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**The role of spatiality and locality in the job keeping skills of the
underprivileged people living in peripheral areas**

Thesis of the PhD dissertation

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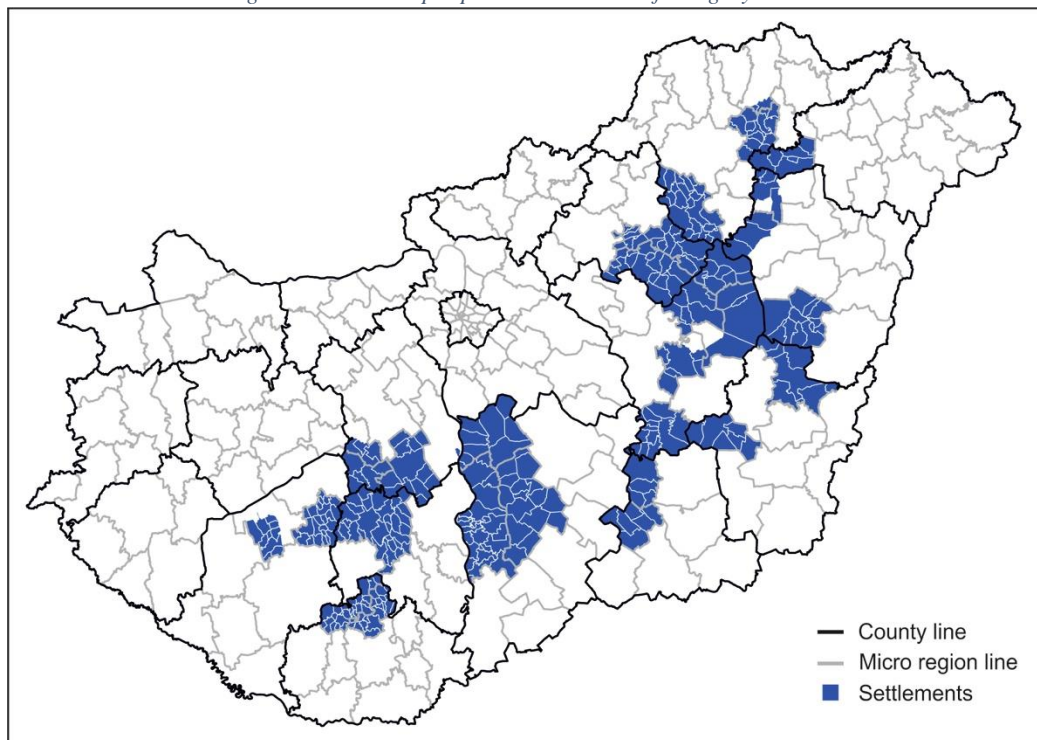
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I. Justification of the research topic, literary review

The difficulties of underprivileged people finding employment in the labour market are a common research topic in Hungary. This social group is overrepresented in the peripheral areas, so the unemployment rate in these areas is much higher than the national average (ALPEK B. L.-TÉSITS R. 2017A, TÍMÁR J. et al. 2015). It is no coincidence, since the forced industrialization of socialism and the deliberate redevelopment of the border regions played a significant role in the emergence of regional differences in Hungary (SZABÓ B. 2005). Due to the settlement development programs of the 1960s and 1970s, a strong correlation emerged between the size and the level of development of Hungarian settlements (ALPEK B. L.-TÉSITS R. 2017C), therefore the poverty concentrated in the small villages of the peripheral areas (BAJMÓCY P.-ILCSIKNÉ MAKRA ZS. 2018). As a result, these settlements are nowadays characterized by demographic (BAJMÓCY P.-BOROS L. 2005) and social processes that are contrary to the national trends. Such tendencies are the growing population and increasing distance from the labour market.

In the middle of the 20th century, the economy of villages was converted into socialist mass production by collectivisation, which ended with the collapse of socialism and the loss of eastern markets (SÜLI-ZAKAR 1997). After the regime change, job opportunities in the villages of inner peripheries fell below the average (SZABÓ B. 2005, SIPTÁR D. et al. 2016), as a result, the demand for underqualified labour force decreased suddenly and massively (KERTESI G.-KÖLLŐ J. 2001).

Figure 1. – Internal peripheral settlements of Hungary



Source: based on VERES (2004) edited by DR. GÁBOR DUDÁS and ÁDÁM ROZGONYI-HORVÁTH

The income of families living in settlements with unfavourable regional conditions and transport infrastructure decreased considerably (BRADBURY, B.-JANTTI, M. 1999), which led to

a dramatical accretion in poverty since the 1990s (MAGYARI N. L. et al. 2001, LADÁNYI J. 2001, MITEV, P. L. et al. 2001). Instead of unemployment, masses fled to low, but steady income inactivity afforded by early retirement and disability pensions (PÉNZES J. 2010). Thus, groups previously integrated into social community were excluded from the society (KERTESI G. 2000A). Its impact still affects all areas of their life, such as education, income, job opportunities, safety and health (SAMMAN, E.-SANTOS, M. E. 2013, RAPHAEL, D. 2002). Nevertheless, without higher education (UNICEF 2007), the children of this population only inherit and reproduce (EMIGH, R. J. et al. 2001, NAGY E. et al. 2015A) the poverty and social situation of their parents (LISKÓ I. 2001).

