

**The Spatial Development Concept of  
Interregional Co-operation in the Danube Space**

**SEE EoI/A/246/4.2/X**

**WP7  
COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY**

**background report for Hungary ASH ARGE Donau Subregion  
part A - Analysis and comparison**

## Contents

# 1. SWOT analysis

ASH ARGE Donau Subregion		
	Strengths	Weaknesses
NC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attractive natural conditions, ecological value of the Danube bank</li> <li>• Rich environmental heritage, important landscape-nature values, biodiversity</li> <li>• Waste water is handled with at least mechanical cleaning process</li> <li>• High number of protected areas (National Parks, Natura 2000 areas, Biosphere reserves, Natural and Landscape Protection sights and UNESCO world heritage sites: Budapest, including the Banks of the Danube, the Buda Castle Quarter and Andrassy Avenue Fertő / Neusiedlersee Cultural Landscape, Millenary Benedictine Abbey of Pannonhalma and its Natural Environment</li> <li>• Karst areas as drinking water reserves</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased charge of natural values, green surfaces and drinking water reserves,</li> <li>• High number of brown fields with risk of environmental pollution</li> <li>• Growing water reserve problems in the southern parts of the region (Homokhátság)</li> <li>• Low rate of waste water treatment in small settlements</li> <li>• Mentality and attitude of population</li> <li>• High number of sensitive surface and underwater water reservoirs on pollution</li> </ul>
SSHR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agglomerating cities, development of organic settlement structure, settlements with development potentials along roads (Mór, Bicske, Ajka, Pápa, Komárom, Tata, Sopron etc. )</li> <li>• Active civil sector</li> <li>• High value of cultural and historical heritage</li> <li>• Economic activity higher than national average, lower unemployment</li> <li>• Favorable state of population's health</li> <li>• Public functions and organizer power of cities is strong</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low number of complex (physical, social) rehabilitation programs</li> <li>• High number of disordered public areas in settlements with architectural values of no function</li> <li>• High number of brown fields along the „energy axe”</li> <li>• High number of settlements with no or weak civil services, difficult civil service organization due to settlement structure</li> <li>• Depopulation and aging especially in small villages</li> <li>• Deprivation and segregation in cities</li> </ul>
T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transport infrastructure configuration better than national average.</li> <li>• Growing utilization of suburban</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Configuration of North-South transport corridors in the whole ASH region, underdeveloped connections of centers and peripheries.</li> </ul>

	<p>public transportation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good geographical state (European corridors, natural waterways, region bordering 2 countries)</li> <li>• Favorable international and national accessibility (highways, airports, ports)</li> <li>• Conjunction of international transport corridors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Configuration of bicycle networks and connected infrastructure is missing</li> <li>• Unharmonized elements of transportation types and public transportation systems; its connections aren't aligned on local or regional level</li> <li>• Possibilities of alternative accessibility is underdeveloped</li> <li>• The role of railway transportation is decreasing, its infrastructure and services decline</li> <li>• The roads connecting inner peripheries are missing or are in bad conditions</li> <li>• The road system of Budapest is overloaded</li> <li>• Some East-West connections missing (M0, Danube bridges)</li> <li>• Value of public transportation is low (unpunctuality, conditions of vehicles, overcrowded, missing links)</li> <li>• Missing links in suburban railway networks in Budapest and its agglomeration</li> <li>• The state of bituminous roads is bad</li> <li>• Water tourism infrastructure is missing (small ports)</li> </ul>
<p>TI</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Electricity, drinking water and natural gas supply is well configured</li> <li>• The region is well provided with energy sources (fossil and renewable) and local energy production at many sites</li> <li>• Waste management recently developed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Low level of utilization of alternative energy sources</li> <li>• Low rate of connections to sewage systems and waste water treatment in small villages</li> <li>• Bad housing conditions in Budapest</li> <li>• Disparities and missing capacity of public services in Pest county</li> </ul>
<p>E</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business, trade and commerce in Budapest</li> <li>• High level of processing industry in Budapest, Győr-Moson-Sopron, Komárom-Esztergom and Fejér counties</li> <li>• High role of transnational firms in the region</li> <li>• R&amp;D high above national average</li> <li>• Logistics especially in Pest region</li> <li>• Clustering is above national average and the process has start up in many sectors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• R&amp;D concentrated only in Budapest</li> <li>• Economy dependent on export, vulnerable</li> <li>• Absence of well qualified labor force in industrial zones</li> </ul>

	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
NC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public consciousness of modern, alternative land use</li> <li>• Development of environmental industry in the field of energetics, waste management and energy efficiency</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation and environmental pollution is growing in settlements</li> <li>• Natural resources being utilized by foreign investors, the base of sustainable development is declining</li> <li>• Dependency on fossil energy - sustainable development in danger and risk of climate change</li> <li>• High demand on building up natural surfaces and crop lands</li> <li>• Due to transit transport destruction of health, tourism, built and natural heritage areas neighboring transit corridors</li> </ul>
SSHR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revaluing of the regional role of mid- and small towns</li> <li>• Regional cooperation between vocational training, adults' education, higher education and R&amp;D</li> <li>• Growing willingness of universities for cooperation with enterprises in R&amp;D</li> <li>• Győr, Székesfehérvár, Budapest as development poles</li> <li>• Rural lifestyle becoming attractive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aging of small villages and Budapest, decreasing number of population in working age</li> <li>• Segregation</li> <li>• Situation and chances of roma people unsolved</li> <li>• Brain drain to Western Europe</li> <li>• Growing transportation demands of commuters</li> <li>• Deviancies of young aged people</li> <li>• High rate of people not using the Internet</li> </ul>
T	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better utilization of facilities of River Danube</li> <li>• New highway connections open up areas to economic development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rate of individual transportation is growing</li> </ul>
TI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development in renewable energy production (wind power)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different interests in energy production, the spread of energy saving products and technologies is slow</li> </ul>
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local supplier and vendor system of transnational enterprises (Audi, Suzuki, Mercedes etc.)</li> <li>• Developing cross-border-cooperation (ASH)</li> <li>• Growing R&amp;D role of enterprises and shift from processing to research</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Taxing conditions</li> <li>• Neighboring regions more competitive (costs of employment)</li> <li>• Risk of investments</li> </ul>

