

The Local Level – Hungarian Case Studies related to Sustainable Cities

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Nowadays one of the main issues is how to and why integrating sustainability into urban policies also considering the possible impact and risks of climate change. Sustainability is increasingly becoming a priority for local policy action especially focusing on adaptation and mitigation. According to several research projects and reports it is well known that cities are responsible for more than two third of global greenhouse gas emissions, moreover they consume the majority of resources and account for great proportion of globally generated waste. Due to the concentration of population, economic activities, consumption and emissions, cities play crucial role in the abatement of negative effects of climate change. Considering the above mentioned, sustainable urban areas related research should focusing on adaptation and mitigation actions in urban areas regarding decrease of urban vulnerability and fostering urban climate change resilience. Furthermore, nowadays more than one-half of the world's population lives in urban areas. It is estimated to reach 70% of the total population in the world by 2050. In addition to this 72% of the European population lives in cities and the permanent urbanisation can negatively impact not only from ecological but also from social and economic aspects. Thus it can play a pivotal role in each dimension of sustainability.

There is growing interest in resilience-based studies not only at international scale but also in Hungary, since the second edition of National Climate Change Strategy is being published in this year, which contains the National Adaptation Strategy that highlights sustainability as a basic element of the practical implementation on settlement level. Nevertheless there is a lack of Hungarian studies with respect to urban adaptation and mitigation strategies moreover related issues such as reduction of climate exposure or urban vulnerability.

The aim of this examination is to analyze sustainability issues in relation to adaptation and mitigation actions considering climate change plans of different Hungarian cities, namely Szekszárd, Albertirsa, Tatabánya, Gyöngyös, Eger, Pécs and two districts of Budapest (XII. and XIII.). Selection of cities is based on geographical aspect and population size. 50% of these examined urban areas are members of the Alliance of Climate-Friendly Settlements in Hungary. The examined climate change related plans and actions of the selected cities have been grouped into main categories regarding the concerned topics such as energy, transport, buildings or waste management. The aspects of the analysis are crucial from a sustainability point of view. In the end of the study there is a comparison with respect to the above mentioned topics between analyzed Hungarian and other European cities.