

The Role of Non-Profit and For-Profit Partnership in Regional Development – Experiences in North Hungary

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Abstract

Partnership is an important principle of the regional development policy in the European Union and literature concerning regional issues emphasizes its inevitability as well.

The article surveys some theoretical aspects of partnership in regional development, focusing on the problems of post-socialist circumstances.

In new democracies non-governmental sector had to be reorganized after 1990. Their incorporatedness into local socio-spatial system is sometimes weak, connections towards each other and the broader society are contingent. Very often NGOs try to fulfil functions originally obliged to different sectors (local self-governments, central authorities etc.). In economically backward areas they often try to create jobs and to contribute to regional added-value.

The role of partnership among enterprises is crucial in regional development. Economic clusters are present in the North Hungarian Region in many branches (biomass energy, tourism).

Energy sector can play a key role in regional development as well in achieving ecologically and socio-economically sustainable regions. The RUBIRES (2009-2011) (Rural Biological Resources) project is an international development project supported by EU initiative INTERREG IV. Different partners from Germany, Italy, Austria, Slovenia and Hungary participate in it. The final aim of RUBIRES is to set up ecologically and economically sustainable value-added chains through value-added partnership of enterprises, NGOs and self-governments. Activities of RUBIRES project can be divided into different working packages:

- WP1 Management and co-ordination
- WP2 Communication and the dissemination of knowledge
- WP3 Material-flow management
- WP4 Regional landuse-management
- WP5 Regional value-added partnership

Activities in different WPs need different skills, in some of them experts must be involved, but WP2 and WP5 concern topics suitable for the broad involvement of NGOs.

Separately from RUBIRES project a network of civil organizations is formed (“Megújulunk és Fejlesztünk” – We Reform and Develop). Our purpose is to highlight some key aspects of the development of both partnership and to point to possibilities of cooperation between them. Since both projects are still going on our results can reveal only some preliminary results.

1. Introduction

1.1. Statement of the problem, research methods

In regional development sustainability is an indispensable principle. It can be interpreted in an environmental, an economic and a social-institutional way. The utilization of local renewable energy resources means textbook examples of this approach. This topic is an important field for enterprises as a new promise of economic development and a growing market. On the other hand it is an interest of the non-profit sector, authorities and the whole population as well.

„Fossil fuel reliance is also causing increased external indebtedness for the least developed countries. Lack of access to decentralised modern energy services, favouring renewables is a key obstacle to a just and sustainable development, including industrial development.”

– NGO policy statement for the 15th session of the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD) in May 2007 –

To successfully realize such a project a broad partnership of different stakeholders must be organized. In Hungary different kind of partnerships (non-profit and for-profit) exist. Our opinion is that renewable energy issues effect the whole society, that is why preliminary work must be done to establish them.

The Eszterházy Károly College is an important actor of Hungary’s higher education in teachers’ training. Recently the institution is looking for other areas of competences and the Rural Biological Resources (RUBIRES) project is something new for us. The final aim of this project is to start up a regional partnership programme which could lead to a special regional cluster promoting the sustainable utilization of local renewable resources.¹

The aim of this paper is to summarize the questions and answers arisen during the RUBIRES project. In our article we are going to present some natural and socio-economic characters of the North Hungarian region and Heves County the broader and narrower target areas of our project. In the theoretical chapter we will have a look at the principle of partnership in general and in a Central European context. In this part we will introduce some basic facts about the Hungarian non-profit sector. We would like to demonstrate its multicoloured-ness, duality and main types. In the next part we will analyze some theoretical and regional patterns of for-profit partnership, namely some elements of cluster formation and some clusters in the target area.

After the theoretical chapters we are going to present the actions of a non-profit network. It is in principle a national one but its members are concentrated in the North Hungarian Region. Here we will show some elements of a survey about attitudes of NPOs of renewable and fossil energy sector. In the last part we will introduce some basic facts and results of the RUBIRES programme.

In the conclusions chapter we are going to answer the basic questions as follows:

What kind of partners can we associate with in order to build a successful value-added partnership?

How can NPOs contribute to the development of such a partnership?

¹ A cluster is only one option, the introduction of a „local currency” could be another possibility (Almássy T. 2009), but its probability is low. A cluster is a form what local actors can accept – according to preliminary research – and there are EU and Hungarian money resources available to support its formation.

What type of cluster can be developed in this topic?

Our article is based on the available literature and contains the results of a questionnaire survey where 181 NPOs were asked about their attitudes and knowledge on energy sector. Additionally results of interviews and workshops in the RUBIRES project were used as well.

1.2. The target area: The North Hungarian Region and Heves County

Heves County

In Hungary recently NUTS II regions are the main units of statistical data gathering, spatial development planning and areas of usage of EU regional funds. On the other hand counties are traditional territorial units of public administration and politics. In the last decade important activities of territorial development planning and allocation of decentralized development money sources took place in Hungarian counties as well. Our planned objective area is Heves County, but we extend our short description to the North Hungarian Region as well.

Location and nature

Heves County (NUTS III) is situated in the North Hungarian Region (NUTS II). The Region is in the North-East part of Hungary, it is the fourth largest NUTS II region of the country, accounting for 13429 km². Heves County has a relatively small area – 3637 km², it consists of 7 micro regions and 121 municipalities. (Figure 1)

The typical North Hungarian landscape is hilly and mountainous, the highest peak of the country (Kékes 1014 m) is situated here as well.

