

The diversity and the multilevel features within the peripheries participate and contribute to the reproduction of the most peripheral villages in the contemporary application system, rather. Furthermore, due to the characteristics of the politics and application system, these all are heavily personal specific: a strong-limbed territorial coordinator, the good ability for political advocacy usually counts more than the other local, reference resources. It is questionable whether the supports available through the application system are enough. Are the accessible tools enough to reach the objectives getting over the local and reference handicaps to stop the centuries-old decay and to ensure the future for local population? According to the present study they are not.

The supporting system of the European Union do not decrease the lagging behind of the peripheries, because only the groups with higher economic, cultural and social capital can utilize the supports within the application system for themselves, in a better case for improvement of the position of wider social groups, that is to say the poorest social groups drop out of the potential benefits by the supports, what is confirmed by our experiences obtained in the Encs district, too. Namely, those who live in the deeper levels of the multilevel periphery are often precluded from the current applying system as it is pointed out by Judit Tímár (2014a, 2014b) through the a priori disadvantaged situation of the women or the persons with disabilities on the peripheries. The social supports or infrastructural development, like quick fixes are not only insufficient for the compensation of the reference handicaps, but the local peripherization processes are reproduced as well.

The intensifying inner polarization holds back even the local centres leading to the lagging behind of whole regions. While according to Lang and others (Lang, Th. et al. 2015), the benefit of the recovery after the crisis hardly filters back from the dynamic economic centres to the lower levels of the peripheries, vice versa it could be stated that the dichotomy between centre and periphery in essence threatens the stability of the whole economic system, including the centre itself on the long run.

Perhaps the only chance of the peripheries is such an area-specific, strongly concentrated, operation not only in the terms of applications, which goes beyond

welfare arrangements. The well retraced state public interventions acting in the long run as learning systems for better cases could contribute to the close-up of the peripheries, so far as they are able to provide and strengthen the inner resources of the area, own recovery

for all beneficiaries with adequate conditions to its own lagging behind level. Perhaps the initial examples are observable by the currently operating Hungarian public work program.

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