

Mobility, Transport and Logistics in Modern Cities Program in Hungary

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Abstract With the centralization of Hungarian development policy new type of national development actions have appeared. Such an action is Modern Cities Program, which affects the Hungarian cities with county rights. Thanks to this program these cities will be the winners of the current EU budget cycle in Hungary. The essence of the program is to secure the development of cities with county rights, which is confirmed in a form of a cooperation agreement between the cities and the central government. Though the program does not have any official conceptual documentation, ex ante evaluation or any public project list, we have tried to determine the goals of the program and to gather all of its projects. We found 258 projects, but the costs are estimated only in 28 cases and in 9 cases the content of the projects is really not clear. The government talked about a €10.960 million budget of the program, but we could calculate only €8.944 million. This paper is about the mobility, transport and logistics dimensions of Modern Cities Program, and we would like to give a detailed description of the affected development projects and their impact on cities.

Keywords: • city logistics • city transport • modern city • mobility • Hungary •

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1 Introduction

After 2010 Hungary saw an increase in big national projects as the tools of new centralisation affecting regional governance. The projects also helped the central government organise and coordinate local development projects and distribute most of the resources set aside for them. They are big in terms of significance and effect, and they are national because they have an impact on the whole country. The common features of the projects are:

- they are targeted at local development,
- they shape regional policy,
- the final decisions are made centrally,
- local policymakers are involved to some extent,
- local communities are not involved in decision-making,
- they form an important part of government communication,
- none of the initiatives has a unified documentation, a previous research or an explained concept,
- the efficiency and effect of the programs are not examined,
- implementation is not transparent,
- clear definition and quantification of the programs are insufficient or difficult because of the lack of documentation.

Since 2010, besides smaller actions, some of the significant initiatives have been the following:

- Modern Cities Program,
- stadium building program,
- strategic agreements with large enterprises.

The present study will discuss the results of a research in connection with Modern Cities Program (hereinafter referred to as MCP) focusing on mobility, logistics and transport. MCP with its HUF 3,400-3,500 billion investment (as stated by the government) will definitely have a huge impact on the development of cities with county rights thus indirectly on the Hungarian urban network. A significant amount of the projects is aimed at transport development as all cities are planning such types of improvements. After a short historical introduction,

the paper will examine the budget of MCP and the projects themselves, then finally the mobility, logistics and transport plans of the cities in question.

2 Hungarian urban network and central development efforts

From the point of view of the Hungarian urban network, three main features are worth mentioning. First, Budapest is predominant both economically and institutionally. Second, there is a huge gap between the capital city and the cities belonging to the next category: according to the UN settlement hierarchy, there are no big cities in the countryside and only smaller middle-sized cities exist with a population of 100-200 thousand. Finally, the Hungarian urban network is fragmented: 28% of the Hungarian settlements having a city status cannot be considered cities according to domestic population classification, while according to the UN classification it is true for 83% of them.

Table 1: Classification of Hungarian settlements

Type	Population (in thousands)	Number of cities
Metropolis	1000 –	1
UN big city	500 – 1000	0
UN middle-sized city / Hungarian big city	100 – 500	8
UN town / Hungarian middle-sized city	20 – 100	50
Hungarian town	5 – 20	189
Hungarian village	– 5	98
Total		346

(Source: chart made by the authors based on KSH data)

The unified development of domestic urban network was first introduced after World War II by socialist settlement developers. They claimed that until 1949 the development had been unplanned and spontaneous. Then in the 1950s, the socialist ideology proclaimed that „villages were exploited and in a subordinated situation during capitalism”, that is why the prerequisite of building a socialist society was to abolish the differences between the city and the village (Hajdú 1989).