By the mid-1990-s, with the closure of major industrial facilities, the spatial structure of Hungary changed and the appearance of external and internal peripheral areas became widespread (PÉNZES J. 2010, SÜLI-ZAKAR I.-LENKEY G. 2014). The spatial concentrations of disadvantaged settlements emerged mainly in north-eastern and south-western Hungary (KULCSÁR L. et al. 2011), in the periphery of border areas and in the inner peripheries (PÉNZES J. et al. 2018A, KISS J. P.-SZALKAI G. 2018, PÁSZTOR I. Z.-PÉNZES J. 2012, TÁTRAI P. 2014, KOÓS B. 2015B). The wealthier segment of the population of these areas moved to nearby cities or to Budapest for higher living and employment opportunities, who were replaced by a sizable proportion of underprivileged (VASÁRUS 2016), mostly Roma population in peripheral small villages and outskirts of cities (BAJMÓCY P. et al. 2018) through selective migration (PÉNZES et al. 2018A). Thus, in addition to the low level of education and discrimination in labour market, the employment chances of Roma people were even more reduced by regional disadvantages (KOC SIS K.-KOVÁCS Z. 1999, KERTESI G. 2000A, ÁBRAHÁM Á.-KERTESI G. 1996, NAGY E. et al. 2015A). As a result of this process, isolated villages (PÉNZES J. et al. 2018A) and urban segregated areas were formed (NAGY GY. 2012).

The combined spatial effect of the impoverishment and segregation (JANEVIC, T. et al. 2010, KÓSA Zs. et al. 2007, LADÁNYI J.-SZELÉNYI I. 2001) result in norms and practices which are totally different from the values of majority society (VIRÁG T. 2009). Therefore, in addition to the difficult living conditions, poverty creates a particular culture which differs completely from the culture of the middle-class. This is the culture of poverty (LEWIS, O. 1966), which can help poor people survive everyday life, but simultaneously hinder them from escaping from the circumstances of poverty. Therefore, the poor conditions persist for a long time and not even the children can escape from this situation, thus generational poverty develops (STENNING, A. 2005). Those who are socialized according to the values of poverty culture have community awareness, but because this culture is contrary to the values of the culture accepted by the majority of society (GECKOVÁ, M. A. et al. 2014), their socialization values exclude them from the greater part of the population. The poverty culture has similar characteristics in family structure, relationships, relation to time, values and consumption patterns, regardless of area, region, settlement type, countries and continents. Accordingly, people living in poverty develop similar adaptation strategies to their problems.

Inherited traits during socialization take a significant part in the persistence of the subculture of people living in peripheral areas. The chances of integration of families living in segregated areas into the majority society are very narrow due to completely different norms and value system. Among these families, necessary financial resources for their children's development are typically lacking, therefore the physical, intellectual and emotional

development of these young people is severely deficient. Nowadays, the second generation is growing up in a socialization environment that is geared to survive the conditions of extreme poverty. Most of these families rely on social supports and different transfer incomes (VÁRADI M. 2014), which allow them a living standard below the poverty line.

The change of attitude of social and employment policy in the 2010s (KOÓS B. 2016) led to the current system, which makes the payments of benefits conditional upon the acceptance of an offered – in most of cases public works programme related – job (TÍMÁR J. et al. 2015), so the government trying to provide their livelihood through work. However, the local conditions of the small villages in the periphery are well illustrated by the fact that most mayors use employment in the public works programme as a disciplinary tool. Therefore, a good relationship with the local representatives is essential for daily prosperity of those living in these villages (NAGY E. et al. 2015B), since beside the social supports and works on the alternative labour market, the public works programme coordinated by the local government can provide income for them. In turn, the public works programme produced many counterproductive results: it reduces the chance of employment in the primary labour market (CSERES G. ZS.-MOLNÁR GY. 2014B, BAKÓ T. et al. 2014), because by providing workers an income lower than the minimum wage, but more predictable and higher than the social support, it weakens the willingness to seek employment (KOLTAI L. 2014). Public works programme does not stimulate work performance, so does not motivate employees to work. Therefore, it does not prepare them for the primary labour market conditions (VÁRADI M. 2010), nor can promote the social mobility (TÓTH J. et al. 2017). As a result, the public works programme cannot achieve its reintegrational objective (VELKEY G. 2014B), as it does not improve participants' employment prospects (KÖLLŐ J.-SCHARLE Á. 2011, FAZEKAS K.-SCHARLE Á. 2012).