Heves County is a geographically diverse area; its northern part is mountainous (the Mátra and Bükk are the two highest mountain ranges in Hungary), while at south it includes a part of the Great Hungarian Plain. From south it's bordered by Lake Tisza, the largest artificial lake in Hungary.

The county has some streams and the most important ones are: the Eger, Tarna and the Zagyva. The River Tisza collects the water of these streams. Heves County has some spring waters and there are waters containing sulphur or carbonated ones (Parád, Bükkszék, Eger), and medical baths were set up on them during the Turkish occupation. Nowadays these are the foundations of health tourism. Its climate is cooler and wetter a bit than the national average. The geology and the natural vegetation of the region is varied very much. The mountains are covered by oakforests in higher regions one may find beech.

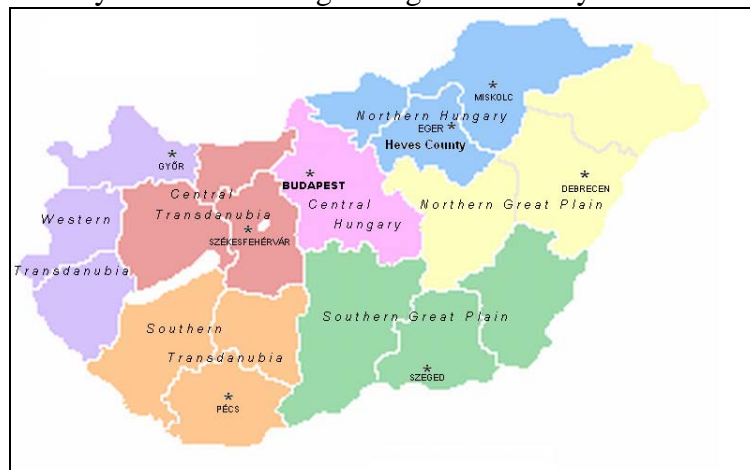


Figure 1 Regions and counties in Hungary (Source: own edition after CSO Hungary)

Population and social background

The Region's 1,276 million inhabitants are distributed in three counties: Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén 54%, Heves 27% and Nógrád 19%. Miskolc is the regional centre, while Eger is Heves county's seat with a population of 56.000 (2006). Bigger towns are Gyöngyös (33,553) Hatvan (23,134) Heves (11,522) and Füzesabony (8,335). The population of the Region and the county decrease in the last decade, there are extensive rural peripheries with the risk of unemployment. Mainly in small settlements elderly people are the only population and in certain micro-regions Roma population become dominant. Their culture is foreign to the Hungarian, the majority is not well-educated, among them unemployment is almost 100%. Small-size municipalities are unable to treat local tension and to contribute to successful social development.

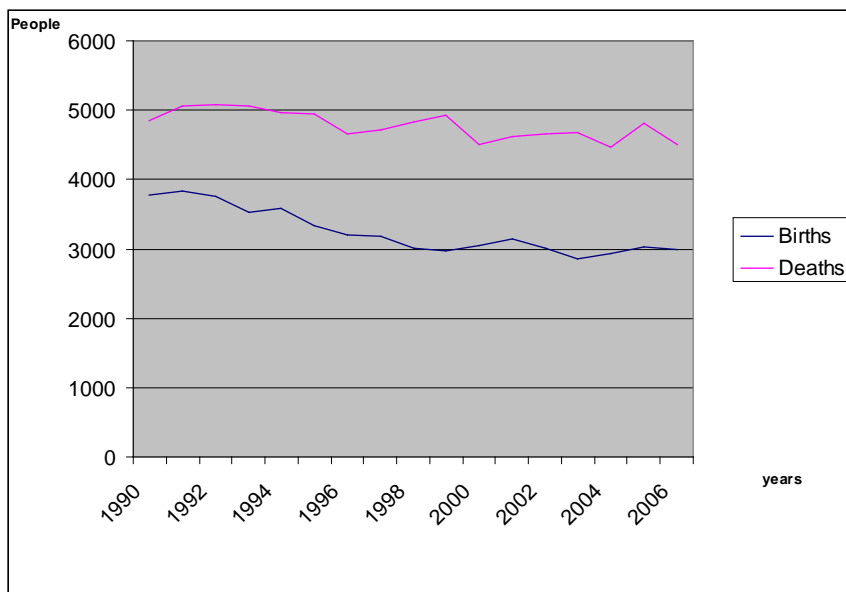


Figure 2 Reproduction rate in Heves County (Source: CSO Hungary)

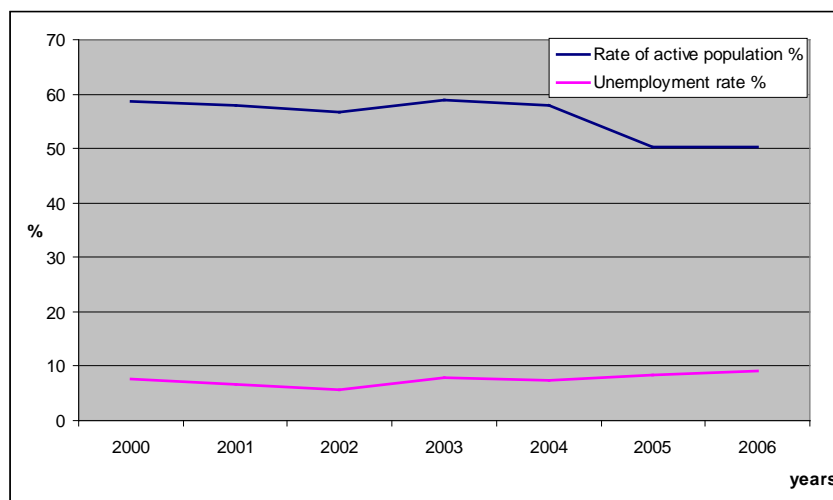


Figure 3 Data of economic activity and unemployment of the 15-64 years old population of Heves County (Source: The Development Plan of Heves County 2007-2013)