## 2. Definition of indicators characterizing the social-economic situation of the D+ region area

### ASH ARGE Donau Subregion

indicator	Years			
	1996	2001	2005	2008
Water pollution Index				
Atmosph. pollution SO2 - emission in t/1000 inh.				
Atmosph. pollution NOx - emission in t/1000 inh.				
Atmosphere pollution ash - emission in t/1000 inh.				
Atmosphere pollution CO - emission in t/1000 inh.				
Landfills				
Number of dwellings per 1 000 inhabitants				
Number of university students per 1 000 inh.				
Regional vitality index				
Road Transport – Density of Highways				
Railway Transport – Density of Railways				
Water Transport - freight transfered				
Water Transport - accessibility of ports				
Air Transport – airports accesibility				
Electric energy supply				
Natural gas				
Broadband (internet connection, >256 kbit/s)				
Drinking water supply				
Wastewater treatment				
Renewable energy sources				
Regional GDP per capita in PPS as a share of EU 27(25) average (%)				
Labour force participation rate (%)				
Unemployment rate in region (%)				
Number of employed in tertiary branch (%)				
Share of college and secondary school educated inhabitants				
Tourism - average guest nights				
Tourism - foreign visitors				

### **3. The analysis and the evaluation of the national regional policies and spatial plans of the country**

#### **3.1. Settlement system**

##### **General information on settlement structure**

Hungary is a small to medium-sized country on a European scale, which covers 93.036 km<sup>2</sup>, of which a sum of 17.747 km<sup>2</sup> can be labeled as ASH ARGE Donau Subregion; this is built up of 5 NUTS3 regions: Budapest, Pest, Fejér, Komárom-Esztergom and Győr-Moson-Sopron. The population of the region was 4.100.100 in 2008.

Almost 30 per cent of the population lives in Central Hungary occupying approximately 7 per cent of the total territory. The settlement network is characterized by many small villages, a few medium-sized country and regional seats, as well as the metropolis of Budapest with an average population per settlement of 3300, but this figure is dropping. Settlements are unevenly distributed. In the hilly Northern and western parts of the country, a dense network of smaller settlements has developed, compared to the much less dense network of large settlements on the Great Plain. Judging by their populations, most towns are small. Nearly 40 per cent have fewer than 10000 inhabitants, and every tenth town has fewer than 5.000 inhabitants although hardly any of these can be considered towns in the functional sense. A further 30 per cent of towns have populations between 10 and 20.000: 70 per cent of towns are small. Eight cities now have more than 100.000 inhabitants, in the region: Budapest, Győr and Székesfehérvár. The small-to-medium-sized towns (10-50.000 inhabitants) are widely distributed. Although their share of the population is small, there is an especially high number of settlements with fewer than 1.000 inhabitants.

Nowadays above 300 settlements (10 % of all municipalities) were registered towns, approximately 70 % or 7 million people lived in urban settlements. In European terms, Hungary is moderately urbanized, but ASH region is of the most urbanized when comparing it to other parts of the country. From 1990 status and function more or less coincide. Since then, several settlements have been granted urban status in the spirit of free democracy and independence and some towns now have either no or very poor urban functions.<sup>1</sup>

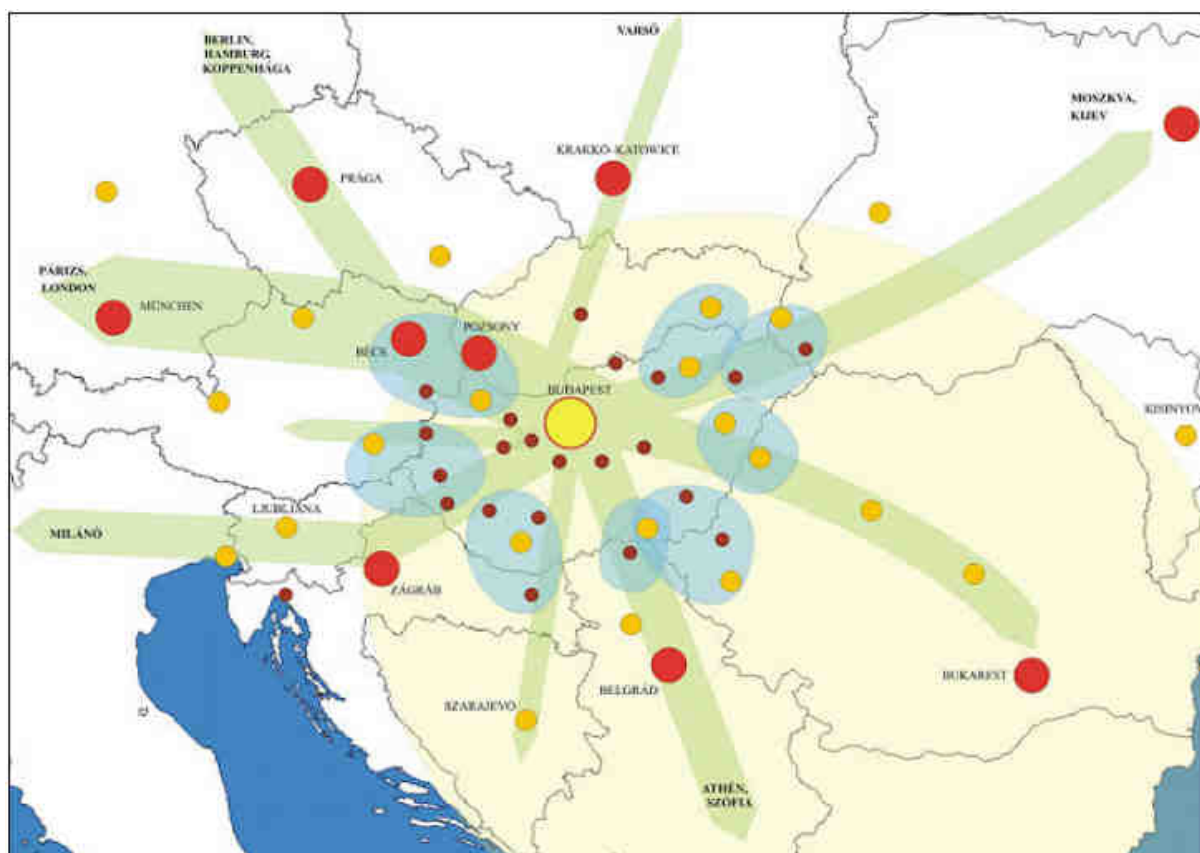
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<sup>1</sup> *OECD Territorial reviews Hungary, OECD 2001, France*

