NEW MIGRATION TRENDS AND THEIR MOTIVATION IN HUNGARY

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Abstract. The discussion to certain population deconcentration trends in the settlement structure has attracted much attention in the last decades, yet most of the researches remained within the border of the urban agglomerations. Suburbanization has become one of the best revealed geographical phenomena in Hungary. However desurbanization has been a rather neglected topic. In this article we try to examine and compare these two processes within the borders of Hungary. Using empirical data from surveys of some 500 municipalities and around 400 households scattered in possible suburban and desurban areas, this paper explores issues relating to people’s motivations and behaviours.

Key words: suburbanization, desurbanization, counterurbanization, reurbanization, motivations.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Hungarian urbanization processes in the last decades are relatively well known. Until 1990 the first phase of urbanization dominated: the population of the towns and cities was growing and the smaller communities were losing their population (Enyedi, Gy. 1988, Beluszky, P. 1999). In the beginning only our biggest cities experienced the fast expansion of population and territory, later the middle and small towns joined the process as well. In the case of the villages the size of them had become a fundamental question: the smaller was the community, the bigger was the rate of the outmigration. Only the geographic situation and the available transportation technology was able to reduce the number of people moving out, therefore those settlements which was situated by good and fast motorways could slow down the process. Only a few small communities had been able to
keep their size, or even gaining population. Because of the high rate of outmigration the demographic situation of the concerned settlements had changed radically, the median age had started to rise, and in the 1970s and 1980s natural population decrease was dominating.

After 1990 the natural population decrease reached the majority of towns, and the inherited migration trends were essentially chanced. The urbanization process firstly slowed down then stopped completely. Almost every town and city experienced the problem of outmigration. The primary reason of this change was suburbanization. In this phase firstly the settlements around Budapest, then the villages around the big and middle sized towns had started to gain population at the expense of the central towns. Suburbanization has quite a wide range of literature in Hungary, therefore the reasons of this process are relatively well known (Bajmócy, P., 2000, Bajmócy, P., 2002, Bajmócy, P., 2006, Dövényi Z. – Kovács, Z., 1999, Hardi, T., 2002, Kókai, S., 2006, Szebényi, A., 2006, Timár, J., 1999, Timár, J. – Váradi, M. M., 2000, Tóth, J., 2011). The classical urbanization theory assumes that during suburbanization the decrease of population in rural areas should continue (Van Den Berg, L., 1982). That happened all over the western world, where new towns started to grow close to the city centres, creating agglomerations, conurbations and edge cities, while many remote and small places had become ghost towns. Despite of this in Hungary the rate of population decrease was not really higher than the national average. The causes of such population trends can be many to name if one really scrutinizes this subject closely. Foremost in traditional rural areas the natural fertility rate is much higher than in urban places. Secondly the beginning of the 1990s many urban citizens moved back to the country because of the difficulties of living in a central town. Because of the lack of jobs and available flat many people needed to move to the poorest regions of Hungary (Szabolcs-Szatmár-Bereg County, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén County, etc.).

The borders of the concerned suburban areas have radically stretched out in space dynamiting some more remote areas. At the same time some classical rural places, especially tourism places (e.g. Lake Balaton, Órség) have experienced appreciation and became the target of slow immigration. Therefore the 1990s and the beginning of the 2000s can be characterized as the time of declining central towns, rapidly growing suburbanias and stagnating rural areas. However this migration trend was not a long life process, and around 2004 and 2005 it turned back again. Since then the metropolitan places are growing again, and the rural areas started to lose its population. The working suburban processes are also slowed down, and around some middle sized town it even stopped (Bajmócy, P. – Dudás, R., 2008).

The migration processes of the last two decades were mainly defined by suburbanization in Hungary, however some desurban and reurban migration trends can still be observed. The aim of present paper is to analyze and compare suburbanization and desurbanization, with special attention on the motivation behind these modern geographic phenomena. Under suburbanization we mean the deconcentration of the urban population and activities, which is part of the overall urbanization process. Deconcentration process in the sense that a part of the population, the productive and non-productive activities, the capital and the investment concentrate into the urban fringe instead of the urban core. Deconcentration, because a part of the urban people and/or them activities (production, service, recreation) are actually move out from the town to the fringe, creating opportunities of edge towns.
2. DESURBANIZATION

During the 1960s, a new phenomenon appeared in the United States. The development of the metropolitan areas had arrived to a new phase, called absolute decentralization. In this phase the metropolitan areas experienced high out migration, and the growth of the fringe areas were not able to compensate that loss (Becsei, J., 1999). While the urban areas as a whole were losing their citizens, the remote and small areas started to gain population through net migration. Although both the Hungarian and the international literature provide us with substantial research within this field, not only the concept, but also the denomination appears unclear. A myriad of concepts and names for these demographic processes exist (Gilg, A., 1985, Mitchell, C.J.A, 2004). Some researchers summarize them as desurbanization - absolute deconcentration (Enyedi, Gy., 1988), others prefer the term counterurbanization. These terms are usually used as synonyms, however we think, that crucial differences can be observed (see Figure 1.)