The rate of active population decreased during the last years, while unemployment grew in the county. These phenomena caused socio-economic risk in many areas. (Figure 2 and 3)

Economic situation and basic infrastructure

Ore mining is a traditional economic branch in Heves County, additionally building materials production and food processing industries, a significant amount of heavy industry was established during 1950s and 1960s. For example the Mátra power station was built on the lignite deposits of the area, and a number of engineering factories were established. Light industry provided jobs first and foremost for women. The county's profile was thus transformed from agricultural to industrial, a process accompanied by a moderate development in the services sector. After 1990, the change of regime large scale socio-economic changes occurred and consequently a significant amount of unemployment appeared. Industry is concentrated primarily in the Zagyva Valley (Hatvan), the area of the Mátra (Gyöngyös), and in Eger and its attraction zone.

The GDP of the Region accounts approximately 8% of the national GDP, and attracts 8-9% of the nation's foreign direct investment. According to EUROSTAT sources the North-Hungarian Region is the 6th least affluent region in the EU (in GDP/capita). The economy is dominated by the presence of SMEs, they employ the majority of labour force. Investment rate in Heves County exceeds the regional average but it is less than the Hungarian national average. (Table 1)

The share of the primary sector in GDP is higher in Heves County compared to the country as a whole, this phenomenon also appeared for the secondary sector, the tertiary sector has one of the lowest shares of the country.

The most important industries in the region are the chemical, metallurgy and metal processing, mechanical engineering, mechatronics, electricity and food industries. Nanotechnology, environment industry and renewable energy are promising sectors for the future with existing R&D facilities throughout the region.

Table 1 GDP, economic organizations, investments 2006

	Heves County	North Hungary	Hungary
GDP/capita (1000 HUF)	1 527	1 441	2 186
Registered enterprises	29 142	98 939	1 183 953
Joint ones from all enterprises	9 429	35 852	513 750
Enterprises with foreign interest	207	623	24 176
Foreign investment (m HUF)	159 225	469 093	13 911 258
Investment of economic org. (m HUF)	99 203	321 623	3 735 731
Investment per capita (HUF)	309 841	255 975	370 926

Source: The Development Plan of Heves County 2007-2013

Comparing with the regional average the county is in a good position watching the number of registered enterprises, but it is below the Hungarian average. The structure of enterprises show that individual forced entrepreneurs are in majority. Their lack of experience and capital make the economy of the area instabile and unable to compete successfully. (Table 2 and 3)

The quality of the agricultural land in Heves is poorer than in other counties, though the fields in the southern and central part of the county are fertile and the production of field crops is supplemented by vegetables, especially tomatoes and watermelons. There are two historic wine regions there (Mátraalja, Eger).

Table 2 The number of registered enterprises (per 1000 pers.) in 2006

	Joint Company	Individual	Total
Heves County	30	61	91
North Hungary	29	50	79
Hungary	51	67	118

Source: The Development Plan of Heves County 2007-2013

Table 3 The number of registered enterprises by economic branch and form (2006)

Economic branch	Total	From total				
		Ltd.	Inc.	Co-op	Co.	Individual entrepreneur
Agriculture, hunting, forestry and fisheries	1 844	232	7	63	132	1 340
Mining	26	18	-	-	4	4
Processing industry	2 072	700	23	13	295	1 022
Energetics, water	21	9	3	-	7	2
Construction	2 587	555	7	2	496	1 496
Trade, repairing	5 352	1 164	4	29	991	3 136
Tourism	2 146	217	1	1	241	1 678
Logistics, telecommunication	1 110	222	4	-	122	757
Finance	1 054	23	6	13	90	920
Real estate	9 210	926	7	63	934	6 613
Education	1 160	44	-	-	118	993
Health and social services	781	92	-	-	371	316
Other services	1 777	171	2	1	158	1 434
Other activities	2	-	-	-	-	2
Total	29 142	4 373	64	185	3 959	19 713

Source: The Development Plan of Heves County 2007-2013

The share of Heves County in the national highway network is higher compared to its share in the country's land area – the area is crossed by the M3 motorway. There are 283 kilometres of railway lines in the county, of which 47% (a relatively high share compared to the national average of 34%) were electrified. The most important railway is the section of the double track line crossing the county which connects Miskolc and Budapest.

The majority of the settlements are well-equipped with basic services (health, education, social and public services). An important exception is the lack sewage systems mostly in backward small villages, characterized by bad accessibility circumstances.

2. Theoretical background

2.1. Partnership as an EU principle in regional development

The importance of partnership in regional development has been increased in the last decade, as a principle it directs the regional policy of the European Union. (BACHE, I. 2010) A “deification” of the principle can be that even in the ESDP document “urban-rural partnership” was declared to be one important policy aim of the European spatial development. (ESDP 1999)

In rural development partnership is a decisive factor to mobilize local energy and to reach sustainable development. (MACKEN-WALSH, A. 2009) Differences between rural areas in Europe make a common explanation of partnership difficult. (DERKZEN, P. 2010)

Partnership can be followed in different parts of regional development. A crucial instrument of spatial planning concerning national, regional and local units. In the guidance and management of different programmes (mainly concerning rural development) partnership must be inevitable. In case of LEADER programme a trilateral (enterprises, NGOs and local authorities) partnership is a cornerstone. Partnership can be an important tool in project development and implementation as well.

