

Preface

Our Journal has now entered its seven year, with the present first issue comprising papers on the comparison of the socio-economic situations of the Southern Great Plain and the Northern Hungarian regions.

In addition, our intention is to present a selection of the works written as the result of the research work in the intellectual workshops of regional disciplines attached to these two regions (University of Szeged, Institute of Economics and Economic Development, and University of Miskolc, Institute of World and Regional Economics). Beyond the similarities (like high unemployment rate, low activity, lower than national average income levels) and differences (like different economic structures or different soil and land potentials), the comparison is given a particular topicality by the fact that both regions are searching intensely for the way out in ways partly identical and partly different.

Both intellectual workshops are committed to play their roles in those efforts.

Miskolc, May 2010.

Prof. Dr. Imre Lengyel

Prof. Dr. György Kocziszky

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Summaries

Imre Lengyel – György Kocziszky
Preface

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Imre Lengyel – Zsolt Fenyővári:

Main Indicators of the Competitiveness of the Northern Hungarian and the Southern Great Plain Regions

In the past decade, the spatial operation of the economy and society has undergone radical changes mainly due to globalisation processes. As a result, we have to re-evaluate earlier standpoints on the economic development and growth of the regions, on developing the economy and on regional policies. The elaboration of answers and responses to global developments and at the same time to the financial crisis has also accelerated in the European Union. The strategic paper, Europe 2020, adopted in June 2010, formulates a strategy of intelligent, sustainable and inclusive growth. Following an overview of new explanations of regional economic growth and the new objectives of the European Union, the paper looks at the main indicators of the competitiveness of the regions of Northern Hungary and the Southern Great Plain together with those of their counties and small regions. The paper attempts to analyse the impact of the economic crisis on poverty. In view of the fact that one of the accompanying phenomena of the economic crisis is a decline in economic performance, it seeks to answer the question to what extent this affects poverty. It seeks to prove that an economic decline contributes not only to a growing proportion of the society becoming impoverished, but significantly increases the depth of poverty as well. If this hypothesis is true, it is worth examining to what extent a unit of economic growth (or decline) decreases (or increases) the rate of the poor and the depth of poverty.

Miklós Lukovics – Péter Kovács – Imola Rittgasszer:

Competitiveness of the Small Regions of the Southern Great Plain and Northern Hungary

The paper undertakes to measure regional competitiveness by multivariable data-analysis methodology focusing on the competitiveness of the small regions in the two regions. The measurement method is based on clear concepts and a closed logical system: it uses the unified definition of competitiveness as its basis and the selection of indicators is coordinated by a widely accepted demonstration model. The novelty in the method is constituted by building the selection of indicators and variable weighting on mathematical-statistical foundations, and thus minimizing the subjectivity of the analyst. The study used 78 selected and weighted indicators to categorise the small regions of the two regions into types of

competitiveness, and also determined the relative competitive rankings of these territorial units among the 174 small regions in Hungary. In the analysis cluster analysis, multi-dimensional scaling and main component analysis were used.

Zsolt Péter:

An Examination of the Utilisation of Commercial Accommodation, with Special Regard to the Regions of Northern Hungary and the Southern Great Plain

One of the priorities of the development of tourism is to increase the supply of accommodations. From the early 1990s to the present day, tourism in Hungary has produced significant achievements. Following a decline of some years, the number of bed nights has increased with almost undiminished force; however, the increase in the number of accommodations broke in 2004 and the figures for the past years show a clear decrease. The appearance of the two phenomena different also in space raises the necessity for examining the utilisation of accommodations. The paper seeks to answer how the changes in the territorial distribution of tourist turnover and the extent of improvements in the composition of accommodations different from regions and counties to regions and counties affected the utilisation of accommodations and where the surpluses and deficiencies in terms of efficiency appeared. The issue was examined by using the shift-share analysis, which is relatively infrequently used in the professional literature on tourism, and the findings were formulated on the basis of the figures and data for the years 2000 and 2008.

Zoltán Bajmócy – Izabella Szakálné Kanó:

Analysis of the Innovation Capacity at Small Region Level. A Comparison of the Regions of the Southern Great Plain and Northern Hungary

The paper analyses the innovation capacity of the regions of the Southern Hungarian Plain and Northern Hungary at aggregate small region level in a national comparison. Starting from the theory of innovation systems, it aims at capturing the efficiency of innovation systems at small region level. Multi-variable statistical methods were employed to develop the index of ‘Small Region Innovation Capacity’ (with the Hungarian abbreviation KIK-index) capturing the complexity of the innovation capacity: the four sub-indices measuring the fundamental elements of the innovation system, and the ten factors capable of capturing their underlying processes and thus the specifics of the regions. The analyses demonstrate that the regions do not form an organic unity in terms of innovation capacity, in reality they are a set of small regions having individual characteristics and not connected to each other in this sense.

György Málovics:

Measurement of Prosperity at Small Region Level. A Comparison of the Regions of the Southern Great Plain and Northern Hungary

The paper analyses prosperity in the regions of the Southern Great Plain and Northern Hungary at small region aggregate level in a national comparison. Starting from the results of prosperity economics, first an outline is given of the main dimensions of the theory of small region prosperity. After this theoretical foundation, the prosperity dimensions used in the analysis and their related factors are presented. Finally, a small region level prosperity evaluation of the two regions is presented together with their comparison on a national scale, with special regard to the Southern Great Plain and Northern Hungarian regions. The conclusions are the following: (1) the majority of small regions with relatively high prosperity

is concentrated in Hungary along a north-west – south-east axis and (2) the two analysed regions can be described by significant regional differences in terms of prosperity.

Eszter Siposné Nándori:

Contributions to Exploring the System of Relations between the Performance of the Economy and Poverty

Although there is no comprehensive information available on the social impact of the global crisis going on since October 2008, it is certain that economic decline, decrease in real income, large-scale cuts in jobs and rocketing instalments have made the lives of many people significantly harder. We know even less today about how the crisis and its consequences affect the most exposed groups of the society lacking cultural and economic capital in Hungary. The paper tries to find out to what extent economic decline effect the rate of the poor and the depth of poverty.

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