## National Regional Development Concept

The National Regional Development Concept (NRDC) was first brought about in 1998 and was amended in 2005. This version is currently in operation by the 97/2005. (XII.25.) Parliamentary Assembly Resolution, and it sets the mid- and long term objectives of the Hungarian spatial and regional development policy. The objectives serve to implement territorial harmony in Hungary.

The NRDC – in accordance with the National Development Policy Concept (NDPC) of 2005 – calls for the horizontal management of territoriality and territorial approach in sectoral policies. Its main message is that sectoral developments have to include place-based concepts, and they have to contribute to enforcing national objectives for spatial development. This political direction for spatial development was drawn up in the NSDP in accordance with the interpretation of territorial cohesion published by the European Commission.



Major dimensions of Hungary's territorial integration



These territorial objectives are presented below:

### **1. National convergence**

In order to integrate Hungary into its immediate (Central Europe and the Carpathian Basin) and more extended surroundings (Europe), it is of key importance to expand and deepen international economic, social, professional and political relationships in a targeted and innovative way.

### **2. Convergence for disadvantaged regions**

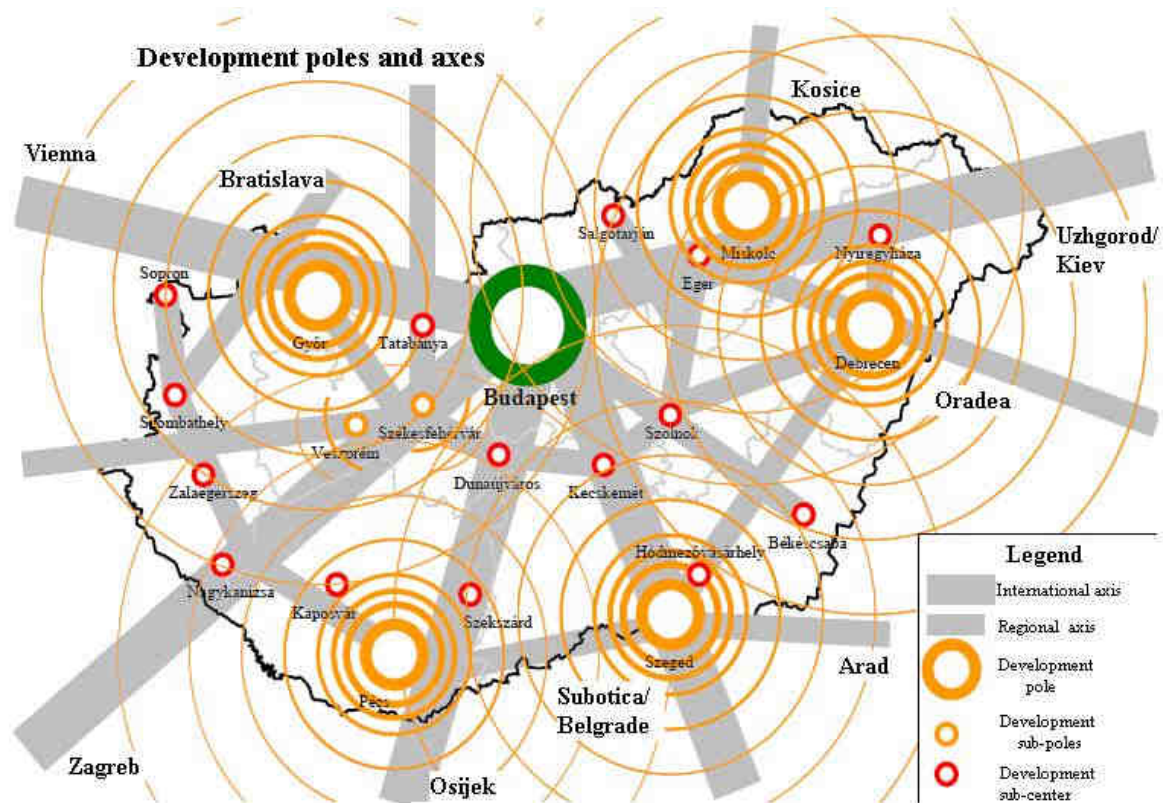
There are significant regional disparities within Hungary. Out of the seven NUTS 2 level statistical-planning regions of the country, six belong to what are known as convergence regions: these are in need of development in order to close the gap at the EU level, and only one region, belonging to ASH ARGE Donau Subregion, Central Hungary – including Budapest, the capital city – belongs among the more developed regions.