In the light of the above, besides the socialization differences, regional disadvantages and local conditions make the social and primary labour market inclusion of underprivileged people even more difficult. Transport difficulties in peripheral areas further preserve geographical segregation, contributing to the persistence of intra-regional and inter-regional disparities (KERTESI G.-KÖLLŐ J. 1998, TÉSITS R.-KERESZTES L. L. 2008). Thus, at the lower levels of the settlement hierarchy, often only the secondary labour market positions operated by the state are available (KOVÁCS Z. et al. 2015A).

In the dissertation I illustrate the labour market connections of these underprivileged people living in geographically isolated and peripheral areas in terms of spatial, social and economic aspects.

II. Research objectives

The aim of the study was to examine the regional characteristics that have the greatest impact on the labour market participation of people living in peripheral areas, and to explore the interaction of these characteristics with the local customs of the poverty culture. Therefore, I researched the personal factors characterizing underprivileged people living in peripheral areas based on their role in the labour market and what local and regional features affect the labour market integration of people living in such areas.

Accordingly, the objective of the research was to uncover traits that mostly affect employability and job keeping skills of people living in peripheral areas, and to examine how these factors relate to the poverty culture presented by the case studies of Oscar Lewis (LEWIS, O. 1959, 1965, 1966, 2000).

While researching this topic, I studied the effect of school attainment on the primary labour market participation of people living in peripheral areas, and I examined whether the job keeping skills of underprivileged people living in such areas depend on the local features of the settlement or residential segregation. The further aim of the research was to test the concept of culture of poverty in the population living in peripheral areas, by quantifying certain elements¹ of the qualitative research described by Oscar Lewis (1959).

By and large, the overall aim of the dissertation is to present the disadvantages of people living in peripheral areas in obtaining and retaining a job solely because they live in a territorially and economically lagging region.

III. Research areas

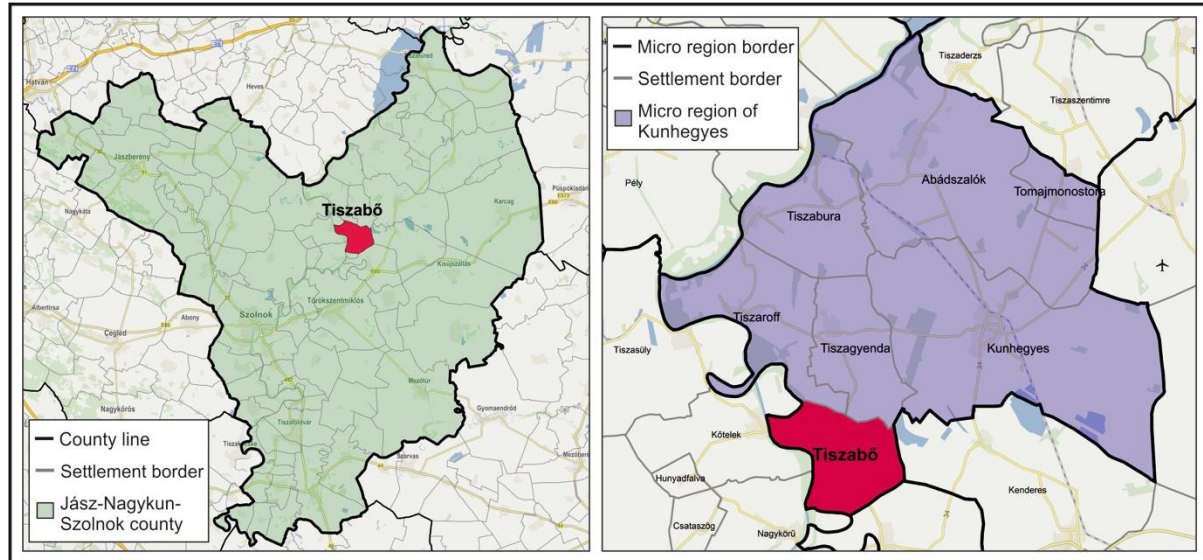
In the selection of research areas there were fundamental aspect that both settlement should be the most backward settlement within the related area and be peripherally located in terms of geographical viewpoint. Accordingly, from a regional perspective, areas were selected where the most disadvantaged people live based on economic and social conditions. In addition, from regional aspect, it was a key criterion that both research areas belong to the same geographical, economical and administrative area. I was looking for areas and settlements appearing at two different levels of the settlement hierarchy. Therefore, the selected settlement can represent the rural and central parts of the same territorial unit at regional and county level. Thus, the presentation of the two areas provides an opportunity to discover and compare the characteristics of a rural periphery and an urban periphery.

The answer to the questions and the labour market characteristics of the peripheral areas are presented on the one hand by the example of Tiszabő village, which is able to represent the labour market opportunities of underprivileged people living in rural periphery. Since the

¹ Because the research of Oscar Lewis used qualitative tools to explore the characteristics of poverty culture, the questions needed to investigate these features had to be adapted to the quantitative methods used in my research. Of course, this was not possible for all attributes, so I investigated the presence of poverty culture using tree fundamental and quantifiable traits: integration into work environment; adapting to the time frame; the length of the future planning period. The different methods used in the two studies did not affect the concept of poverty culture.

village is located on the inner periphery of Central Tisza Region and it became the poorest settlement in Hungary (RUDOLFNÉ KATONA M. 2015) in the 2010s several times, most recently in 2014.