“Desurbanization is a process (...)when the centre of population growth moves toward the rural areas outside of the urban agglomerations: rural-urban population rate shifts for the benefit of the rural population” (Enyedi, Gy., 1988, p.83). Desurbanization is a complex deconcentration process, which caused by both structural and behavioural changes. Those small and remote settlements which are experiencing population growth through net migration at the expense of metropolitan areas can be called as desurbias. The redistribution of people and businesses prompting that during the process the settlement system is transformed into a more balanced pattern, both in terms of population density and state of development. By now, we see a decentralization process from the point of the rural population as well; the growing settlements are dispersed around the whole country. On one hand, this may cause the decline of suburbias (Timár, 1994, 1999); on the other hand, it may lead to revitalization of some rural areas. The population turnaround may cause a kind of rural revival, by activating the local community, dynamiting the economy and

[Diagram of Desurbanization]

(Source: Hosszú, Sz., 2009)

Fig. 1 The system of desurbanization
emphasising the importance of the environment. It contributes to strengthen the system of
the small and middle sized towns.

Three type of desurbanization can be seen if we look at the distance and the
motivations of the migration. The first type is ‘periurbanization’ (Fielding, A.J., 1986),
which refers to those people, who moved to rural areas, mainly because of housing reasons,
but they maintain their linkages with the city centre. Therefore, it is only a “spill over” of
the city (Coombes, M., 1989), the continuing process of suburbanization, just on the other
side of the towns’ borders. In the American literature it is mainly known as
‘exurbanisation’.

The second type is called ‘displaced urbanization’, and refers to those migrations,
which are primarily driven by economic reasons. People move because of rational reasons:
for example higher income possibilities or lower living costs. Thus, the people are “forced
movers”, they move because they have to move, therefore if they have any possibility to
move back to the city, they would do. For that reason displaced urbanization is only a
temporary pattern. After the transition it was quite a common pattern in Hungary, when
many people from Budapest moved back to the country.

The third type of desurbanization is the well known ‘counterurbanization’. Most of
the studies in this research field rely on the concept of Berry (1976, p. 17):
“...counterurbanization is a process of population deconcentration; it implies a movement
from a state of more concentration to a state of less concentration.” However, this
definition is very similar to the above outlined term of desurbanization, it is not the same.
Counterurbanization means not only the relocation of households, but also implies a job
transfer for employed people and a complex change in the lifestyle of the migrant.
Coombes et al. (1989) and Halliday and Coombes (1995) argues that
counterurbanization should be something, which is a „clean break” from past movements,
and not only a „spill over”. In this case, a “true counterurban person” not just moving out
of the city, but chooses a more rural place to live and work, and has changes in his/her life.
The movement is now a deconcentration process from a countryside perspective as well.
Counterurban people are free movers, who leave the city and move to remoter and smaller
places, where they can live a much different life than before. It means that
counterurbanization is the actual counterpart of urbanization. Investigating the intentions,
motivations and other features of the migrants we can also distinguish three sub forms of
counterurbanization.

One of these sub forms is referred here as ‘simple living’. Under this phrase we
understand a radical reaction against urbanization process. People who leave the city want
to leave not only the settlement, but all the features and achievements of urban /modern/
way of life. They change their residence, their jobs and their lifestyle as well, and therefore
the term should equal with de-modernization and ‘anti-urbanization’.

The second form is ‘penturbanization’, the typical type of urban-rural migration. It
means not only the relocation of residences to the countryside, but the relocation of jobs
and activities as well. People’s motivations most of the time are the housing facilities, the
rural idyll or better job opportunities, all together the better “quality of life” reasons. They
move because they wish to live in a better and safer environment, far from the increased
congestion of the towns.