The making of partnership in post-socialist countries is a great challenge for policy-makers and other actors of regional development. After many decades of state absolutism in almost every part of life the reorganization of bottom-up social structures seem to be one of the hardest tasks of societies. (MACKEN-WALSH, A. 2007, MAJLÁTH R. 2009)

Partnership in regional development in Hungary appears from the level of national frame documents (declared as a main goal in the National Regional Development Concept 2005) to the everyday works of Local Action Groups of the LEADER programme. Partnership prevailed during the elaboration of large national and regional concepts and strategies in the form of workshops and collection of comments from different stakeholders². (MOZSGAI K. - SOMFAI Á. 2004) In the operative programmes connected to the National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) huge amounts of resources are available for the organization of partnership even in special projects addressing partnership as their primary goal. Any candidate can get plus credits in tender evaluation who can muster partner organizations.

Notwithstanding distrust, lethargy and the lack of consciousness of self-interest usually prohibits the organization of successful partnerships.

Non-profit organizations are usually lead by non-state and non-profit interests and have criteries typical of formal institutions additionally they can be characterized by a certain degree of autonomy and voluntariness. The base of their functions are the free actions of citizens. These organizations are not parts of the state or the business sector. Their prior target is not profit-making, they rather spend their incomes and gains for public purposes. To a certain degree they have a formal, organized structure that is they are institutionalized. Important buzzwords of their profile are: self-governance, autonomy, self-regulation, independent activity and voluntarism.

An integrated part of non-profit working is partnership with other non-profit and for-profit organizations. Regulatory, legal and guarantee elements signal the co-operation between state

² We must note that telling and collecting comments is only a first stage of partnership. Stakeholders are often disappointed facing the fact that their useful ideas are forgotten by officials and eliminated from the final version.

and non-profit sector. In general these are permissive like state regulations which secure broader latitude. Non-profit organizations play a mediatory role between citizens and state, citizens and economic sphere. In order to enforce their interests they can infiltrate into the structure of power.

The most important motivation force of the co-operation with for-profit sphere is to gain resources. Members of the two sectors use products and services of each other, of course not to the same degree.

An important character of the non-profit sphere is the maximum rate of transparency, giving publicity to their values, the spread of their services and the development of their connections. Media can help to achieve these functions. Among non-profit organizations a worldwide „division of labour” is growing, but local, regional and national network formation is important as well. (RENKÓ E. 2005)

The re-birth of the non-profit sector in Hungary started at the last years of the communist era at the end of the 1980s.³ In a relatively short period the growth of the sector was dynamic. Kuti E. (1992) explains this with the constellation of five factors:

- Return to the original trend, a quick orientation to the shattered historic development
- The transformation of political and social structure: effects of changes occurring during the change of regime
- The chronic lack of welfare services: to satisfy citizens’ needs after decades of socialist system of economic shortages
- “Shift of responsibility” and structural change: a strong participation of state in the organization and financing of the sector
- A way of fight for survival during the crisis

The table (Table 4) shows the types of NPOs concretized by the Hungarian regulations. Here we may read some important elements of their founding, activity, closing up etc. as well.

In the first 10 years the number of non-profit actors were multiplied tenfold while a special structure of the sector was formed. (HARSÁNYI L. 1998) On the one hand concerning the numbers the civil organizations (associations and private foundations) are in majority. In this part the bottom-up initiatives, creativity and civil pluck prevail so individual a small group interests can influence them. On the other hand there is a much narrower set of non-profit organizations tied to the states and local-self-governments, made and partly owned by the state. These have considerable money resources their typical organizational forms are public foundation or public benefit company.

In 2006 in Hungary cc. 56. 000 NPOs were. 47% of them were foundations, 48% societies. On the other hand 46% of the whole support (totally 850 bn. HUF) was paid to public foundations and public benefit companies, only 11 % of the money was distributed to cultural (5710) organizations. The majority of these work on settlements having more than 50.000 inhabitants. 75% of settlements have no cultural NPOs at all.

The majority of existing NPOs function only at a settlement level and can not move to the micro-regional or regional level. Regional non-profit cohesion hardly exists in Hungary. (HORVÁTH T. 2007)

³ In 1987 a modification of law was implemented in order to make possible the legal acceptance of grants from György Soros (The Soros Foundation).