The most important tool used for settlement network development was socialist industrialisation, and to do so the 609/31/1950 regulation of the Peoples' Economy Council put the settlements into categories. One of the first and most important research tasks of the Territorial Planning Institution was to define which settlements would be improved, and as a result, 75 settlements were put on the list. The population of these places was 1.9 million apart from Budapest (Hajdú 1989), which is almost the same number of residents (1.98 million) involved in MCP now. The Country Settlement Network Development Study Plan was published in 1963 which stated that the focus of development was still the so-called socialist cities (Rechnitzer 2018). Based on this plan in 1971 a new Country Settlement Network Development Concept was developed which gave priority to the development of regional centres, a fact being important from the point of view of MCP. It also selected 23 advanced centres which almost match with the cities of MCP (excluding Baja and including Érd).

The difficulty of urban network and regional public administration was also studied by Bibó (1975): "it goes without saying that the regional division of public administration and urban network development are parallel, mostly the former aligning with the later". This idea of Bibó backs up the concept of MCP which says that urban network development comes first and the regional system is in life with it, where cities are the centres or frames of development. An important element of the regional system is the intermediate level, the county, about which Bibó says that "it easily confronts cities wanting to make them subordinated". It can especially true for cities with county rights as their relation to the counties is still not clear. One only needs to consider that MCP will partly be financed by county Regional Operational Programs.

After the change of the regime (1989) urban network development was again „haphazard and spontaneous” (Szepesi 2008; Pirisi 2008; Szabó 2016). Local administrations were independent to a great extent and city rights were granted in large numbers resulting in the numbers already shown in Table 1. We presume that there were three key elements contributing to the development and success of cities for two decades after 1989. The first one was the attitude and professionalism of city leaders and the institutional system in a broader sense, the second one was the advantages resulting from the location and accessibility of the city, and the last one was a clever choice of developmental path (for how the developmental paths of transition evolved see Lux 2017). While the large

investments of MCP do not affect the first element (though in case of Érd the development of the institutional system is of significant importance), the second element is a priority as each city with county rights must be reached on a highway. Regarding the development path, the picture is mixed: there are places where they strongly rely on the existing traditions (dependency on roads), while in other places they are trying to establish new industries (creation of roads).

A new phase of urban development started in the first decade of the new century due to a reorganised and strengthening regional development. One of the first and most important documents of this new institutional system managing territorial planning was the National Territorial Development Concept (NTDC) in 2005. One of its main principles was the development of cities and villages (OTK, 2005), and the first overall aim was to boost regional competitiveness based on strengthening central regions, so-called development hubs. Among medium-term objectives the second one was again “to support the development hubs energizing the regions and to improve urban networking”. EU accession meant not only the localization of the planning system but the adoption of approaches and specific policy documents as well. For example, the Leipzig Charter (2007) states that urban development should be dealt with at the national level and countries take responsibility for the implementation of sustainability principles and integrated developmental tools, ensuring balanced territorial development. Several MCP projects promote the principle of sustainability (i.e. electric buses), and balanced territorial development is underpinned by unified government requirements which “modern” cities have to satisfy.

EU accession had an impact not only on planning but on financing as well: urban development gained momentum due to EU, or to be more precise, co-financed resources. From this point of view one of the most important elements of the first complete EU budgetary cycle (2007-2013) was the formulation and implementation of Integrated Urban Development Strategies (IUDS) by more than 100 settlements in 2007 (Kukely 2015). According to Barta (2009) “the public opinion about these strategies is that the renewal of urban development has not been started yet because of different reasons”. One of them is that “the fundamentally new urban development approach” had to be applied within half a year: the Hungarian handbook came out in October 2007, and if applicants wanted to submit IUDS tenders next summer, which was the deadline, they had to develop their strategy in such a short time. This kind of hurry and quick implementation is also characteristic of MCP. The other reason for failure might

be that a basic idea of IUDS is the promotion of grassroots initiatives. This approach is present in MCP, too, as there were wish lists compiled by local leaders who later discussed them with the Prime Minister.