### **3. Convergence for disadvantaged micro-regions and settlements**

In addition to helping Hungary to close the gap with the EU average, emphasis is also placed on mitigating territorial disparities within the regions. Suitable conditions must be ensured for the socio-economically most disadvantaged micro-regions as well as that the less accessible settlements in peripheral areas can become integrated into the region's economic and social life. There no "most disadvantaged micro-regions" in ASH subregion.

### **4. Development poles**

To avoid restricting development exclusively to the capital city Budapest and its surroundings, poles catalyzing development for the whole country are necessary. Regional centers can play the role of development poles: in ASH subregion Győr and in the region of Central Transdanubia Székesfehérvár and Veszprém (out of Danube region) together (these two cooperate as development co-centers). Such poles are able to attract capital, development and innovation and to allocate these within their regions, thus promoting development (e.g. through a supplier network growing in the area to serve large companies which have located to these poles). Furthermore, these companies might be able to retain even the best qualified workers in the area by providing a high standard of education (R&D sector and higher education institutions), cultural events, services and jobs.



The regional development poles and axes of Hungary

These functions can be implemented by Ensuring accessibility to the pole cities (modernization of their transport connections) and by strengthening their developed and diverse informational and communication infrastructure, central function and cultural role. Thus, the best case scenario is that the development of regional centers must reflect the development needs which have arisen in their extended region. It is important that a pole, in addition to its general central role, is defined by some special commercial or service provider activities, industry or field of research and development, as a focus for development (i.e. Győr is the “Autopolis”).

## 5. Strengthening the relationships between towns and networking

During the development of the settlement network, attention must be paid to strengthening the relationships between settlements and encouraging co-operation. It is especially important to promote the share of functions between towns – those which create and spread innovation and generate development in their vicinity– at a national and cross-border level. In terms of the distribution of functions, it is worthwhile having some towns which develop specific industrial and service provider roles, thus becoming an irreplaceable and useful member of the network of towns. Of course, all this only works if co-operation is supported by suitable

informational, communication and transport links between the towns (in this respect, community transport connections are also important).

## **6. Establishing and renewing an integrated system of connections between urban and rural areas**

Small and medium-sized towns have a key role in developing rural areas that are often in peripheral areas. Strengthening the co-operation between regional centers and their catchment areas, by establishing a new, integrated system of relationships between urban and rural areas ensure that these regions can close the gap with others.

## **7. Addressing environmental and social problems in towns**

Towns can still be considered to be junctions of social and economic activities with concentrated problems. There is a need for town rehabilitation interventions which develop infrastructure and human resources in order to strengthen social connections and social cohesion within towns (primarily in the medium-sized and large towns which are most often subject to urban problems).

## **8. Change in the functions of rural areas**

In underdeveloped rural areas which face social and economic problems, rural development activity over and above the agricultural sector is necessary. Development schemes are intended to establish sustainable systems which help the disadvantaged region to close the gap – by using the specific local social, economic and environmental resources in an efficient way and preserving assets. Therefore, it is necessary to gradually widen the functions of the areas and involve new resources (e.g. tourism and alternative sources of income), or even in many cases, to change functions completely (e.g. by establishing functions for living, holiday sites and tourism). Besides new functions, renewing the traditional agricultural and food industry functions is also an issue for development in these areas (renewal might mean solutions requiring employment and small plants processing local products).

## **9. Sustainable development of environmentally sensitive regions of national importance**

These areas considered to be key areas in terms of spatial development have unique natural and cultural assets. Therefore, when drawing up and implementing development programs, efforts must be made to preserve these vulnerable ecological systems and to consider how to

manage them in a sustainable way, to establish farming methods complying with landscape and ecological characteristics and to ensure the protection of cultural heritage.

The Danube – also known as Helsinki Corridor VII– is one of the most significant transport and ecological axes in Europe. The key objective of the development of the Hungarian areas along the Danube is to improve the conditions for river navigation and to ensure that the interventions of spatial and rural development are in harmony with regional characteristics and ecological issues. In order to achieve these objectives, it is necessary to guarantee a suitable international fairway, to build and strengthen the systems of flood protection and water resource management, to use natural and cultural resources in compliance with sustainability, to rehabilitate the Danube and its tributaries and to preserve biodiversity.

In the area of Homokhátság (Southern Pest County) between the Danube and the River Tisza, there has been a dramatic drop in the water table as a result of climate change, causing animal husbandry to decrease, which in turn has led to a deficiency in fertilizer. Public safety has also deteriorated, thus endangering the security of agricultural production and the viability of farms. Finally, these all have led to further migration of the population and deterioration of the landscape. The most important tasks for development of this area is to encourage structural changes in agriculture in order to adjust to environmental factors, to improve poor water management on the ridge, to promote change to the functions of farms (e.g. farm-based tourism), to improve living condition through infrastructural development and to protect special natural assets.<sup>2</sup>

### **The National Spatial Plan**

The National Spatial Plan was elaborated in 1999-2002 as a follow up of Act XXI of 1996. The purpose was to outline the future national spatial structure with particular regard to the commitment to balanced, sustainable development of the national territory and to provide an overall framework for the spatial allocation of infrastructure investments and for the control and regulation land use.