The last separated form of counterurbanization is called as ‘retirement migration’.
The migration of retirement and pre-retirement people is mainly driven by amenity reasons.
After their children left the family nest and they achieved everything they wanted, they free to move. They do not have to worry about their jobs anymore; the most vital thing is their comfort. Therefore, they are looking for a place where they can have satisfying entertainment possibilities and special services, like professional healthcare. Their migration pattern is usually strongly influenced by their life-cycle experiences (Bures, 1997); it could be the mirror of their life.

3. TRENDS OF POPULATION CHANGE IN HUNGARY

For showing the trends of population change in different types of settlements we used a previously developed categorization (Bajmócy, P. – Dudás, R. 2008), in which - after the work of Beluszky, P. - we aggregated the functional towns into four categories (Budapest, large towns, middle towns and small towns). The remaining settlements were classified into two suburbs (around Budapest and other), a touristic and a rural group. Before 1990 population concentration trends had been observed around the bigger towns, agglomerations and leading touristic places, while remote rural areas had experienced only population loss (see table 1).

Table 1. Percentage of the different settlement-types from the population of Hungary between 1949 and 2010 (%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Budapest</th>
<th>Large town</th>
<th>Medium sized town</th>
<th>Small town</th>
<th>Suburbia of Budapest</th>
<th>Suburbia of large towns</th>
<th>Touristic area</th>
<th>Rural area</th>
<th>Together</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1949</td>
<td>17.28</td>
<td>11.05</td>
<td>8.93</td>
<td>10.23</td>
<td>6.13</td>
<td>5.08</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>39.29</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>17.88</td>
<td>12.49</td>
<td>9.79</td>
<td>10.10</td>
<td>6.41</td>
<td>4.99</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>36.35</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>19.39</td>
<td>15.05</td>
<td>10.45</td>
<td>9.76</td>
<td>7.26</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>31.27</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>19.23</td>
<td>17.38</td>
<td>11.32</td>
<td>10.13</td>
<td>7.81</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>27.52</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>19.44</td>
<td>18.40</td>
<td>11.40</td>
<td>10.35</td>
<td>7.92</td>
<td>4.68</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>25.64</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>17.27</td>
<td>18.30</td>
<td>11.27</td>
<td>10.53</td>
<td>9.31</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>25.82</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>16.85</td>
<td>18.10</td>
<td>11.12</td>
<td>10.42</td>
<td>10.11</td>
<td>5.52</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>25.58</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>17.19</td>
<td>18.36</td>
<td>10.91</td>
<td>10.06</td>
<td>11.07</td>
<td>5.65</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>24.42</td>
<td>100.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own calculation by HSO data.

In the last decade of the 20th century almost every bigger town was experiencing outmigration, while around them a continuous fringe of suburbs was emerging containing several independent settlements. The most dynamic fringe was of course around the capital, which had reached the agglomeration area of Székesfehérvár, Dunatúrvas, Tatabánya, Kecskemét and Szolnok (see Figure 2). Meanwhile the southern and western part of Hungary lost quite a big part of their population and enterprises. Only few other settlements were able to gain population, mainly villages close to the Austrian border, around Lake Balaton and in the heart of the Great-Plain. However many towns and villages in the northern part of Hungary was gaining population through net migration, it was not a
typical counterurban process. Mainly people moved to this region, because of employment change, lower housing prices, and cheaper livelihood, and mostly they moved back to the place where they had lived before. During this period displaced urbanization was the main changing force in these rural areas.

![Figure 2](image1.png)

**Fig. 2 Population change trends of Hungarian settlements between 1990-2001.**
Source: Own calculation by data of HSO.

Between 2001 and 2005 the above described migration trend was slowing down, only a few settlement was able to keep their position in that competition (see Figure 3.).

![Figure 3](image2.png)

**Fig. 3 Population change trends of Hungarian settlements between 2001-2005**
Source: Own calculation by data of HSO
By the end of 2005 a new pattern seems to dominate in Hungary, and significant changes can be observed in the distribution of population. While between 1990 and 2001 around 1289 settlements, and between 2001 and 2005 about 1113 settlements were growing, between 2005 and 2010 only 645 growing settlement remained. The number of rapidly growing settlements (growing rate above 2%) was mainly stable (1990-2001: 135; 2001-2005: 139; 2005-2010: 120), while the number of rapidly diminishing settlements at the end of the decade became 3 times higher than before. The suburban zones around towns shrank, in some places even disappeared (see Figure 4). The biggest shrinking was observed around Budapest, where the southern and south-western part of the suburban zone spectacularly diminished. Only a few growing town has remained in the country, mainly around Lake Fertő, Lake Velence and Hévíz. But at the same time the centre town of the regions started to grow again, mainly because of reurbanization.