Tenders or programs aimed directly at city or urban network development are strongly connected to the EU accession. One of the first initiatives was the Regional Operational Program (ROP) in 2004-2006 giving almost €80 million to city rehabilitation (Baráth-Szépvolgyi 2006). In the period of 2007-2013 there were seven ROPs prioritizing regional and sub-regional development and city rehabilitation. These programs were targeted at cities and realised €1.4 billion investment (ÁSZ 2015). For the 2014-2020 period the main resource of urban development is Territorial and Settlement Development Program (TSDP), in which priority 2 (Business-friendly settlement development, maintaining the population), 6 (Sustainable development of cities with county rights) and 7 (Local developments managed at community level) have a direct impact on cities with their €1.87 billion budget (TOP 2018).

Finally having a look at the neighbouring countries it can be said that the picture is also mixed if we look for unified national urban policies. Out of 35 OECD members only 15 have an explicit national urban policy, and 5 of them are only in the program planning phase (OECD 2017). Poland accepted a document called National Urban Policy 2023 at the end of 2015. It gives a framework and sets directions at all developmental levels defining five priorities and ten thematic fields (i.e. community involvement, transport and mobility, investment policy) which must be present in local initiatives and development programs. The Check Republic in 2010 also adopted a document called Basic Principles of Urban Policy. It sets six principles (i.e. close involvement of stakeholders or regional approach to urban policy, namely the improvement of city countryside relations), and serves as a guidance on coordinating urban development actions of different sectors and regional governance levels (OECD 2017). In Slovakia, they were planning an urban development policy in 2017 involving a wide range of stakeholders into the preparation. Slovenia doesn't have an explicit urban development document, but the topic is present in and forms an important part of the Slovene Territorial Development Strategy. Out of the eight priorities three of them specifically apply to cities. Finally, Austria also doesn't have an independent urban policy, but the development of urban areas and

agglomeration policy are included in the Austrian Regional Development Concept (OREK 2011; OECD 2017).

3 Modern cities program

MCP has started another chapter in Hungarian urban policy and its effects on mobility are worth studying. MCP is targeted at cities with county rights which form a special group within the Hungarian settlement network. These cities are the most important hubs in the countryside – most of them are county centres as well – and have comparable rights with counties. All Hungarian rural cities having a population over 50,000 are cities with county rights, and the 21 biggest rural cities are also cities with county rights, only Salgótarján and Szekszárd do not belong to the biggest cities.

The program was launched on 15 March 2015 by Prime Minister Viktor Orbán in Sopron (Merényi 2017), and after that, he visited all the cities concerned, the last one on 26 May 2017. According to the government communication, the essence of the program is to determine the development priorities for cities with county rights for the next 4-7 years, sanctioned by a cooperation agreement between the Hungarian Government and the cities. Neither the starting, nor the finishing dates have been published, but participants mention the years 2019-2022 concerning the implementation of MCP projects.

But what does a modern city look like according to the central government? “For us, Hungarians the modern city means that it is Hungarian, formulated by Hungarian temper and way of thinking. It means a cosy, homey community and a safe environment offering employment opportunities and improving living standards. It means a place where people can find everything locally and feel themselves valued, where the streets, squares and buildings are becoming nicer and full of life” (Orbán 2015). There is no more detailed explanation available, but press briefings might offer some more specifics about modern cities:

- they are included in the highway system,
- they represent a high standard in all regional operational functions, and these functions are complete (transport, industrial and trade infrastructure, public utility and public functions, education, health care, recreation, tourism),

- they have developed public transport (i.e. electric buses, intermodal public transport centres where train and bus stations are in one place),
- they have a suitable area for investors,
- they have a special, local feature (i.e. cultural, natural heritage)

It is obvious that out of the five specifics two of them are closely related to transport. Although MCP does not have precise objectives the projects which have been chosen are based on the development ideas of the cities which are parts of their evolving development concepts (i.e. New Phoenix Plan of Debrecen). From 2014 the development concepts of cities are laid down in the Integrated Urban Development Strategies (IUDS), and there are approximately 180 of them (Kukely 2015). IUDSs give an analysis of the situation and set middle-term objectives as well as declare action fields accompanied by an itemised list of development projects. These projects strongly build on previous development ideas, mainly on Integrated Urban Development Strategies from 2007, and usually, after a very basic social debate (including a local public forum and downloadability of documents), they are accepted by the local administration assembly. The projects of MCP are also present in previous plans and we will discuss them under the heading about the projects.