Figure 2. – Location of Tiszabő in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county and in the micro region of Kunhegyes



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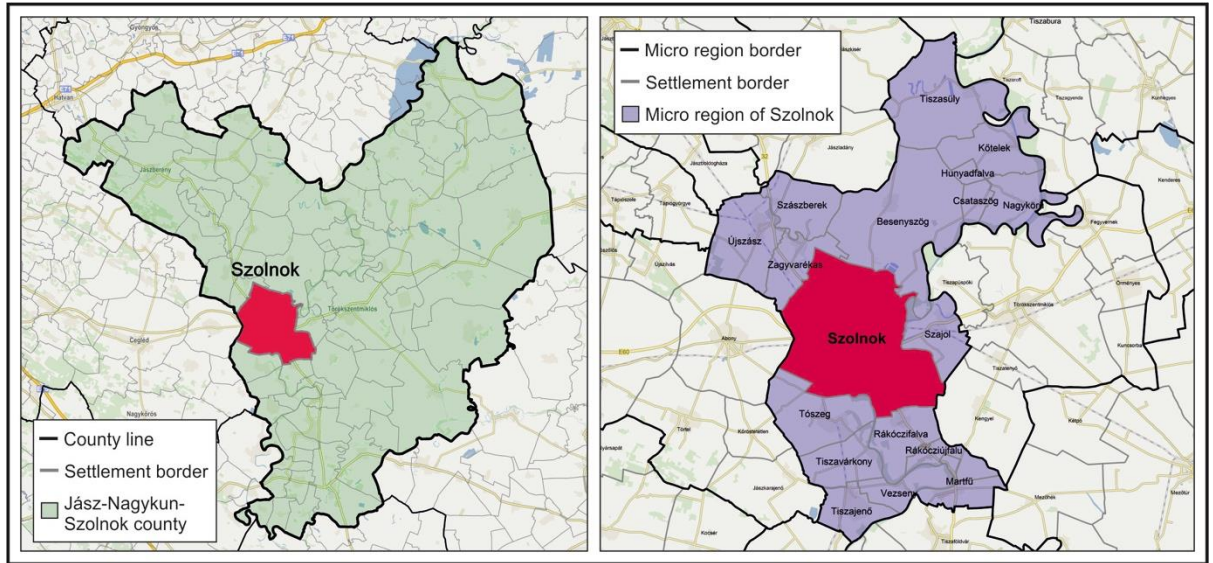
Picture 1. – Courtyard of a house in Tiszabő



Made by DÓRA MITRIK

I chose the segregated area of Törteli Road in Szolnok as a sample of periphery near the centre, which is located within the city of Szolnok, therefore it is centrally located at regional and county level, nevertheless, it is situated at a peripheral area of the city. The area has all the features that characterize the peripheral territories.

Figure 3. – Location of Szolnok in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county and in the micro region of Szolnok



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Figure 4. – The location and satellite picture of the segregated area of Törteli Road, 2016



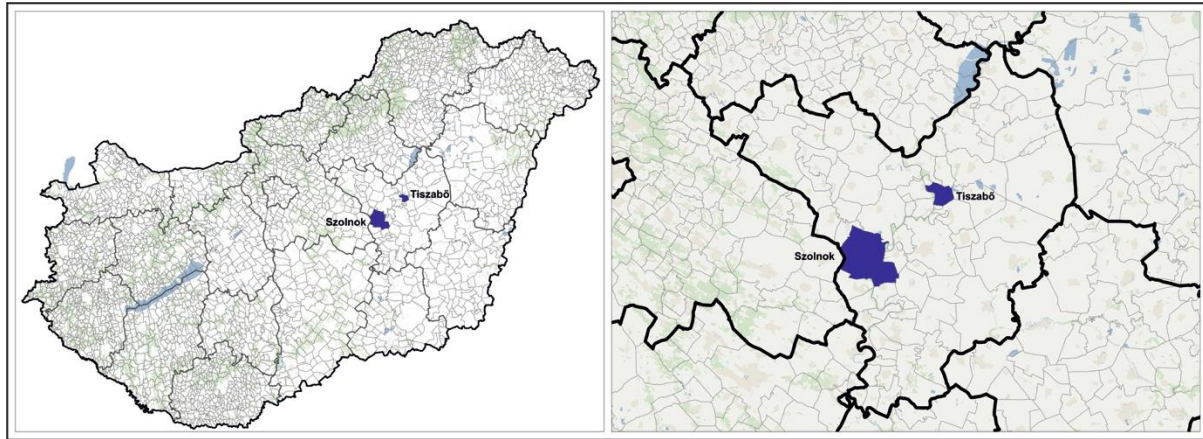
Source: MAPS.GOOGLE.HU, edited by DR. GÁBOR DUDÁS és ÁDÁM ROZGONYI-HORVÁTH