As we see in the last 20 years many contrary migration processes was operating at the same time. Nowadays suburbanization, desurbanization and reurbanization work all at once, and effect the distribution of population and activities. However in the last decades the most determining process was suburbanization, the areas of the suburban zones are continuously fade with an accelerating speed. The only exceptions can be found near the Austrian border, close to Győr and Sopron. The growing rural towns and villages also disappeared, only few exist in the eastern and north-eastern part of the country, and near to the River Tisza. The bigger part of the population of these settlements is usually from the poorest gipsy minority. At the same time our biggest towns has started to grow and develop again, after a long break.
4. MOTIVATIONS OF SUBURBANIZATION AND DESURBANIZATION

In the spring of 2011 the University of Szeged conducted a survey of 500 municipalities and 403 households in possible suburban (Szeged, Székesfehérvár, Dunaújváros and Budapest) and desurban (Lake Balaton, Hévíz, Lake Velence, periurban fringe of Budapest) areas to investigate why people chose to leave the central towns and live in the countryside. Data were collected during the month of March from people who moved to the examined place in the last 15 years. A total of 249 suburban and 154 desurban surveys were completed. The survey gathered questions about the circumstances of the migration, motivations and intentions, satisfaction about the housing facilities and the use of services. Two thirds of survey respondents came from a closely situated big or middle sized town (see Table 2). In the suburban zone (around Szeged, Buda, Székesfehérvár and Dunaújváros) this rate was between 70-90 %, while in the rest of the investigated areas the rate was much lower. The second biggest group was the people who moved from Budapest to the place where they live now (12%). The rate of these households was especially high around Martonvásár, Lake Velence, Vác and Lake Balaton. The rate of people arriving remoter parts of the country was around 10 %, and the number of them was usually much higher in the touristic places. Foreign people can be found primarily around Héviz and Lake Balaton. The survey was proved our assumptions that people living in suburbias mainly came from the central town. In contrast the population of desurban settlements show a much more complex picture, we can find households from nearest towns (Vác, Keszthely, Balatonfüred), from Budapest and its area, other cities, remoter areas and even from abroad.

Table 2. Home settlements of survey respondents before migration (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of survey</th>
<th>Together (pc.)</th>
<th>Nearby town</th>
<th>Nearby agglom.</th>
<th>Nearby periph.</th>
<th>Other counties</th>
<th>Abroad</th>
<th>Budapest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Szeged</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>72,0</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>7,5</td>
<td>14,0</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>0,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budapest</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>91,7</td>
<td>5,6</td>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>2,8</td>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Székesfehérvár</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>72,1</td>
<td>9,8</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>11,5</td>
<td>1,6</td>
<td>1,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dunaújváros</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>86,4</td>
<td>1,7</td>
<td>1,7</td>
<td>6,8</td>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>3,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vác</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>50,0</td>
<td>16,7</td>
<td>5,0</td>
<td>5,0</td>
<td>1,7</td>
<td>21,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Velence</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14,3</td>
<td>14,3</td>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>7,1</td>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>64,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region of Martonvásár</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>21,4</td>
<td>21,4</td>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>7,1</td>
<td>50,0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Survey area: Deszk, Domaszék, Mórahalom, Szeged-Marostó, Szeged-Szentmihály
2 Köszárhegy, Pákozd, Úrghida
3 Baracs, Kisapostag, Kulecs, Nagyvenyim, Rácalmás
4 Csobinka, Pomáz
5 Balatoncsösö, Balatonszőlős, Dörgiese, Káptalanótó, Kékkút, Pécsely, Szentjakabfa, Vászoly
6 Alsópáhok, Felsőpáhok, Nemesbük, Sármellék
7 Kápolnásnyék, Sukoró
8 Kods, Penc, Rád, Szendehely, Vácduka, Verőce (near Vác), and Ráckeresztúr, Tordas (near Martonvásár)
Using a five-point scale we asked the respondents to rate some predetermined issues concerning the motivations behind the move. We categorized the answers into two main group: important (really important and important) and not important (not important and really not important). Both in the suburbias and in desurbias the most important issue was the state of environment (see Table 3). It is coincides with previous research (Bajmócy, P., 2000). By this in the suburbias the desire of an own house, the need of a bigger home and a possibilities of a garden were also important question, while the changes in earnings, in jobs or in health were not important issues. In the desurbias then mentioned issues were also important, but question of jobs was much more essential than as we saw in the case of suburbias.