Table 4 The main elements of regulations concerning non-profit sector in Hungary

	Association	Public body	Foundation	Public foundation	Public benefit company⁴
Founders	Legal and natural person	Law	Legal and natural person, except the Parliament, Government and local governments	The Parliament, Government and local governments	Legal and natural person
Possibility to join, membership	Voluntary join, acceptance according to basic charter	Obligatory membership according to law or voluntary join	Voluntary acceptance of join according to basic charter	Voluntary join, acceptance according to basic charter	According to Company Law
Aim, basic activity	Aim decided in basic charter	Public function connected to membership	Permanent public interest aim	State or local self-government function based on law	To satisfy common needs of society
Possibility of economic activity	Only as a supplementary function	According to law	Only as a supplementary function	Only as a supplementary function	Primary function
To get legal personality	Court registration	Court registration	Court registration	Court registration and official announcement	Registration at the Companies Registry
Legal supervision	Public prosecutor	Authority indicated in the law	Public prosecutor	Public prosecutor and State Audit Office	Companies Registry
The destiny of property after closing down	According to basic rule or the decision of leaders or for aims of public interest	According to law	According to basic rule or with court judgement transferred into a similar foundation	According to the decision of the founder	According to companies' law
Closing down	Dissolution, merger	With law	If the aim is realized, time expires or merger	Demand ceases to exist or can be satisfied more effectively in another way	According to companies' law

Source: HARSÁNYI L. 1998

⁴ From 2010 this category was ceased and „non-profit ltd.” replaced it.

2.2. Networks and clusters

One main aim of RUBIRES project is to develop partnership based on renewable resources and to a certain degree institutionalize it. A possible solution can be a cluster which is an accepted form of co-operation among for-profit and non-profit actors as well.

A cluster is a network consists of enterprises and co-operative non-profit or publicly financed institutions whose members are located geographically relatively close and they work together in a certain economic branch. It can be based on subcontractor connections, commonly used technology, knowledge-base or used raw material. The phrase sometimes means institutions of enterprise development which build and manage such alliances.

The concept of cluster comes from researches concerning sectional and regional competition. According to experiences of the last decade enterprises can gain competitive advantages which can successfully integrate into the network of their entrepreneurial, institutional and social surrounding and regions that can create suitable frames for it. Global competition itself can not create clusters, a certain type and quantity of co-operation among stakeholders. Nowadays co-operation can create competitive goods only if beyond goods knowledge-based services are included as well. Innovation must play an important role in the creation of them. Literature very often examines networks of cluster enterprises together with the regional institutions.

The competitiveness of clusters depends on four factors, national or regional governments and authorities can influence all. (Table 5)

Table 5 Interrelations between competitiveness factors of clusters and government intervention

Competitiveness factor	Government intervention
Factor-supply (company resources and infrastructure)	Secure infrastructure
Demand conditions (mainly qualitative: growth rate, structure)	Government as market component, legislative process
Support and connected industries	Through competition, tax and financial regulations it can influence the circumstances of inter-entrepreneurial co-operation.
Entrepreneurial strategy, structure and competition to maintain competitiveness	Through the definition of possible enterprise forms and market structures it can limit strategic movements of enterprises

Source: KAJATI GY. 2007

Beyond economic goals clusters can aspire to the realization of targets of regional development, SME improvement and innovation policy. In these cases the managing organization of the cluster is a bureau integrated into the structure of a non-profit organization.

There are many ways to classify clusters, one method distinguishes vertical and horizontal clusters. Vertical ones are built up along a certain branch from value-added type connections, as the value-added of the product is growing firm by firm. In general they are formed around 1-2 bigger corporations. Horizontal clusters aim to increase the competitiveness of enterprises working in the region. These clusters concentrate on a certain economic branch such as tourism.

The development of clusters is a long process in which typical sections can be distinguished according to the literature. The “Observatory 8” research differentiate six steps in cluster formation.

Table 6 Types of clusters

	Industry-based cluster	Institution-based cluster	Network-based cluster	Knowledge-oriented cluster
Linking	Cluster-specific conditions (rhomb)	Cluster-based service centres or associations	Business networks (exclusive co-operations)	Networks promoting information exchange (opened surroundings)
Background	Regional specification: innovation system	Institutional economics, firm-based business support	Co-operative attitude, the development of long-term among partners	Continuous learning, the promotion of inter-entrepreneurial exchange of experiences
Cluster as a target	To facilitate inter-branch cluster development, support value-added chains and cluster-based innovation systems	Organic focus: cluster-based supports raising the improvement of size, diversity and thrift	Reinforcement of the business cluster: complement capacities	“Stimulated cluster” focal groups (spontaneous organizations), initiatives around assistant enterprises
Cluster as a method for business support	Integrated policies, cluster-based technological policies	Customized services and economic intelligence, the service centre helps the integration of policies	The utilization of cluster-specific knowledge: many levels of customized services	Mediation between the groups of related firms and of service sector
Dominant direction	National/regional	Regional/company	Company	Company
Examples	Porter-type clusters	Italian Regional Service Center (Italian School)	SME cluster (Californian School)	Groups of SMEs (Scandinavian School)

Source: LENGYEL I. – DEÁK SZ. 2002

The first stage can be named the phase of pioneer enterprises, its main character is the formation of the first firms. Their strength is the possession of a special local knowledge. He pioneers are usually followed by many spin-off enterprises. The second phase is about the organization of a special economic background as because of the starting of concentration,

additionally a special job market is formed and it means a stable base for enterprises. In the third stage in order to further ensure development during the clustering process one or more new organizations or institutions are formed in order to assess the special needs of firms joining the cluster and based on these individual demands to supply services. In the fourth phase the cluster attracts its broader environment as firms recognize the possibilities in the new milieu. Many outsider enterprises decide to join the cluster and settle down in the region dominated by the cluster, additionally new firms are formed continuously. Besides enterprises well educated workforce with special competences are attracted by the cluster. In the fifth stage a non-market based network of personal relations is formed among enterprises and NPOs, it helps to enforce information flow and the utilization of local knowledge. In the last phase a declining period starts, it can mean the cessation of the cluster or a new development direction of it.