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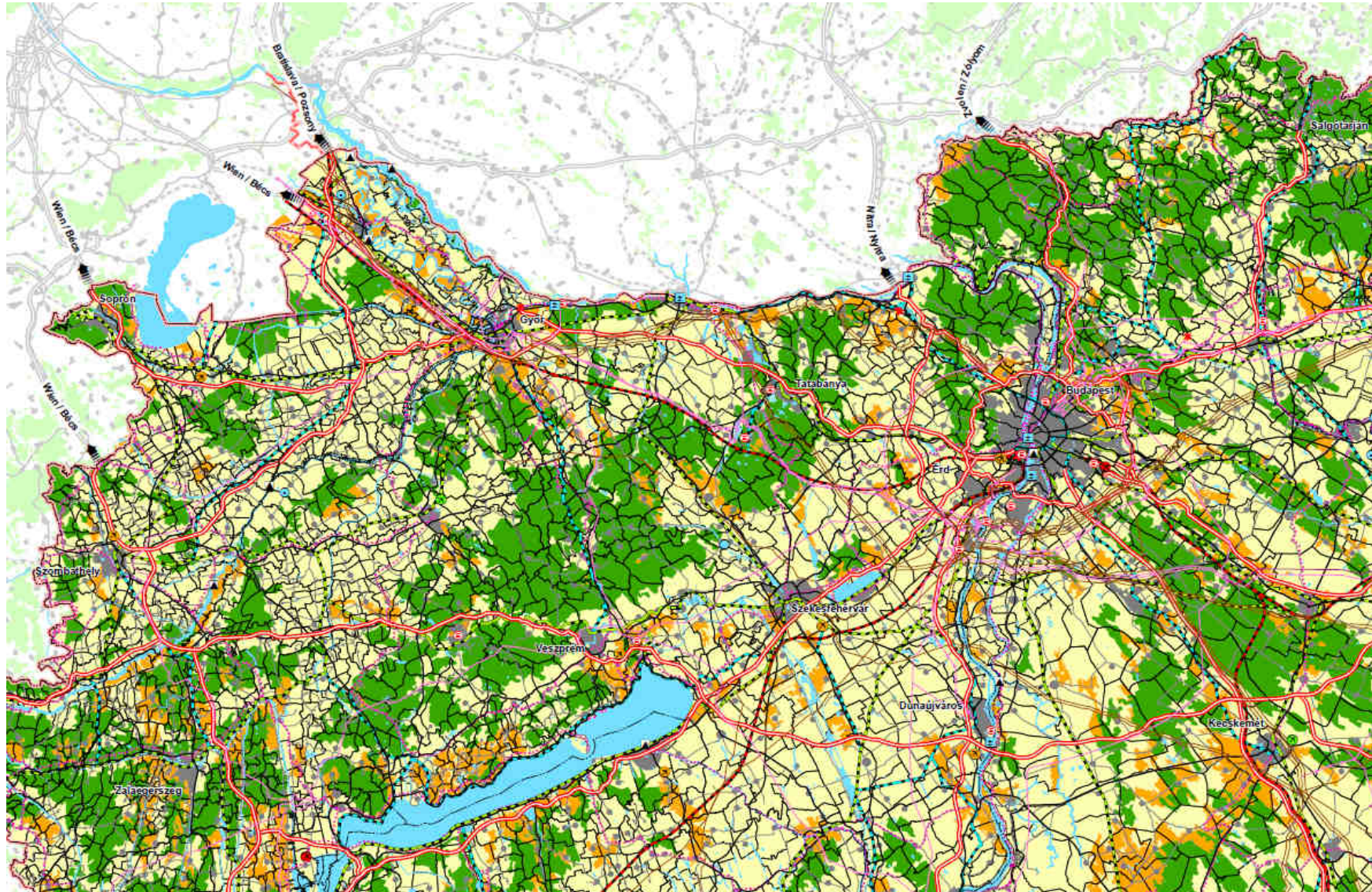
<sup>2</sup> National Regional Development Concept, 2005, 97/2005. (XII.25.) OGYH,  
Handbook on territorial cohesion NFGM, VÁTI Nonprofit Ltd., 2009

An important aspect of the elaboration process was the consistent interagency co-operation both at the governmental level and at the level of spatial planners and specialists responsible for transport, water management, nature conservation, environmental protection, agriculture and forestry. Furthermore, the county and local authorities as well as the non-governmental environmental and professional organizations were consulted and were given opportunity to influence decision making. The National Spatial Plan was adopted by the Parliament in 2003 in form of a Law. In Hungary this has been the first national spatial plan to be enacted by the Parliament. It provides a regulative framework for the elaboration of the physical plans of regions and administrative counties.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Göncz A., Vajdovichné dr. Visy E. (2006): Az Országos Területrendezési Terv. Falu Város Régió 2006/1