3.1 Budget

There are 258 projects in MCP. The costs have been estimated in 28 cases and there are 9 cases when even the contents of the projects are not clear. So the data are only partly suitable for analysis. Besides, the sources of the budget are not published, thus we do not know if the money comes from the EU, or the central or local government. Table 2 shows that we identified €8,944 million; however, the government communicated €10,960 million as the budget of the program (Csepregy 2017). The reason for the difference is that the data are not public.

However, as Undersecretary Mr Csepregy stated 60% of MCP budget comes from EU sources (Weinhardt 2017). It is clear that the EU-based support per capita of the cities with county rights will be prominent. It is also obvious that in the current period the winners of the Hungarian settlement network will be these cities. However, there is no assessment study on the impacts of these developments on the Hungarian urban network.

Table 2 Modern Cities Program: Distribution of the investments by settlements

City	Population (in thousands, 2015)	Budget (M €)	Narrow budget* (M €)	Investment per capita* (€/capita)
Békéscsaba	60334	1332.0	242.0	806.7
Debrecen	203506	154.3	154.3	514.4
Dunaújváros	46052	125.3	125.3	417.8
Eger	54609	138,7	69.3	231.1
Érd	63993	136,7	136.7	455.6
Győr	129372	305,0	221.7	738.9
Hódmezővásárhely	44795	142,7	69.3	231.1
Kaposvár	63742	508,0	158.7	528.9
Kecskemét	111836	534,7	191.0	636.7
Miskolc	159554	633,0	133.0	443.3
Nagykanizsa	48241	185,3	114.3	381.1
Nyíregyháza	118125	183,0	123.0	410.0
Pécs	145985	880,7	118.3	394.4
Sajógótarján	35811	357.0	190.3	634.4
Sopron	61780	396.3	29.7	98.9
Szeged	162593	355.3	187.3	624.4
Szekszárd	33032	121.3	121.3	404.4
Székesfehérvár	98673	244.0	244.0	813.3
Szolnok	72786	437.3	37.3	124.4
Szombathely	77866	439.3	106.0	353.3
Tatabánya	66791	186.7	186.7	622.2
Veszprém	60761	192.7	192.7	642.2
Zalaegerszeg	58959	954.7	114.7	382.2
Total	1979196	8944.0	3 267.0	473.5

Source: made by the authors

(*without highways and railroads)

The overweight of transport projects is significant not only in quantity (30.2%) but more in the budget (73.5%), which is due to highway and railroad developments of the program. €5.68 billion will be spent on highways and railroads from the total transportation development budget (€6.57 billion). Even if we do not calculate these investments, €890 million remains on transportation development, which is yet the highest amount among the sectors. What is interesting is that the healthcare budget is very small (only 1.2%). The first reason for it is the former significant hospital development investments, which affected

typically the cities with county rights. The second reason is that the government pushed healthcare into the background.