There are many different systems of classification of clusters. According to some empirical studies made by Lagendijk four types of clusters can be distinguished. (Table 6) Their development tools and purposes are different.

In recent economic conditions competition among different regions strengthens. It is more probable that a confidence threshold is formed among local actors than among actors of remote locations. Literature states that the essence of a cluster is a “local social network” namely a co-operation of individuals and groups. (KAJATI GY. 2007) An important task therefore is to organize a dialogue among prominent people and to build an atmosphere of co-operation.

Porter (2000) defines regional clusters as a geographic concentrations based on innovative connections of co-operating companies, support services, financial and infrastructural (education, R&D) institutions, entrepreneurial alliances (chambers). Regional clusters can be divided into three sub-groups according to their spatial extents (LENGYEL I. – DEÁK SZ. 2002):

- Macro-cluster, a whole country is the spatial base
- Regional cluster, its spatial base is a region or a bigger city and its broader attraction zone
- Local cluster, they function in a commuting zone



Figure 4 Starting clusters supported by the regional operative programmes (Source: ZOMBORI Z. 2010)

Cluster formation in Hungary started in the beginning of the new millennia, the so called “Széchenyi Plan” Economic Development Programme in 2001-2002 started to give state subsidy to these formations. After the full EU membership of Hungary 2004 the National Development Plan 2004-2006 and the so called Economic Competitiveness Operative Programme contained EU and national money sources to support clusters. In the new 7 years financial period of the EU the New Hungarian National Development Plan (ÚMFT) divided the support of clusters into two groups. More developed clusters are supported by the centrally managed by the Economic Operative Programme (GOP) and less developed ones can get money from regional development programmes. In his later group two sub-classes were formed: 79 starter and 21 growing got EU subsidies since 2007.

As we can see on the maps the in he North Hungarian Region the formation of clusters is at he beginning, the majority of them was formed only in the last couple of years. (Figure 4 and 5)



Figure 5 Growing clusters supported by the regional operative programmes (Source: ZOMBORI Z. 2010)

The following list shows some of these in an alphabetic order (in brackets we may find the name of the centre of the cluster):

- Bioenergetikai Innovációs Klaszter (Bioenergetic Innovation Cluster)(Gyöngyös)
- Biomassza Energia Klaszter (Biomass Energy Cluster) (Kál)
- Borsodi Hotel Klaszter (Hotel Cluster of Borsod County) (Miskolc)
- EBIK - Energiabiztonsági Klaszter (EBIK – Energy Safety Cluster) (Miskolc)
- ENIN Környezetipari Klaszter (ENIN Green Industry Cluster) (Miskolc)
- Észak-magyarországi Informatikai Klaszter (North Hungarian Informatics Cluster) (Miskolc)
- Geotermikus Klaszter (Geotermic Cluster) (Eger)
- Kárpátok Beszállító Klaszter (Carpathians Supplier Cluster) (Sátoraljaújhely)
- Magyar Űripari Klaszter (Hungarian Space Indusry Cluster) (Miskolc)
- Magyar Anyagtudományi és Nanotechnológiai Klaszter (Hungarian Cluster of Material Sciences and Nanotechnology) (Miskolc)

- NOHAC Észak-magyarországi Autóipari Klaszter (NOHAC North Hungarian Car Industry Cluster) (Miskolc)
- ÖKOLAND Környezetipari és Hulladékgazdálkodási Klaszter (ÖKOLAND Green Industry and Waste Management Cluster) (Kazincbarcika)
- Szőlészeti és Borászati Klaszter (Cluster of Viticulture and Wine-making (Tállya)

