

## Annual research report (2014)

### I. Summary of the five year research and main duties of the research unit in 2014

The comprehensive project, „*Területi közszolgáltatások szabályozásai*“ [Regulatory Tools for Local Public Services] (2012 -2016) of the MTA-DE Public Service Research Group sets out a wide range of public services delivered at local level, and those public functions which have implications for public service provision in a local context. In doing so, we are focusing especially on public utilities, social services, administrative services and education issues. Viewed from an East-Central-European angle, our underlying conception is that the content and territorial management frameworks for public functions have been gradually transformed from the millennium in the developed countries, according to the main trends in the European integration process. There is a tendency of moving (back) from local government autonomy to centralisation.

On the basis of the above underlying aims, the concept papers of the research have already been completed. This conceptualisation stage resulted in the volume T.M. Horváth (ed.) (2013) "*Kilengések. Közszolgáltatási változások*" [Swings. Changes in Public Service Delivery]. Budapest: Dialóg Campus. The research group continued the exploration with international comparative researches in order to identify the basic patterns for different fields of local public services (public utilities, public education, administrative services etc). From 2012 to the end of 2014, based (fully or partly) on researches in the project, two PhD thesis were completed, more than 70 papers (already cited more than 60 times total in other works) have been published in academic journals or as a part of academic volumes (an English written collection majority including abstracts of these papers is available at: [http://jog.unideb.hu/documents/mta\\_kutatocsoport/summary2014.pdf](http://jog.unideb.hu/documents/mta_kutatocsoport/summary2014.pdf) ).

For the year of 2014 within the whole project period, (a.) publication of the volume "*Külön utak*" [Distinct Roads], (b.) preparing further thematic papers of the "encyclopaedia" (the planned final product of the comprehensive 5 years project), (c.) empirical researches in the town of Hajdúböszörmény and factual overviews of the findings, as well as (d.) processing and evaluation of survey results have been scheduled.

### II. Remarkable research and other results in 2014

#### II/a. Remarkable research and other results

The outcomes according to the above annual plan are the following:

a.) Based on the result of the research carried out in previous year, a new volume "*Külön utak*" [Distinct roads] has been published. The book provides international comparative studies in the main public service sectors, explores the relevant sectorial EU policy fields, and also presents a few recent examples of Hungarian public service management models. It may thus contribute to better understanding of domestic solutions and tendencies. The findings may be also useful to experts in their everyday practice associated with industrial networks management or social service delivery (for a summary in English, see: <http://jog.unideb.hu/kutatasaink/distinct-roads-solutions-for-public-service-delivery>).

b.) In February 2014, the research group initiated empirical researches in Hajdúböszörmény. According to the chief objectives of the comprehensive research program, this middle town has been ascertained as an ideal example and place for using field research methods (in our case mainly interviews, collection of empirical data, participatory monitoring). For this part of the project, a separate working group had been set up of academic scholars and experts of the local practice. The research basically focused on public service delivery, as well as management of different public functions in the town. The predecessor of our workout method was the research on administration of the town Tata carried out by professor Zoltán Magyary and his disciples in the first half of the 20th Century.

This empirical phase has been carried out in the first half of the year and resulted in the volume „*Gyűrűk és sugarak*” [Rings and Avenues] published in September 2014. The collection of factual overviews focuses on the changing role and latitude of local government and local bodies. Taking the example of Hajdúböszörmény, the volume topically examines the regulation for and management of local public service delivery. The perspective of our work reaches beyond the "Böszörmény-case" and also indicates typical problems and characteristics which are common in Hungarian towns. The book may be useful and stimulating to students of social sciences. Academic researchers, experts of local governments and other stakeholders may find this volume interesting, too (for a summary, see: <http://jog.unideb.hu/kutatasaink/rings-and-avenues-what-services-are-delivered-by-a-hungarian-town>).

As a part of the research, an electronic database (<https://drive.google.com/> the username and password can be requested from the research group) has been developed during the work, which contains information on the city, as well as the analysed data and documents in a structured manner. Our virtual library will constantly be updated as long as the comprehensive project runs (end of 2016). The content is open for the readers of the volume, for the purpose of secondary processing, too.

c.) The research group also continued to prepare a volume exploring a taxonomy and management theory of public services in a comprehensive manner and which is intended to be published later on. As a part of the work, sectorial studies have been finished this year (in 12 sectors).

d.) Processing and evaluation of survey results also has been finished this year. The population survey was carried out in the framework of the comprehensive project last years. People have been asked to give their views on the management of public service delivery in their surrounding and to rate their overall satisfaction with public services (quality, access to services, etc.).