Picture 2. – View of the row of houses „A” in the segregated area of Törteli Road



Source: own picture

Figure 5. – Locations of the research areas in Hungary and in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county



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IV. Methodology

1. Conceptual definitions

For the interpretation of the peripheral areas, I used the definition of MARGARITA SCHMIDT (2007), who describes them in rural areas and parts of urban settlements that have separated from the central core area, and due to their marginalization, people living there are characterized by low levels of social participation (such as lack of employment in the primary labour market), low satisfaction of basic needs and informal dependencies. The characteristics of such areas are lack of integration, spatial, economic and social isolation, weak innovation potential and the mutually reinforcing effect of the spatial accumulation of these disadvantages (SCHMIDT, M. 2007 cites: NAGY E. et al. 2015A).

Slums were interpreted as defined by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office. Accordingly, segregated areas are those, where the proportion within the active population with at least primary education and with no regular working income is higher than 50% (RÁCZ A. 2014).

The basic unit of my research was household and I defined it as the people who – regardless of their kinship – live in the same house or apartment, and those who also form an income and consumer community (SMF 2006).

Throughout the research, I used the concept of disadvantage in relation with labour market status, and in territorial, social and socio-cultural sense. Social scientists generally describe the disadvantage with the existence of unfavourable economic factors. Underprivileged people typically have low incomes, most or all of which come from social supports, pensions, or income from the secondary, alternative labour market (such as the public works programme), and casual work.

While the labour market approach of the European Community Commission (EUR-LEX 2008) is valid for persons living in the researched areas, during the study of the topic, I conceptualized deprivation in terms of living conditions and quality of life.

Based on these interpretations, it may well be argued that the persons in the research sample can be said to be disadvantaged and underprivileged both in relation to labour market status and in social terms.

2. *Sampling methods*

In the selection of households, I used probability sampling in both research areas, which allowed each household to have the same chance of being included in the sample.

In the case of Tiszabő, the survey used *a territorially proportionate, systematic sampling*, prepared based on the layout and building stock of the village. Accordingly, I selected every fourth element of the housing stock of Tiszabő into the research sample.

In the case of the segregated area of Törteli Road in Szolnok, representativeness was ensured by *including each and every household into the sample*, only limited by the willingness to participate in the survey.

3. *Data collection methods*

In the selection of data collection methods, I took into account the experiences of my previous research in the research areas, therefore, because of the precise interpretation of the questions, the *structured questionnaires* were completed with the help of the interviewers. Besides that, informal conversations and *unstructured interviews* also emerged during the completion of the questionnaires, that provided additional qualitative data for the research. Most of these communications focused on the local and nearby primary and secondary labour market situation, political relations and earning opportunities. This provided an understanding of the local context.

In Tiszabő, I conducted *semi-structured interviews* with fourteen underprivileged people living in the village with expert selection, who showed a more open-minded attitude during the survey and provided deeper insights into the daily life and opportunities of the settlement. Beside these, an interview was conducted with a person living in the village, who previously worked for the Family Care Centre of Tiszabő, and at the time of the research he worked as one of the administrators of the public works programme. Furthermore, an interview was made with a colleague of the Employment Department of the Government Office in Kunhegyes.

The inhabitants of Törteli Road showed a much more distant attitude during data collection, therefore no semi-structured interview was conducted with those living in the segregated area. I tried to fill this gap with interviews with those who provided social assistance to the people living in the segregated area.

Through the time spent in Tiszabő – about 35 days – and the observations made during my visits to the Törteli Road site – about 20 times – I had the opportunity to gain insight into the life of the settlement and the segregated area. Before the field work, in the secondary analysis I used the data of censuses and the results of previous researches conducted in Tiszabő and in the segregated area of Törteli Road.

4. Analysis methods

For the analysis of demographic data, I primarily used *frequency distribution*, then, based on the relation to the labour market by aggregation variables, three groups were created among the people in working age: active people in the primary labour market; inactive people in the primary labour market; public works programme employees. Following the creation of the groups, I analysed the individual characteristics by frequency distribution, then I examined the relationships between the major labour market features by cross-tabulation analysis.

V. The summary of the results

1. According to the results, the average age of underprivileged people living in peripheral areas in both research areas is well below the average age of Hungarian society, that is 42 years (KSH 2017): this is 24 years in Tiszabő, and 22 years among those living in the segregated area of Törteli Road. Norms associated with poverty culture as sexual activity beginning in childhood (TOWNSEND, P. 1979) and the consequent early childbearing, which have an impact on the low level of education of those living in periphery explain the lower average beside other reason. Through socialization, parents raise their children for this, which is already evident in kindergarten role play, where they often imitate the process of giving birth (SZVF 2017). Children in peripheral areas usually choose a partner from the immediate living environment at an early stage, thus leaving the school at a young age without completing primary education.