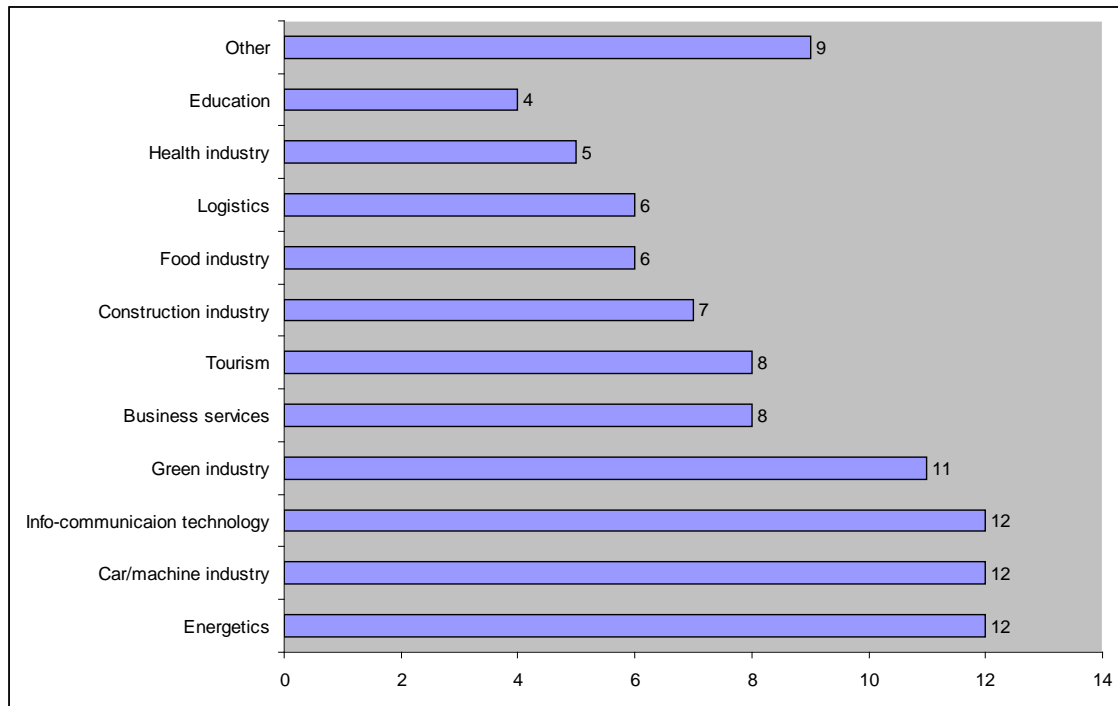


Figure 6 Key topics of clusters supported by Regional Operative Programmes (2007-2013) in Hungary (source: ZOMBORI Z. 2010)

The majority of clusters function in different industrial categories. (Figure 6) As we can see Energetic is one of the most popular theme of co-operation. In our narrower target area, Heves County two clusters work in this field. The Bioenergetikai Innovációs Klaszter (Bioenergetic Innovation Cluster) in Gyöngyös seems very important for us because in the core is a college (Károly Róbert College) so it can be a useful example for our case as well.

The establishment of a cluster in the County of Heves had been already proposed in 2005 (Gergely S., 2005). As claimed by the author the focal concern can be, in addition to the Mátra Heat Power Plant Close Corporation, heat power plants of towns and small-sized power plants to be established in the future (of which one example is the heat power plant of the Károly Róbert College near the Town of Gyöngyös – ‘Tass puszta’).

Further independent actors are enterprises involved in the collection and chipping of biomass (with their role being the main suppliers of power plants and heat power plants as well as being interlinked to land-owners). Certainly, this group is the linkage between the producers and power plants.

The third group of actors is represented by producers, land-owners and land-leasers involved in agriculture and forestry. Their role is to provide main and by-products for biomass energy production.

Finally, the fourth group of actors is the organisations providing scientific background to produce biomass energy and to the efficient operation of biomass energy-based systems. It involves municipalities as well as institutes of educations, especially of the higher education, conducting biomass-related research. In this case, the role of Eszterházy Károly College of Eger involved in the topic within the framework of this project is remarkable as well as that of

the Károly Róbert College in Gyöngyös with its Bioenergy Innovation Research Centre. (Figure 7)

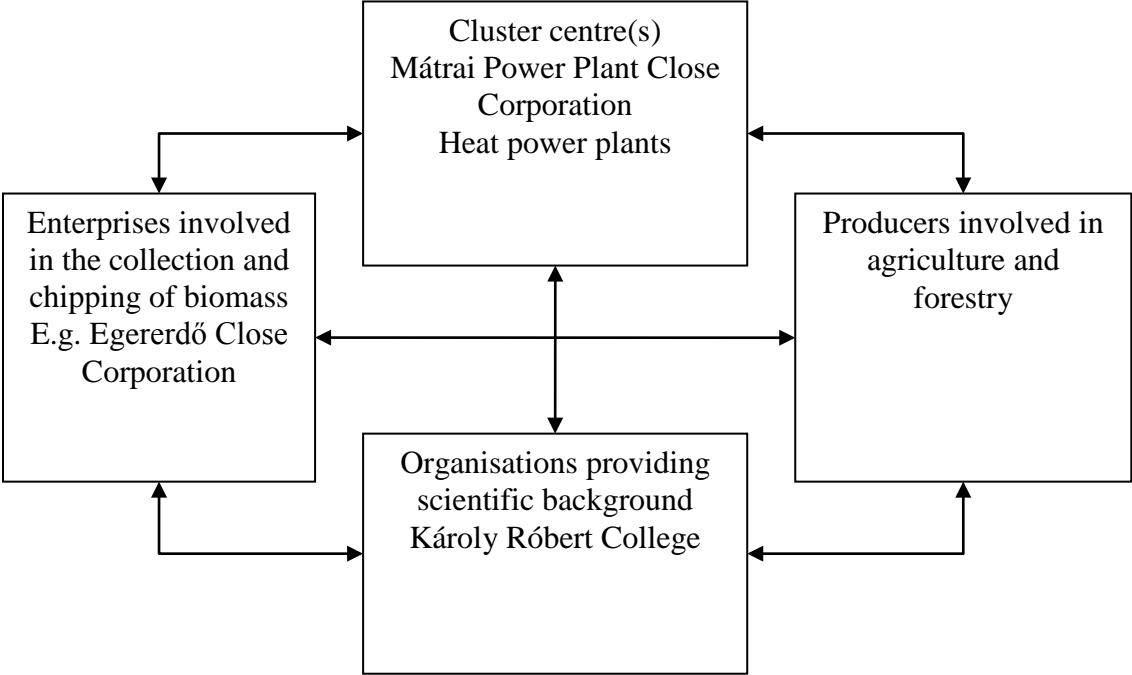


Figure 7 System of the Bioenergetic Innovation Cluster (Source: RUBIRES WP3 Biomass Potential Analysis, 2010)

3. Partnership in RUBIRES

3.1. NGOs in Heves County

Energetic question are crucial in recent societies concerning national, regional and local levels. To solve problems of this sector we need multi-sector approach since questions of cost-efficiency, supply-safety and environmental issues may arise. If we plan to organize regional energetic projects the opinion of experts, local authorities, economic organizations and NPOs are important as well. That is why it is important to get to know their opinion in general in energetic issues.