Table 3. Importance of motivations of moving (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>%</th>
<th>Need for own house</th>
<th>Need of bigger flat/house</th>
<th>Improvement of financial situation</th>
<th>Deterioration of financial situation</th>
<th>Garden</th>
<th>Environmental advantages/disadvantages</th>
<th>Cheaper house</th>
<th>Change of working place/retirement</th>
<th>Change of health situation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not important</td>
<td>20,6</td>
<td>26,1</td>
<td>34,5</td>
<td>77,0</td>
<td>32,9</td>
<td>17,3</td>
<td>51,6</td>
<td>79,1</td>
<td>81,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td>70,6</td>
<td>63,9</td>
<td>35,3</td>
<td>8,9</td>
<td>52,2</td>
<td>73,9</td>
<td>38,7</td>
<td>14,9</td>
<td>14,9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desurban</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not important</td>
<td>35,7</td>
<td>39,0</td>
<td>56,2</td>
<td>85,8</td>
<td>36,4</td>
<td>18,8</td>
<td>46,4</td>
<td>63,0</td>
<td>82,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important</td>
<td>57,8</td>
<td>48,7</td>
<td>22,9</td>
<td>3,4</td>
<td>49,4</td>
<td>65,6</td>
<td>39,9</td>
<td>31,8</td>
<td>11,7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The same can be experienced when the respondents were asked to rate the former and the present living conditions, including housing and neighbourhood as well. 13 aspects were used to investigate the question. The housing facilities, the state of environment, the neighbourhood was usually better rated at the present home (eg. the average rate of the cleanness of air got 3,15 points at the former house and 4,74 points at the present house), while the same time accessibility and transportation possibilities were usually better rated at the former house (eg. accessibility of services was 4,47 at the former and 3,58 at the present house). In the suburban areas great differences can be seen between the rating of housing facilities and neighbourhood, while in the desurban areas the issue of accessibility got the most different judgment.

In our theory the main difference between suburbanization and desurbanization can be found in the degree of lifestyle change. Therefore we find it really important to know
whether the jobs were moving with the household or not. In the case of the suburban areas migrants were usually working in the central town. Only 10-20% of them were working locally, and around 15% were not working at all. In contrast in desurban areas the picture is more complex. In perurban areas (area of Vác, Budapest, Martonvásár, Székesfehérvár) migrants were usually working in the central town, just like in the case of suburbs. Despite of this in touristic areas the rate of non-workers was much higher (30-40%), mainly because most of them were already retired. Therefore in these areas retirement as a motivation was an important issue (eg. Hévíz: 27%, Lake Balaton: 27%, Lake Velence: 11%). At the same time the migration of jobs was also significant. Around the mentioned touristic areas many migrants was able to found job locally (eg. Vác 20%, Martonvásár 50%, Hévíz 12, Lake Balaton 15%, Lake Velence 17%).

It is quite usual that the migrants sold their previous home (around 85% of respondents). Around Szeged and Dunaújváros only 7%, while in Buda (Pomáz, Csobánka) 31%, around Lake Velencei 36% and around Lake Balaton 42% of the respondents were able to keep their former home (see Table 5).

Table 4. Present working-places of survey respondents. (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of survey</th>
<th>Together (pc.)</th>
<th>Locally</th>
<th>Nearby town</th>
<th>Nearby agglom.</th>
<th>Nearby periph.</th>
<th>Other counties</th>
<th>Abroad</th>
<th>Budapest</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Szeged</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>57,0</td>
<td>19,4</td>
<td>7,5</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>2,2</td>
<td>3,2</td>
<td>1,1</td>
<td>8,6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budapest</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>61,1</td>
<td>13,9</td>
<td>5,6</td>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>5,6</td>
<td>2,8</td>
<td>11,1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Székesfehérvár</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>54,1</td>
<td>13,1</td>
<td>1,6</td>
<td>1,6</td>
<td>0,0</td>
<td>3,3</td>
<td>11,5</td>
<td>14,8</td>
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Table 5. Keeping the former house/flat of migrants by survey respondents (%)

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5. DISCUSSION

Our findings concerning migration trends in Hungary are coincides with previous researches, maybe the decline of suburban zones gives us some new information. As we can see the desurbanization in remote and rural areas slowed down, and in some places even turned back, therefore this research provides us with new evidences about the presence of reurbanization in Hungary.

REFERENCES