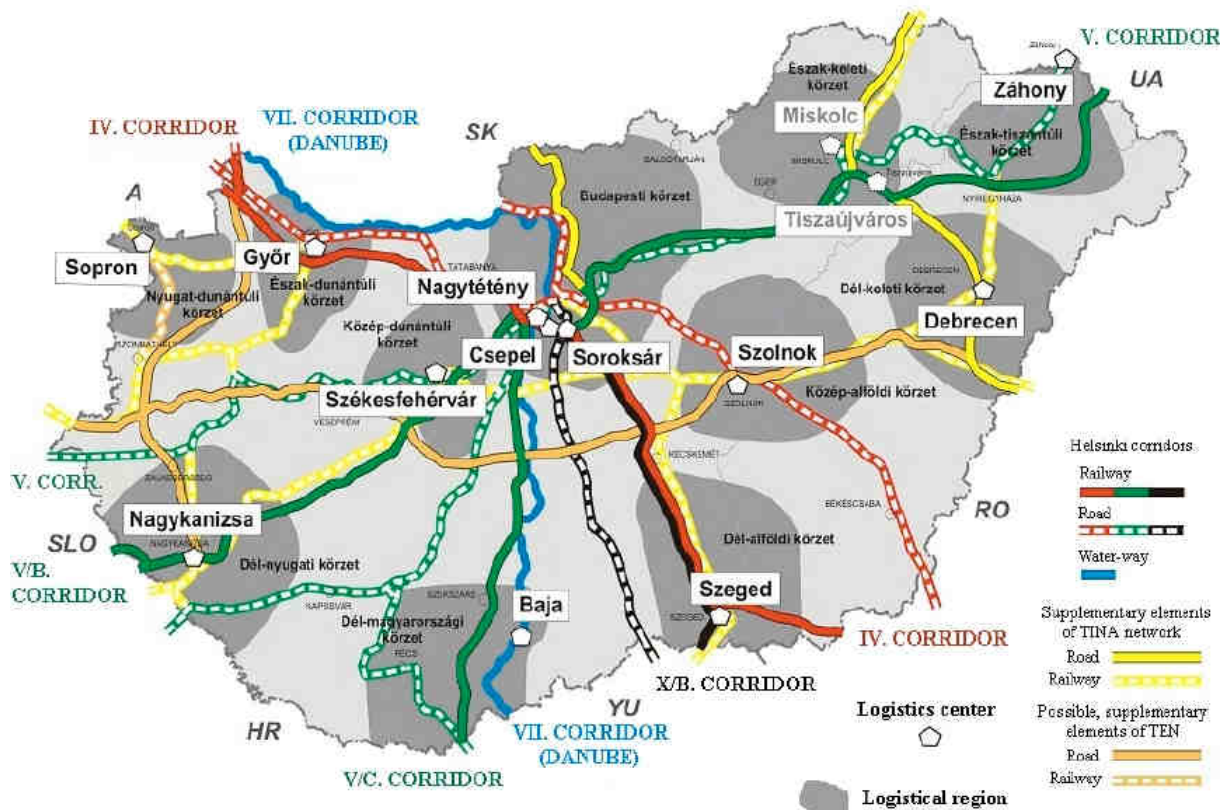


ASH ARGE Subregion in the National Spatial Plan



## 3.2. Factors influencing the cohesion development in the Donauregionen area

### 3.2.1. Logistics



The Hungarian elements of TEN and logistics centers

The idea of “Hungary as a logistics center” has been around for a long time and is based on solid foundations: these include the favorable geographical location of the country, the international transport corridors passing through it, membership of the EU, the rapid economic development of neighboring countries political and economic stability, the presence of multinational companies and the country’s relations with states farther to East. The role of logistics is especially dense in the ASH region as seen on the map. Many elements of this system are missing: a permanent waterway, links to the north, West-East interconnections South of Budapest and the added value beyond simple storage.

However several obstacles exist to the realization of the concept: these include the poor condition of infrastructure, the restricted internal market, VAT and customs problems, the limited foreign language skills and although the favorable geographical location could hardly

disappear, one must keep in mind that its effect can be transient. The fact that several other countries in the region seek to achieve a similar position also provides good grounds for rapid measures to be taken by the government. Through accession to the EU, competition has intensified among new member states for the position of Central Europe's regional centre, and their own centers linked to the global economy and strategic dimensions of multinational companies (which will fundamentally decide the result of the competition) will certainly be influenced by having a head start within the European Union.