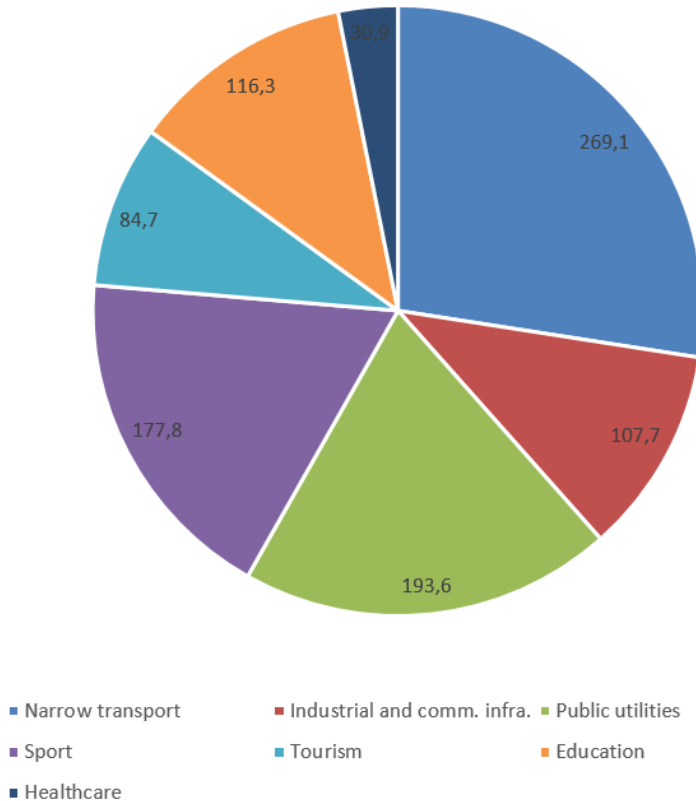


Figure 1: Planned MCP budget by sectors; Source: made by the authors.

Due to the big differences, the distribution of the total budget between the cities and regions cannot be interpreted. In the case of the narrow budget, we can see that Békéscsaba and Győr got the highest amount of money per capita, and Sopron got the least. The latter was the first visited city so in that time they did not know they could ask for more grants. The biggest sum exceeds the lowest one 8.2 times. In Figure 2 the size of the circles shows how big the budget is and the darkening colours show how the budget per capita is growing.

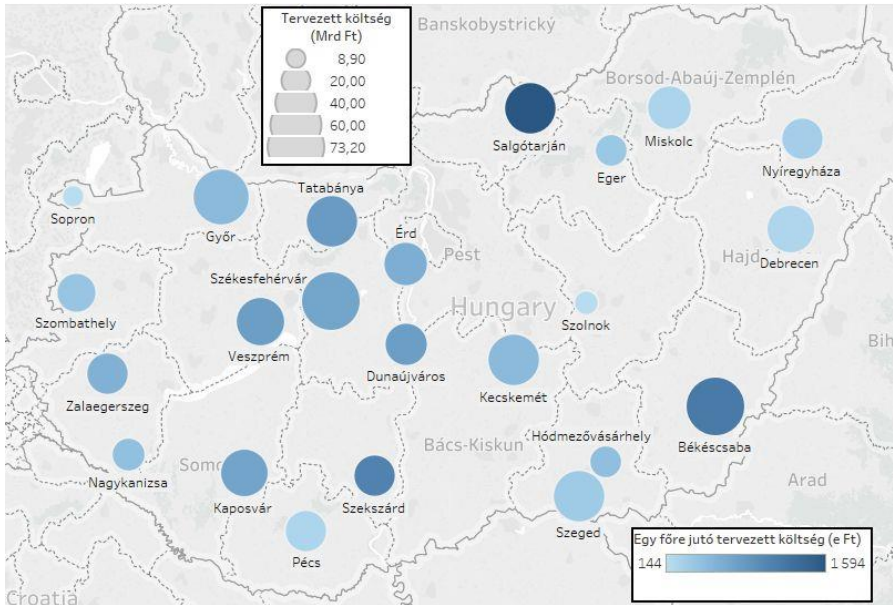


Figure 2: Territorial distribution of the planned MCP budget; Source: made by the authors.

3.2 Projects

We can get more information from examining the development projects. We could identify 258 projects from different sources. Typical projects are the development of – often intermodal - transport centres, formation of industrial areas, refurbishment of theatres, building sports centres and hotels, as well as expansion or renewal of secondary, typically vocational schools.

