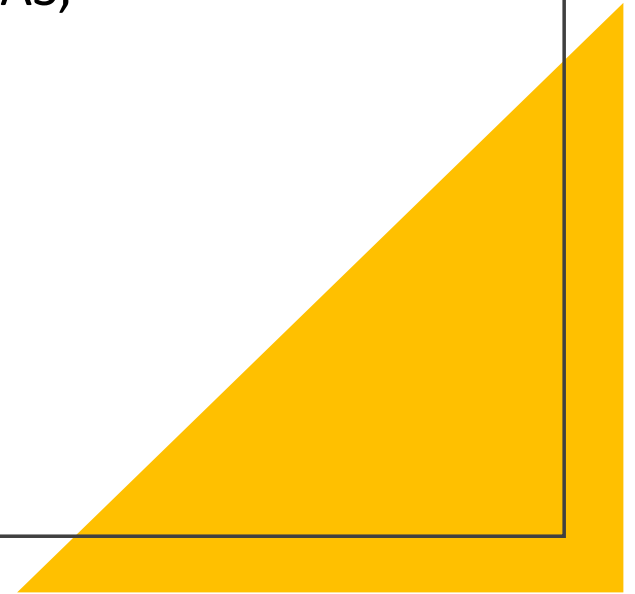


Depopulation and Public Policies in Rural Central Europe. The Hungarian Case

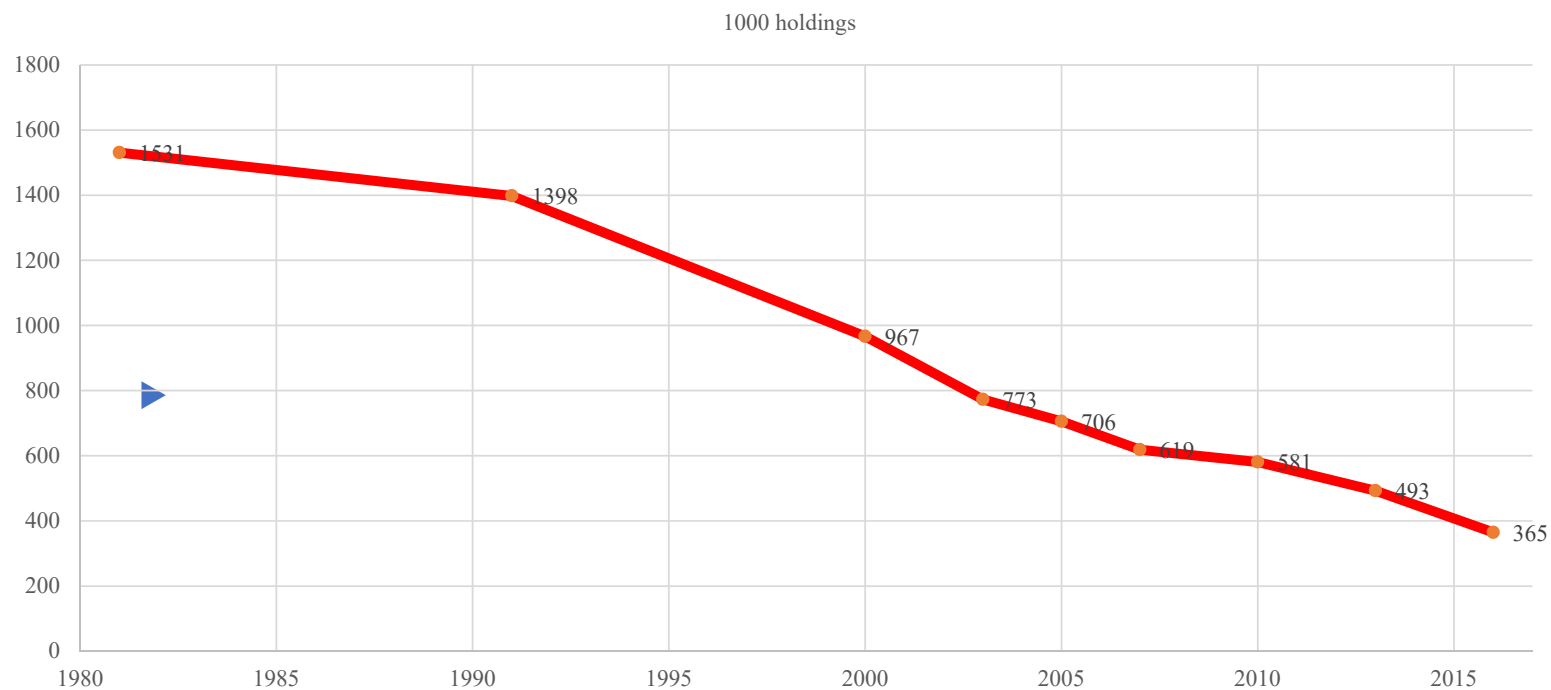
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- Institute of Sociology, HAS,
Budapest
- University of Debrecen