### **3.2.2.**

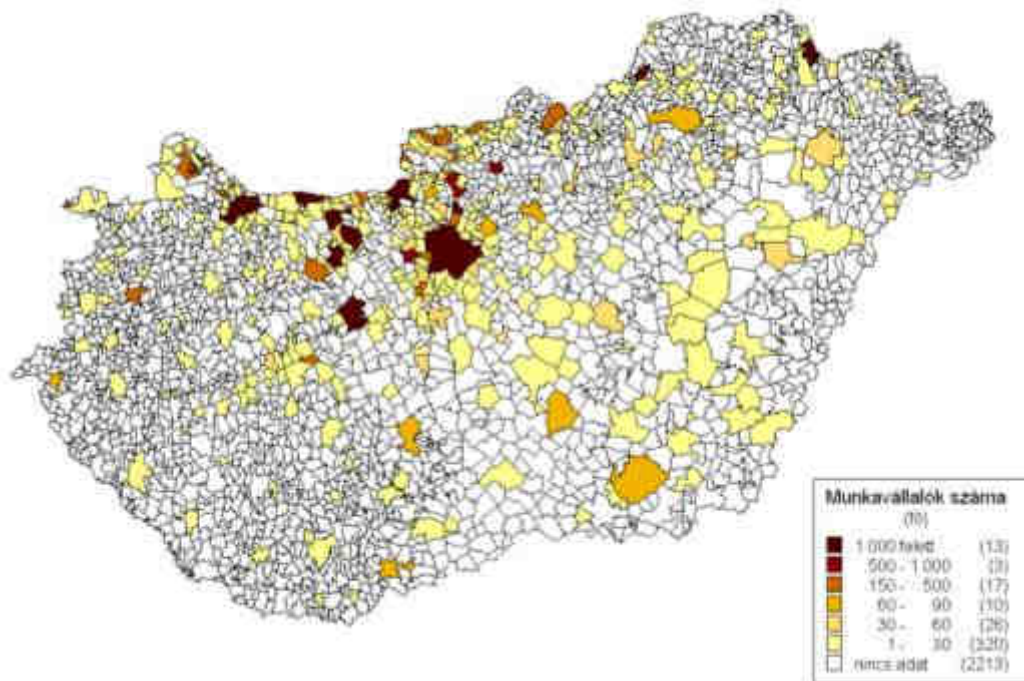
#### **Tourism**

The ASH region is featured with high tourism potential both in direct connection with the Danube and in the wider hinterland. The possibilities of tourism development is based on the major cities (Sopron, Győr, Tata, Székesfehérvár and naturally the number one tourist attraction Budapest), Danube river especially where it meets both natural or cultural-historical heritage sites (Szigetköz, Esztergom, Danube-Ipoly NP, Visegrád-Danube band, Ráckeve Danube arm), and the rural areas with extraordinary peculiarities (Fertő/Neuseidler See, Pannonhalma, Kisbér, Lake Velence, Ócsa/Kiskunság NP etc.)

The greatest chance for tourism development is creation of such destinations that are built on cooperation between different actors of the sector.

#### **Labor force flow**





### 3.2.3.

#### Water management

Large part of Hungary belong to the sub-humid and semi-arid climatic belt. The normal annual precipitation ranges about 500-600 mm. The annual precipitation to potential evaporation ratio was lower than 0,65 over the past 20 years. Around 90 per cent of the territory of Hungary is exposed to droughts.

95% of the surface water resources of the country originate abroad.

### 3.2.4.

#### Environmental risk management

##### Floods

Hungary is located at the lowest part of one of the most enclosed basins on Earth, with a considerable proportion of surface waters with no outlet, or prone to inundation. As a consequence of climatic conditions, there are extreme fluctuations in water flow, resulting in regular floods and temporary lakes at one extreme, and droughts at the other. Hungary has the greatest area requiring flood protection in Europe, with nearly 25% of the territory of the occupying the flood planes, which includes one third of the total cultivation area, 32% of railways, 15% of public roads, and 30% of the GDP production. The property value at risk is valued at over 5,000 billion HUF (see Table 1.5). This includes the gross value of properties and investments in industry, agriculture, the construction industry, tourism, retail trade, catering, accommodation, municipal and treasury properties and the value of houses.

On the basis of statistical averages, areas prone to flooding will experience minor or average floods every 2 to 3 years, major floods occur every 5 to 6 years, and extraordinary floods can

be expected every 10 to 12 years. On the upper sections of rivers, major floods typically last 5 to 10 days, while on the middle and lower sections with little slopes floods may even last for 50 to 120 days. For example, there were a series of abnormally high floods along the River Tisza since 1998 that had adverse social and political impacts.

Construction of the current flood defence system began in the middle of the last century and was completed recently in order to provide protection against damage by floods. In the whole of the country, the total length of primary protection lines reaches 4,181 km, out of which the length of man-made flood control works, dikes and flood protection walls, is 4,003 km, while 178 km are levees. The 96 flood plain bays of the River Tisza are protected against damage by floods by 2,951 km of defences.

The incidence of natural environmental incidents such as extreme floods and drought is growing, as is the impact of environmental contamination/pollution. Flooding in the Tisza valley could have beneficial economic and ecological effect on its regional development by generating tourist income from new eco-parks in the wetlands; however to achieve this it is necessary to control the flooding and improve conditions for its inhabitants through infrastructure development and environmental protection and sympathetic land using changes, in accord with the EU requirements.

## **4. Donauregion and the European Development Policies**

### **4.1. Review of adaptation of the ESDP in the Donauregion+ area**

### **4.2. Review of ESPON-project in the area**

One of the most important international projects, which deal with the questions of spatial development in the European scale, is the project ESPON. From lot of projects prepared in these frame, and which are most applicable on the Donauregionen area, we can mentioned mainly the projects ESPON project 1.1.1; Potentials for polycentric development in Europe<sup>2</sup>, and ESPON project 3.2; Spatial Scenarios and Orientations in relation to the ESDP and Cohesion Policy.

#### **ESPON project 1.1.1 – Potentials for polycentric development in Europe**

The ESPON project 1.1.1 analyzes the European urban system concerning their polycentricity. Polycentricity has two main aspects. The first relates to morphology, i.e. the distribution of urban areas. The second concerns the relations between urban areas, i.e. the networks of flows and co-operation.

According to ESPON nomenclature policentricity can be measured by the distribution and characteristics of FUAs (Functional Urban Areas), MEGAs (Metropoliatan European Growth Areas), PUSH (Potential Urban Strategic Horizons) areas and PIAs (Potential Polycentric Integration Areas) are present in the region.

The Functional Urban Area consists of the municipality int he core and municipalities surrounding this core; the fringe. Conditions for choosing FUAs listed in ESPON 1.1.1 were: (1) FUAs with population over 50000 inhabitants and an urban core (agglomeration) with more than 15000 inhabitants. This excludes those artificially large „urban” areas with minor urban core.

(2) FUAs with a population of more than 0,5% of the national population and an urban core (agglomeration) with more than 15000 inhabitants. Accordingly, in less populated countries smaller FUAs were taken into account.

(3) Smaller FUAs were included if they had at least local importance in transport, knowledge or decision-making functions or regional importance in administrative, tourism or industrial functions.

Hungary has one dominant city, Budapest, supported by a dense network of small and medium-sized cities. Totally there were 77 Functional Urban Areas identified in Hungary, of which 28 were located in regions bordering or being bisect by the river. 20 cities are defined as FUA sin the ASH subregion (Budaörs, Budapest, Cegléd, Dunakeszi, Dunaújváros, Esztergom, Gödöllő, Gyál, Győr, Mór, Mosonmagyaróvár, Oroszlány, Pilisvörösvár, Ráckeve, Sopron, Székesfehérvár, Szekszárd, Szentendre, Tatabánya, Vác).