The city of Békéscsaba focuses on the food and printing industry but the most significant development will be the new highway to the city, which project covers 12 per cent of the whole MCP budget. In addition, the city would like to build a new railway station, which is a great investment, too (over €100 million), and the city wants to upgrade the extant airport to an intermodal centre. Still from the transport sector, there is the expansion of bicycle routes, which affects the whole city.

The city of Debrecen wants to spend a lot of money on innovation (€17 M, details are not clear), but the largest project is, of course, a transport project: there are plans to build a new railway station (€70 M). The development of the existing

and well-used airport, which is the second biggest airport in Hungary, is also on the list here.

The biggest investment in the city of Dunaújváros is the logistics centre, which has been planned for decades, and it has appeared in every development plan since 1999. This plan consists of an intermodal logistics centre and a large storage base. In addition, the city wants to procure electric buses, which would contribute to the decrease of the significant air pollution of the city. There are two further mobility projects here: the development of traffic nodes and a large-scale road rehabilitation.

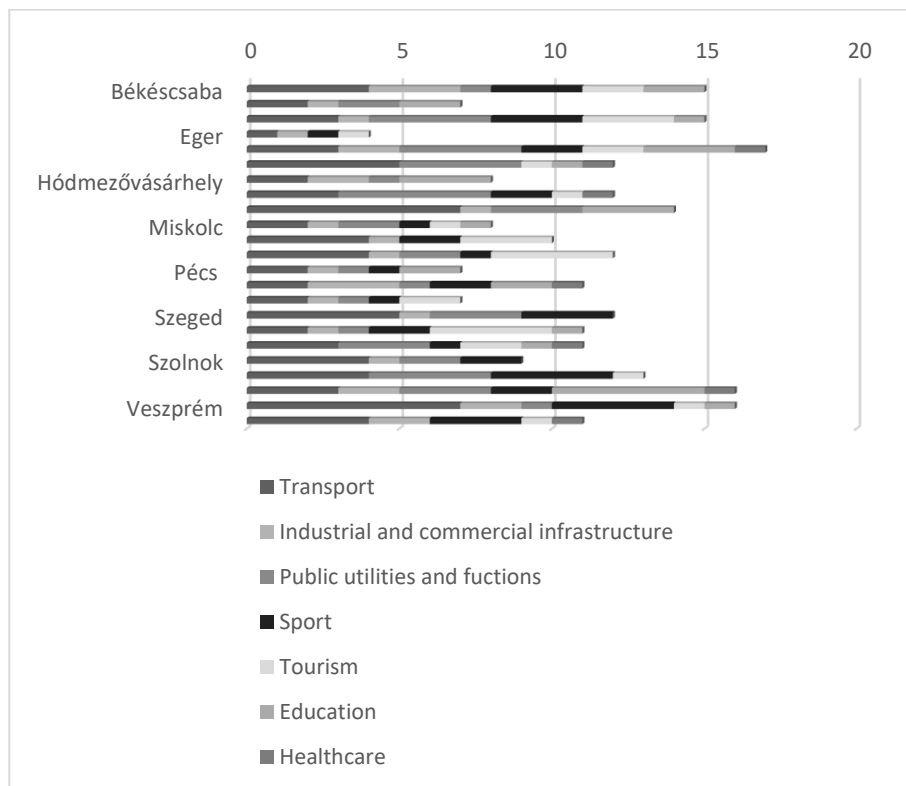


Figure 3: MCP projects by sectors; Source: made by the authors.

The city of Eger focuses firstly on the historical castle, which is the base of the remarkable tourism of the settlement. Only one project concerns mobility (it has to be noted that Eger has the fewest projects: only four), which is exactly as big

as the other three projects. This project is the building a four-lane priority road from the M3 highway (€70 M).