Low average age can also be caused by local factors such as lack of pharmacy and health services, the presence of addictions or even the harmful effects of the living conditions.

In Tiszabő, the lack of locally available public services and territorial stigma are the main problems, because, despite the locally unavailable medical presence and emergency care, they are not provided with health services in the neighbouring town, Fegyvernek.

In addition to the low level of health literacy of people living in the segregated area of Törteli Road, lack of attention from the general practitioner and quality malnutrition already seen in childhood as well as the wet walls in homes, poor hygiene and houses built with no comfort – in particular, lack of running water – and addictive products – alcohol, drugs, tobacco – increase the health risks among people living there.

Low average age indicates a rejuvenating society, which is associated with a high proportion of children. Due to the exceptionally high number of children, the proportion of inactive persons per hundred people in active age is higher in peripheral areas than the national average².

² At the time of the survey, the average number of inactive people per 100 economically active people (aged 15-64) in Hungary was 49 (KSH 2017), which was 62 in Tiszabő and 58 in the segregated area of Szolnok.

2. According to the result of the research, the increase in education attainment has a positive effect on the primary labour market integration of people living in peripheral areas. In the surveyed areas, those working in the primary labour market had the highest level of education, as well as household income, while those working in the public works programme had the lowest education attainment and household earnings. This confirms the impact of education on the labour market and proves that the programme offers opportunities primarily for those with the worst labour market characteristics (TÉSITS R. et al. 2015).

„In public works programme, no one asks how many classes or what qualifications they have, anyone can sweep the street. (Community developer fellow)

Taking into account regional differences, people living in the rural periphery have higher educational attainment, coupled with a higher proportion of primary labour market participation. Additionally, first employment at young age is one of the most important factor that positively influences labour market participation.

At regional level, comparing the city and the village, rural, inner peripheral areas have slightly higher primary labour market activity compared to those living in central, urban peripheral areas. Of course, higher income is also linked to a primary labour market position, therefore, wages constitute a higher proportion of the total income of the households of Tiszabő than in the case of the households of the segregated area of Szolnok. This also has a positive impact on per capita income, which implies higher levels of relative well-being for those living in rural peripheral areas.

3. It can be concluded that the local characteristics of the poverty culture – difficulties of adapting to workplace environment and schedules as well as short term planning – do not hinder the long-term employment of underprivileged people living in peripheral areas. However, job keeping skills are related to current labour market status, since long-term job retention is more prevalent among those in the primary labour market, furthermore, labour market participation can be traced back to educational attainment. In consequence, the higher qualification a worker has, the longer the job retention period will be. In close connection with this, on the basis of regional differences, people living in rural periphery have stronger job keeping skills. Longer-term employment is higher among them and the longest job retention is nearly three times longer than in the case of people living in the periphery close to the centre. This may be related to higher wages in the primary labour market and higher job satisfaction. Nonetheless, based on the interviews with Tiszabő residents and social workers in Szolnok, it can be said that the poverty culture is present in both research areas, which is mostly manifested in short-term planning.

The values and norms of poverty culture are deeply woven into the everyday and family life of underprivileged people living in the urban periphery. The people living in the periphery are afraid of any change due to the well-established local rules, therefore they need constant motivation and support to be able to change their situation.

4. The results show that the geographical, spatial characteristics of peripheral areas and the infrastructure difficulties of public transport have a negative impact on the primary labour market presence of underprivileged people. These conditions are particularly problematic for the inactive people since the access to the employment centre is very difficult with public transport and in some cases they cannot afford the cost of travel. Nonetheless, residents of both rural and urban peripheries are primarily seeking help from the employment centre for their labour market situation.

However, with the continuous renewal of the public works employment contract, the employment office – especially the one that is linked to the rural peripheral area – only conserves the labour market situation of underprivileged people.

As a result, according to official data, the unemployment rate in Tiszabő was double the national average at the time of the research, while according to unofficial result, the inactivity among the people living in Törteli Road segregated area was fifteen times the national rate. Of course, these high proportions are not only caused by the practice of the employment centre, as described by people living in peripheral areas, but the low job-seeking motivation of those who are inactive on the primary labour market also assists to stabilize the current situation, which is further mitigated by working in public works programme.

Based on the results of the research, spatial isolation and the lack of public transport – mainly in rural areas – prevent the compulsory personal appearance in the employment office and hinder the registration for the renewal of the public works employment contract. The limited presence of public transport also makes it difficult for people living in the urban periphery to get to work, but it also impedes job seekers from reaching the employment centre.

5. During the research the role of a territorial stigma has become clear, which unfavourably affects everyday lives and labour market participation of people living in both kind of peripheral areas. Stigmatization on a territorial basis for those living in rural periphery covers the whole county, and in the case of the segregated area of Szolnok, it covers the territory of the city. Consequently, in both peripheral areas, the territorial stigma covers the employment zone related to the primary labour market.