Budapest, the strongest FUA is also defined as MEGA, that is “Metropoliatan European Growth Area” centre. Those FUAs are assigned MEGAs that are dominant in the terms of population, transportation, industry, learning, decision-making. MEGA centers are ranked into 5 groups according to their importance, Budapest is labeled as member of the 4<sup>th</sup> “Category Three - Potential MEGA center” group. In the neighboring areas Vienna, Bratislava and Timisoara are the closest MEGA cities to Hungary ARGE Subregion.

The potential area of cooperation is defined as the area of municipalities accessible within 45 minutes on road from FUAs, and this area is called PUSH, Potential Urban Strategic Horizon. The rate of PUSH areas is high in Hungary. This way, centers of PUSH areas are the same as FUA’s. Trans-national PUSH areas can only be found in the Northern, ASH Subregion of the two Hungary ARGE SUBregions, these are: Budapest, Esztergom, Győr, Mór, Mosonmagyaróvár, Oroszlány, Pilisvörösvár, Sopron, Szentendre, Tatabánya and Vác.



Area assigned to PUSH area (in red) – municipalities of which at least 10% of the area is within 45 minutes from the nearest FUA centres

In the next step, Potential Polycentric Integration Areas (PIAs) were identified, based on the hypothesis that neighbouring cities with overlapping travel-to-work-areas. PIAs have been constructed by merging the PUSH areas of neighbouring cities, if the, demographically speaking, smaller one shares at least 1/3 of its PUSH area with the larger one. Each PUSH area belongs to one PIA only, the largest neighbouring city being preferred when there are multiple overlaps. The FUA centers being PIA main nodes at the same time of ASH Subregion: Budapest, Ráckeve, Székesfehérvár and Tatabánya. Hungary shows a high potential of regional polycentricity due to the relatively dense settlement system.

Source: Egy koncepció – sok megközelítés? A policentrikus városhálózat megjelenése az európai területi gondolkodásban. Falu Város Régió 2007/4

Source: ESPON 1.1.1 Potentials for polycentric development in Europe Project report 2005

### **ESPON project 3.2 – Spatial Scenarios and Orientations in relation to the ESDP and Cohesion Policy**

The ESPON project 3.2 was focused on to prepare possible development scenarios. In the four ESPON 3.2 integrated scenarios, the future history of Europe up to 2030 is analysed by examining a number of key driving forces. There were three integrated scenarios illustrated – directions of development namely Baseline scenario, Cohesion orientated scenario – Danubian Europe and competitiveness orientated scenario, and the thematic scenarios as well (demography and migration, transport, energy, economy. rural development, socio-cultural evolution and integration). According the integrating scenarios were set down the policy recommendations for central and eastern Europe:

#### **Challenges**

The necessary restructuring of agriculture and industry leads to considerable losses of jobs which make necessary the creation of a very important number of new jobs.

Low fertility rates and westward immigration cause depopulation. Catching up with Western Europe will increase disparities with neighbouring countries in the East.

#### **Policy options**

- Modernize the economy quickly, while creating a very important number of new jobs

- Support to local small- and medium-sized enterprises through infrastructures (transport, telecommunications) and education of the local labour force, especially in traditionally industrial urban regions that face deindustrialisation.
- Adaptation of social welfare systems to European standards.
- Transnational and transregional co-operation with the external Eastern neighbours.

#### **4.3. Review of other relevant projects in the area**

In the Slovak Republic was prepared some projects, which are dealt with the spatial development concerning the Donauregionen area and with the cross border spatial development as well. From these mainly the project Spatial and regional development project of Slovak-Hungarian border area, prepared with Slovak and Hungarian experts (Slovak environmental agency in Bratislava and VÁTI Budapest) in the year 2002, and the Polycentric settlement conception as a instrument to secure functional complexity on the regional and local levels, prepared by AUREX, Ltd. For the Ministry of construction and regional development in the year 2006. In both of them the results are supporting the cross border cooperation in the areas which are identified in this paper in the chapter 3.1. Settlement system.

#### **5. Analysis of several transnational initiatives**

The transnational initiatives in the ASH ARGE Donau subregion are mostly ensured by the euroregions. There are created three euroregions in the frame of ARGE Donau subregion area with the partners from Hungary

- Euroregión Podunajského Trojspolku (<http://www.euroregio.sk>),
- Euroregion Váh–Dunaj–Ipeľ (<http://www.euroregion-vdi.sk>),
- Ipeľský euroregión (<http://www.ipelregion.sk/index.sk>).

The activities in the frame of created euroregions are focused on the creation of allround conditions for mutual recognize, cooperation and coordination activities with the

selfgovernmental bodies and organisations oriented on the crossborder cooperation with the neighbouring regions in the various fields of sociable and economy life.

They prepared statistical yearbook of the euroregion (Euroregión Podunajského Trojspoľku), secure different projects e.g. Training of regional managers in the field of rural tourism (Euroregion Váh–Dunaj–Ipel'), Common increasing of the attractiveness of Poiplie as a tourist goal, Natural and cultural values of the Middle Poiplie, Ipel basin – source of the renewable energy, Ipel bridges which project is oriented on the initialisation of renewing of the Ipel bridges destroyed and up to now not renewed from the time of Second world war.

The euroregions are also make effort in frame of LEADER+ project. The most importable initiative we can see in the common effort of the towns Komárno and Komárom by the build up of the new bridge through the river Danube, connecting both towns in a new locality.