The city of Érd wants to compensate for its missing functions as a regional centre (e.g. police-office, prosecutor-office, and courthouse). There are mobility projects, too: a 14km-long bicycle road, a road rehabilitation package and procurement of buses. In this city, transport projects are small in size and significance, too.

The city of Győr wants to develop further their cultural capacities connected to the European Capital of Culture application, but out of its 12 projects five of them are mobility projects. They want to construct the western bypass road and connected to this, a new Danube bridge is being planned. The third project is the Hungarian part of the Győr-Dunaszerdahely priority road, connecting the two settlements. The last two projects belong to urban development: extension of the bicycle road network and formation of an intermodal public transport centre, which means the modernisation and transformation of the railway station of this city.

The city of Hódmezővásárhely – besides the tramtrain – would like to invest in bicycle roads and a solar power plant. The tramtrain would go to the county centre, Szeged, and the bicycle roads would be 117 km long.

In the case of the city of Kaposvár the main priorities are sport and healthcare, but the fifth largest project of MCP can be found here: the transformation of road 67 into a four-lane highway reaching to highway M7, costing €350 M. Besides this project, the construction of the city's public transport centre and of a new bus premise with purchasing electric buses are also on the list.

In the city of Kecskemét there is a €83 M development fund (details are not clear), and a railroad development project as the most significant items. 7 out of the 14 projects are connected to mobility. As it can be seen in the case of Győr, Kecskemét also emphasizes the bypass routes and the two four-lane roads to highway M5. The largest project is the development of the suburban railroad which helps to reach Budapest more easily. The building of a new P+R parking system and the renovation of the railway station are connected to the previous project. Finally, the city wants to transform the former military airport, mainly to satisfy the transit demand of Mercedes factory.

The projects of Miskolc are very diverse, but the Hungarian part of the Miskolc-Kassa highway far overtops as regards the budget (€500 M). In addition, there is a project titled “Public Transport Development” (€30 M), the details of which are not known but it may concern bus transport.

The city of Nagykanizsa focuses more on sport and tourism, because there is only a 38-km long bicycle road relates to mobility within the city. But outside the city all of the three projects relate to mobility: the construction of a four-lane road from highway M7, and two bypass roads.

The city of Nyíregyháza has significant projects within public transport, industrial infrastructure, sport and tourism sectors, too but the largest project is a bypass road again. Besides this project, the development of the bus fleet, the building of the Nyíregyháza-Tokaj bicycle route, and the establishing of the intermodal transport centre concern mobility.

The city of Pécs spends the essential part of its narrow budget (80%, €95 M) on the development of the university – the investments will affect all faculties of the university (PTE, 2017). On the full list, however, there is the second largest project of the whole MCP, the western arm of highway M6 from Pécs to Barcs (€600 M) and the extension of highway M6 to the southern border.

In Salgótarján the second largest item (€73 M) is a so-called Regional Development Plan (details are unknown), and the largest item is, of course, a transport project: connecting the city to the highway network (€167 M). In addition, there is one more mobility project: the renovation of the bus station.

The high priority in Sopron is tourism (e.g. building a new hotel), but the largest project relates to transport: the extension of the highway to the border (€333 M) and another four-lane road (€33 M).

The city of Szeged particularly wants to develop its public transport and sports institutions. The tramtrain represents public transport development, which is the continuation of tramtrain of Hódmezővásárhely to the direction of Makó. In addition, the city wants to build a new vehicular, a new railroad, and a new pedestrian bridge in the next years. And finally, the development of the airport could not be left out of the list.

In Szekszárd the largest investment will be the new district-heating system, which is a unique project in MCP. Transport is represented by three smaller projects: the development of the road network of the wine region, the expansion of the port, and the expansion of the dinkey line with an 8 km long part.

The program of Székesfehérvár is balanced: they want to implement a significant project in the field of transport, tourism, education, and culture, too. The city has a smaller airport and they want to develop it. In addition, a new parking house will be built, but its location is still unknown.