Interpretation
of the term
„rural” in
Hungarian
social,
economical
context.

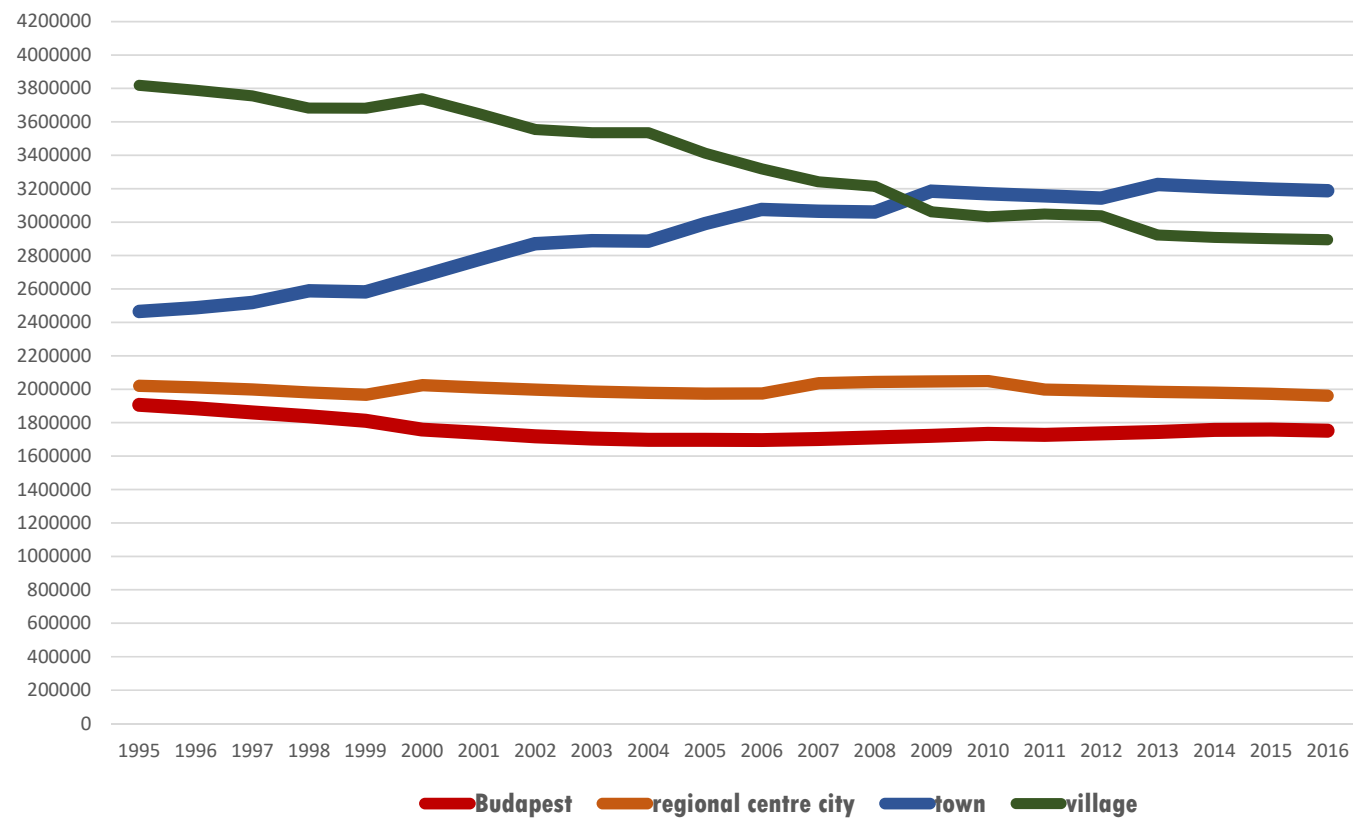
- There is no clear concept of „rural” adopted by consensus.
- High agricultural population (40 %) at the middle of 20. century – still 1,2 million employees worked for agricultural cooperatives and state farms in 1988 from 4 millions total employed in labour force.
- **Deagriculturisation** after 1990 (regime change), **depeasantisation** but **no de-ruralization**