Territorial stigma is a form of discrimination that complicates the everyday lives of people living in a specific area, as it causes difficulties for people living in a stigmatized area, both in the labour market and in trade, but in some cases also prevent access to public services. The stereotypical, stigmatizing mentality of people living in zones around peripheral areas is evoked in both research areas by a deviant behaviour of a group of people living in the stigmatized areas, and in the case of Tiszabő, the wider coverage is due to the frequent media appearances of the village, mainly with negative content.

The stigmatizing attitude of primary labour market employers leads underprivileged people towards casual and public employment, which preserves their circumstances. Stereotypical thinking related to territorial stigma also has an impact on the labour market opportunities, access to public services (administration, health care) and in the field of trade (banking services), especially in rural peripheries. Territorial stigma is not the same as discrimination on the basis of ethnicity or nationality, but it overlaps and coexists with it. The territorial stigma more significantly complicates the employment of underprivileged people,

than the discrimination based on ethnicity. The latter prevents the employment of those living in the urban periphery at a higher rate.

The range of residential discrimination is wider for those living in the rural periphery, covering the entire county and causing significant disadvantages in commercial and public services alongside labour market drawbacks.

6. Social capital plays the most important role in the primary labour market employment for those living in the rural periphery, while the employment centre provides the greatest help to those living in the urban periphery. At the rural periphery, local social capital also plays an important role in getting job in public works programme, which is determined by the quality of the relationship with the mayor and representatives. The quality of this relationship – according to local respondents –, is based on the vote in municipal elections.

7. In spite of the local selection and operation system related to public employment in Tiszabő, the high participation rate in the public works programme is not accidental, because – according to the people living in Tiszabő – the number one employment and livelihood opportunity is this programme. In contrast, the inhabitants of the segregated area in Szolnok mainly base their livelihood on income from seasonal, occasional work.

Examining the results in a territorial relation, it is clear that in the rural peripheral area the public works programme plays a much more important role – proportionately more than twice as high – than in the urban peripheral area close to the centre. The high rate of public employment on the rural periphery is not surprising, considering that the last primary labour market wage of underprivileged people in both research areas was only a fraction of the average national wage of a given year. Of course, this is still higher than the current year's public employment wage due to the principle of least interest, but public employment typically has lower levels of responsibility, expectation and obligation than a primary labour market position, and also represent a locally available opportunity.

According to some studies (SCHARLE Á. 2015, TÍMÁR J. ET AL. 2015, CSERES G. ZS. 2015, TÉSITS R.-ALPEK B. L. 2015), the social benefit of the public works programme is that it provides participant a higher income than unemployment allowance. This is confirmed by my research results, since almost every employee in the secondary labour market (in Tiszabő: 85,7%; in Szolnok: 87,5%) found that their financial situation improved due to their placement in public works programme.

8. Improvement in the financial conditions of households as a result of public employment does not clearly imply a change in the values related to the poverty culture, and secondary labour market expectations are not as stringent as those experienced in companies in the primary labour market.

Some studies (SIPTÁR D.-TÉSITS R. 2014, VELKEY G. 2014A) conclude that among the advantages of public works programme are that employment in it contributes to maintaining or even improving the employability and professional skills of long-term unemployed people. In

this respect, it can be said that results of the research in both peripheral areas show that accurate arrival and precise work, as the two basic requirements, significantly help to adjust the schedule, adaption of the rules and a sense of completeness of the work performed. In addition, public employment has a positive effect on the workplace integration through the positive work experiences in community and learned workflows. Furthermore, public workers can see the results of their work and feel its impact – distribution of crops produced, an archive building which was built of adobe bricks made by them, the wire fence they pound, as well as the village beautifying through renovation of sidewalks, tree plantation and street kept clean –, which in some cases after 20 to 25 years of being out of the primary labour market, can provide them further positive affirmations of their future opportunity of employment. As a result of these, and due to the daily work routines and work schedules acquired in public works programme, the culture of poverty reduces among underprivileged people living in peripheral areas.

Thus, the work socialization goal of the public works programme could actually be achieved, but the majority of public works employees living in peripheral areas (in rural periphery: 77,2%, in urban periphery: 100%) are not looking for primary labour market jobs³. In the case of inactive people living in rural periphery, this is mainly due to that them basing their future on the secondary labour market in jobs offered by public works programme.

In the light of these results, it is not surprising that the public works programme did not achieve its original purpose in peripheral areas, which was to lead participants back to the primary labour market as a result of work-socialization activities. According to the results of my research, public works programme reduces the willingness of job seeking and also confirms the outcomes of studies (KOLTAI L. 2014, CSERES G. ZS.-MOLNÁR GY. 2014B, BAKÓ T. ET AL. 2014, BASS L. 2010) that public works programme reduces the chances of finding employment in the primary labour market. Besides these, it proved that – similarly to the experience in the literature (CSERES G. ZS.-MOLNÁR GY. 2015, BASS L. 2010) – tasks in public employment are too simple to develop workers' competences and skills. This is especially evident in the case of people living in urban periphery, where public works positions – park maintenance, town care responsibilities, cleaning – are typically related to trained works. In contrast, in the rural periphery, besides the trained and unskilled labour jobs, value-creating and administrative tasks can be performed in the programme.