In Szolnok besides transport investments we should emphasize the development of the beach and swimming pool. Transport investments include the development of the port, the construction of a four-lane road connecting to the highway network (€200 M), the building of the northern bypass road (€200 M), and a sidewalk and road renovation package, which affects the whole city.

In the city of Szombathely sport and tourism are top priorities after transportation. The city wants to broaden the highway road (€200 M), establish a four-lane road (€133 M), and rehouse the bus station.

In Tatabánya three projects represent mobility. They want to connect the bus and the railroad station, so the plan is to establish an intermodal public transport centre. The second project is to renovate the city's road network, and the third project is to modernize the bus fleet.

The city of Veszprém has made a balanced list with a lot of projects: 7 out of the 16 projects concern mobility. It includes clarification of the ownership of the airport and then its development, construction of a new viaduct, road buildings all over the city, building new bicycle roads (30 km) and a new bypass road, and the establishment of a new intermodal transport centre, which is the largest mobility project in Veszprém (€20 M).

Finally, Zalaegerszeg focuses on sport, healthcare and tourism, but, of course, it has two huge and two smaller mobility projects as well: building a new highway (€500 M) and a four-lane road (€370 M), establishing a new intermodal transport centre, and building a new 4-km long railway to the industrial park.

In the field of establishing industrial parks there is a new element in Hungarian economic development: a group of companies called National Industrial Park Management and Development Ltd. This government-owned company establishes industrial parks mainly in cities with county rights under the brand Inpark. The company was founded in December 2015, and in June 2016 the central government decided about the implementation of the national industrial park conception. The total value of the investments connected to the development of the industrial park network is about €500-650 M, which is the largest real estate project in Europe in this field (Inpark, 2017). According to the Government resolution (1268/2016.VI.7.), the tasks of the new company are the planning and implementation of industrial parks of MCP and the planning, implementation and management of intermodal centres.

4 Conclusion

One of the questions is whether the developments of MCP are a new development path for the cities concerned. Because the coherence of the projects is fairly weak, a characteristic development path cannot be determined in every case. Generally speaking, the cities are going into the already successful direction (e.g. cultural and university developments in Győr) or they are building on extant potentials (e.g. Munkácsy-district in Békéscsaba, Clerical Fields in Érd, Mindszenty place of pilgrimage in Zalaegerszeg). The latter are characteristically tourism projects. On the whole, we cannot speak about significantly new development paths, only about the correction of the former development paths, e.g. strengthening tourism or education.

Basically it is a good result to have such a program, which tries to develop the rural centres of Hungary. The (not clearly described) aims of MCP can be acceptable, too. But we have to notice some risks regarding the implementation of the program:

- a lot of projects do not have an accurate content,
- most of the projects are overpriced (mostly with 50-100%),
- the whole program is absolutely not transparent,
- the overall budget of the program reaches 9% of the Hungarian GDP (in 2017), so it is a huge expenditure,
- unbalanced development of the cities: smaller towns are pushed into the background.

Social acceptance of the projects is good: firstly, the members of a community are glad for new developments, secondly, many of the MCP projects are not without precedent, but they reflect some local demand. Among the projects concerning mobility, logistics and transport some of them are returning ones, like four-lane roads, intermodal public transport centres, bypass roads, or modernising bus fleets.

On the whole, it can be claimed that MCP is a new tool for city development but Hungary still does not have a unified urban policy, and urban network development is still not well-established or balanced. What is more, the implementation of MCP can have a positive effect on regional centres, especially if the government will be open for the proposals of professionals. It can also be seen that mobility, logistics and transport are the strongest parts of the program regarding both the budget and the number of projects. These transport investments will determine the image of the most significant Hungarian cities for the next decades.

Acknowledgements

This paper was supported by the TÉT_16-1-2016-0053 Hungarian and Slovenian cooperative research and development project. The results of the study were presented at 12th International Conference of Logistics in agriculture in Novo mesto, Slovenia.

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