Decrease in the number of agricultural holdings between 1985 and 2016 (thousand)




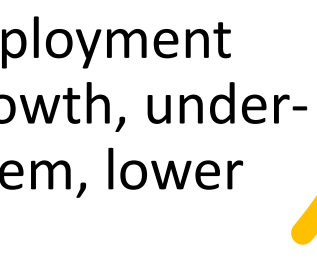
- 
- Based on official statistics: village and farmsteads population = rural (not urban)
 - 152 larger villages have been declared cities and 800,000 people lived in the new towns in 2018, where rural living conditions or populations are not changing at a rapid rate - the vast majority of rural population decline,
 - The population of villages and small towns is 52% of the total Hungarian population --- a strong feature of the higher rural population of the states that joined the European Union after 2004

Total number of population by settlement categories, 1995-2016

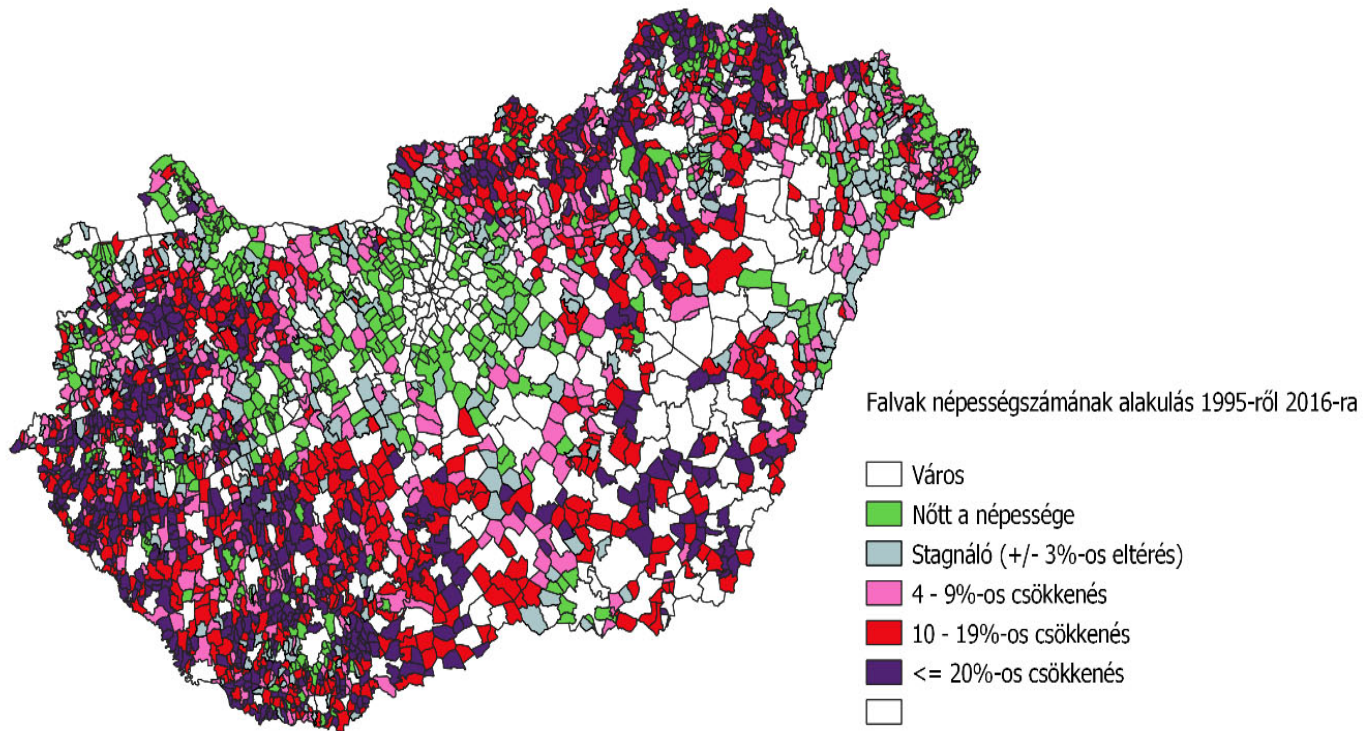


Rural-urban mobility 2018

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1. Always living in a village	1195	44,3	44,3	44,3
	2. Moved to village	266	9,9	9,9	54,1
	3. Moved to city	260	9,6	9,6	63,7
	4. Always living in the city (but not in Budapest)	571	21,2	21,2	84,9
	5. Living in Budapest (previously in Bp or big city)	408	15,1	15,1	100,0
	Total	2700	100,0	100,0	

- 
- The administratively continuous village category (2.8 million people in 2018) **lost only 80,000 people** between 1990 and 2018
 - But there is a **strong exodus from smaller villages to larger villages**, which is the mainstream of rural depopulation
 - Aging, poverty, child poverty, unemployment concentration, Roma population growth, under-education, mental and health problem, lower life-expectancy
- 

The change in the population of the villages 2018



State policy against rural depopulation I.

- **Hungarian Village Programme (2019-)**
 - For villages under 5000 people,
 - Direct financial support – no self-sufficiency (contribution) obligation
 - to develop infrastructure, services