## II/b. Science and society

The research group laid a special emphasis on dissemination of project outcomes this year as well. Book launch has been organized for both volumes to reach potential readers. The book "*Gyűrűk és sugarak*" was presented in Hajdúböszörmény for the interested members of the local community, with local media present. The head of the research group also introduced the book in the framework of an (almost one hour long) professional discussion broadcasted by the Radio Orient ([http://radioorient.hu/adasok/2014-12-04\\_horvathmtamas](http://radioorient.hu/adasok/2014-12-04_horvathmtamas)). The local

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functions of public companies – a topic which was also examined in the book – were explained to the public likewise ([http://radioorient.hu/adasok/2014-10-02\\_horvath\\_m\\_tamas](http://radioorient.hu/adasok/2014-10-02_horvath_m_tamas)). The current state of the project (latest „research products”, news) can be followed by visiting the website of the research group, which makes most relevant information available in English, too (contributing this way to engagement of the research group to international research networks). Besides, the members of the research group regularly publish the particular research results or book reviews in the academic journal "*Jegyző és közigazgatás*" [Municipal Clerk and Public Administration]. Since this year, the research group has an own regular section in the journal.

### III. Domestic and international relations in 2014

The Faculty of Law at the University of Debrecen, which is the host institution of the research group, concluded a solemn agreement with the local government of Hajdúböszörmény in the matter of our working group's empirical researches in the town.

The head of the research group took part and held a presentation [with the title "*External managing answers on integration failures. An East-Central European aspect of public services (The Hungarian case and its context)*"] on the 3rd General COST Meeting of the Management Committee and the Working Groups "*Local Public Sector Reforms: An International Comparison*" at the Postdam University on 15-16 May 2014.

One fellow of the research group spent two month abroad with scholarship support; at the Faculty of Law of the University of Florence between 2 and 29 June in the framework of the Campus Hungary program; and in the Collegium Hungaricum Vienna btw. 1 and 31 October. Both of the research trips basically aimed at contribution to her postdoctoral researches.

### IV. Brief summary of research applications approved in 2014

Four universities – the University of Debrecen, the Univerzita Palackého v Olomouci (Czech Republic) Transka Univerzita v Trnave (Slovakia) and Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski Jana Pawła II. (Poland) – submitted an application to implement a joint project '*Tax Authorities in the V4 countries. Common Experiences after EU Accession.*' The application has been approved in 2014. The program is supported by the Visegrad Fund for the period of 01. 01. 2015 - 01. 02. 2016. The head of the research group takes part in the cooperation as research fellow of the University of Debrecen.

### V. Most relevant publications in 2014

Bartha Ildikó: Hungary's international agreements in the light of its EU membership. In: Márton Varju and Ernő Várnay (eds.): *The Law of European Union in Hungary: Institutions, process and the law*, Budapest: HVG-ORAC 320-360. (2014)

Horváth M. Tamás (szerk.): *Külön utak. Közfeladatok megoldásai [Distinct Roads. Models for Public Service Delivery].*, Budapest–Pécs: Dialóg Campus Kiadó (2014)

Horváth M. Tamás és Bartha Ildikó (szerk.): *Gyűrűk és sugarak – Mit nyújt egy magyar város? [Rings and Avenues – What Services are Delivered by a Hungarian Town?]*" Budapest–Pécs: Dialóg Campus Kiadó (2014)

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Horváth M. Tamás: Átváltozás (Az önkormányzatok kétharmados törvényi szabályozása, 2010–2014), [Metamorphoses. (Regulation of local governments by cardinal acts)]. Új Magyar Közigazgatás 2014. (VII. évf.) 1. szám 30-34.

Horváth M. Tamás – Péteri Gábor – Vécsei Pál: A helyi forrásszabályozási rendszer magyarországi példája, 1990-2012. [The case of regulation in local government finances in Hungary, 1990-2012], Közgazdasági Szemle 2014. (LXI. évf.) 2. szám 121-147.

Horváth M. Tamás: Vállalati részesedések igazgatása – köztulajdoni körben [Internal management of public shares in publicly owned companies. In: Patyi András – Lapsánszky András (szerk.): Rendszerváltás, demokrácia és államreform az elmúlt 25 évben. 221-229. (2014)

Szilágyi Bernadett: Egyházi egy százalék(ok) [The Ecclesiastical Percentage(s)], Pro Futuro, 2014. (IV. évf.) 1. szám 62-79.o.

Szilágyi Bernadett: A saját bevételek szerepe az egyházak finanszírozásában [The role of own revenues in Church financing], Közjogi Szemle 2014. (VII. évf.) 2. szám 47-53.