Consequently, public works programme does not prepare employees for primary labour market requirements (VÁRADI M. 2010), which further reduces the chance of upward social mobility (TÓTH J. ET AL. 2017).

9. Public employees in both areas mentioned among the benefits of the public works programme the type of work activity and the fact that the public employment creates livelihood opportunity for them. Nonetheless, some public workers are critical of the shift in social and employment policy direction towards active employment tools behind the public works programme.

³ However, based on their payment expectations, they would have a good chance of finding job: those in the rural periphery would take a job on average for 100.600 HUF net in the primary labour market, while those living in urban periphery would expect on average a net income of 93.500 HUF in the primary labour market.

„You have to do it even if you don't want to. It's hard, men's work.” (a 27 year old woman from Tiszabő)

In their case, the effect of the reorganization of the Hungarian labour market after the regime change from socialist to a capitalist structure can be felt and the impact of earlier alternative treatment techniques for these changes, such as different possibilities for inactivity: early retirement, disability retirement, long-term arrangements for social benefits. These circumstances still left tasks undone for the labour market inclusion of underprivileged people living in peripheral areas. Because since the substantial Hungary social policy reorientation, which appeared in the Social Law of 2011 (MAGYAR KÖZLÖNY 2011, KOÓS B. 2016), only those are entitled to social – unemployment – support provided by the state, who worked at least 30 days in the 12 months before the review. The public works programme can provide opportunity for this, and the offered (public) work must be accepted as a condition of cooperation.

This direction of social and employment policy is primarily aimed at preventing people from getting stuck in the poverty trap⁴ into which masses of inactive people of working age fell after the regime change. It has been only a few years since the reorientation of Hungarian social and employment policy, during which time the social consequences of the 20-25 year gap in the primary labour market could not have been completely by new social and employment policy tools. Since as a result of leaving the employment, work morale deteriorates very rapidly and previously acquired professional competences and knowledge are swiftly depreciated as a consequence of technical progress and economic transformation.

The social and employment policy direction change and the related public works programme, while reducing the possibility of casual employment and the desire to work in the primary labour market, also provide opportunities for workplace (re)socialization of people who left the primary labour market for decades.

10. It is not only the social and spatial segregation and marginalization processes started out in socialism, and the socialization values of the poverty culture that can be attributed to the survival of the disadvantaged situation of people living in peripheral areas. The living conditions of the people living in the periphery are preserved by local factors, such as the local government and the families living in the surrounding area, whose monetary interest is to maintain the position of underprivileged people in school level, financial condition and access to information. This is also the basis for preserving the monopoly situation resulting in a dependent relationship.

In spite of current operational problems and the possibility of occasional, unscheduled employment, public works programme is essential to sustain the daily living of people living in peripheries, while it strengthens the paternalistic system and reduces social tensions in the periphery (VIRÁG T. 2009). Therefore, despite the malpractices of the local government, there

⁴ The appearance of poverty trap refers to a situation where gross income growth results in net income loss or no income growth overall (SEMJÉN A. 1996).

is a continuing need for participation in the programme due to the lack of locally available jobs in peripheral areas.

VI. Applicability of the research results

- The results of the dissertation can be used for a settlement development and anti-segregation programme, as they reveal the lack of essential services of Tiszabő and the segregated area in Szolnok resulting from their peripheral positions and which lead to a significant reduction in the quality of life of the people living there.
- The impact of the territorial stigma found in the research in both areas may justify initiating a settlement marketing and sensitization process that can reduce the stigma of those living in the area, thereby improving the perception and employment opportunities of people living in Tiszabő and the segregated area in Szolnok.
- The results can be taken into account in the development of a complex social inclusion programme that takes into consideration the characteristics of underprivileged people living in peripheral areas such as socialization difficulties, education and training dilemmas, housing, health and different living conditions.
- The results of the research highlight the importance of training based on the teaching of key competences and its possible process for companies struggling with labour shortages, thereby supporting the inclusion of underprivileged people into the primary labour market.

VII. Further directions of the research

Further possible directions of the research are worth exploring the perceptions and opinions of the local management of the public works programme on the characteristics of the employees that influence their primary labour market participation. In addition, it is appropriate to examine the perspectives and experiences of primary labour market employers on the integration and performance of underprivileged people living in peripheral areas. In their case, in order to assess training needs, it may be useful to investigate labour market characteristics and expectations, which are required as basic conditions by major primary labour market employers located nearby the peripheral areas.

Accordingly, in the possible new directions of the research, it is worth focusing on those competences and individual factors expected from employers that typically prevent the employment of underqualified people, but the direct development of these competences would ensure the primary labour market participation of underprivileged people living in peripheral areas.

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