 - Three pillars: housing, transport and public services
 - 18 direct development goals
 - development of local public spaces, filling them with content, including church public spaces, construction or renovation of nurseries, construction or renovation of kindergartens, renovation of inland roads, renovation of inland sidewalks, acquisition of public space maintenance equipment, replacement of village caretakers for start-up service, cemetery developments, construction and renovation of medical offices, purchase of medical equipment, construction of medical service housing, construction or renovation of service housing for kindergarten teachers and nursery caregivers, construction of sports parks, and procurement of sports equipment.

State policy against rural depopulation II.

- **The Hungarian Village Program Village Civil Fund (2020-)**
 - support rural civil associations
- **Home improvement allowance for village families (2019-)**
 - for 1 child HUF 600 thousand, for 2 children HUF 2.6 million, for 3 children HUF 10 million - Strict conditions (minimum 2 years employment for example)
 - **Safe Start Program - Safe Start Children's Home (2009)**
 - Against poverty and intergenerational transmission of poverty in less than 4000 people villages
 - Centers for high quality, integrated care for children
- **Long-term program of "catching up" 300 settlements,, (2019-)**
- **Public work program (2015-)**
 - against unemployment and for „work for aid” political program

Local policies against rural depopulation

- strengthening projectification, strengthening project application potential
- Local „culture economy”
- Local identity making
 - - festivals, preservation of traditions, local history
- Tourism potencial
- Food self-sufficiency programs
- Local environmental protection programs