In our research we asked representatives of non-profit organizations in the region about their attitudes towards energetic questions.

In the first part of our questionnaire we asked them about their opportunities and activities displayed in this topic. The majority of respondents have not read the National Energy-policy Conception yet, but most of them have already heard of it. Almost 50% of the organizations do not know that their opinion should be taken into consideration in decisions concerning energy policy. It is promising that 20 of the asked NPOs have already committed themselves on questions of energy policy. The majority of these respondents are older than 50 years. If a power station were built close to their settlement 75% of the respondents would express his/her opinion.

To summarize this section of questions we may state that the majority of respondents have no information about the possibilities given by the National Energy-policy Conception and their rights to form opinion, however they would contribute to the decisions with their standpoints actively. Being aware of this it would be practical to increase the legal knowledge of NPOs through sending circulars or displaying professional knowledge on the website of the “Egri Civil Kapu” (Eger Civil Gate).

In the next session we asked NPOs preferences of energy sources and of different types of power stations. 93% of respondents preferred renewable energy resources to non-renewable ones, namely traditional energy production lose ground against environment-friendly new technologies, the rejection of the former ones is growing. Even the most preferred power station based on fossil energy resource is lagging behind the popularity of the most rejected renewable (biomass heating). The most accepted one is the utilization of solar energy and wind energy follows it. It is interesting that the rejection of nuclear power stations is extremely high, the refusal of lignite heating ones follows it. It is illuminating that almost 50% of electricity production comes from these two methods. (Table 7)

To summarize this section we may state that the support of renewable energy resources is extreme. The main reason can be the media which supports these ones while disapproving traditional fossil ones.

The next part of our survey is about the importance of deployment factors and principles of energy policy. Our results show that in case of deployment factors environmental issues became the most important. After it the renewable nature of energy resources comes, safety of supply is only in the third place. It is interesting that according to responses the national property is more important than the price of electric energy. NPOs prefer renewables to local resources. The time of economic return seems to be the least important for the organizations. (Table 8)

Table 7 Answers to the question: „ If a power station were built close to your settlement how would you welcome the followings?” Please mark them from 1 to 5! (1: least; 5: most)”

Types of power stations	Mark					Total	Average	Order
	1	2	3	4	5			
Lignit heated:	78	41	46	9	5	179	2,01	9.
Balck coal heated:	73	45	46	14	1	179	2,02	8.
Natural gas heated:	45	41	60	29	4	179	2,47	6.
Petroleum heated:	61	62	43	10	2	178	2,04	7.
Nuclear:	111	30	16	15	7	179	1,75	10.
Solar energy:	5	3	6	38	126	178	4,56	1.
Wind energy:	2	7	17	31	122	179	4,47	2.
Water:	9	16	39	41	73	178	3,86	4.
Biomass (wood etc.):	15	21	59	45	36	176	3,38	5.
Geothermic energy:	6	6	30	50	85	177	4,14	3.

Source: own edition

Table 8 Answers to the question: “In case of building a power station the next factors should be taken into consideration. Classify the next factors from 1-to 5! (1:least; 5:most)”

Factors	Mark					Total	Average	Order
	1	2	3	4	5			
Supply safety	1	6	14	61	93	175	4,37	3.
The utilization of renewable resources	4	3	13	52	105	177	4,42	2.
The utilization of local resources	4	6	49	62	57	178	3,91	9.
Efficiency	3	3	30	66	74	176	4,16	5.
The price of electric energy	3	6	26	68	75	178	4,16	6.
Time of economic return	8	24	55	50	42	179	3,53	10.
Environmental protection	1	7	10	23	138	179	4,62	1.
National ownership	7	12	22	39	97	177	4,17	4.
Improvement of employment	5	9	26	61	77	178	4,10	7.
The opinion of the local society	7	6	35	63	67	178	3,99	8.

Source: own edition

We may argue that among the three most important principles of energy policy the order of importance for NPOs is: environmental protection, supply safety and competitiveness.

From the supply safety point of view respondents appreciated hydroelectric dams the best solution – it corresponds to the opinions of experts. On the other hand it is surprising that NPOs award wind energy power stations the second most reliable. On the contrary experts state their operation as unpredictable and fractional. In the worst position we may find lignite and nuclear power stations. In reality their most important advantage is their predictable operation.

We can state that representatives of NPOs seem to be too committed to renewable energy and they may not know the exact meaning of supply safety.

In the examination of competitiveness we asked NPOs to estimate the cost of electricity-production in different types of power stations. The majority of responses awarded hydroelectric and wind power stations the best. In contradiction to this experts state that nuclear and lignite power stations are much more cheaper ones.

The most environmentally friendly utilities are wind and hydroelectric power stations. The judgement concerning nuclear power stations is rather wrong although their CO2 input is almost zero. According to respondents the management of nuclear waste is unsolved.

3.2. The “We Reform and Develop Civil Network”

From the above mentioned more than 50.000 NPOs 6200 organizations were registered in the North Hungarian Region. It means that in the area the number of such organizations are only 4 per 1000 inhabitants. (In comparison this rate in the Netherlands is 12,1!)

According to data of the system of National Civil Base Programme (NCA) only a small part of civil organizations take part in tenders in the North Hungarian Region. In 2009 only 912 organizations applied for support.

Civil organizations of the region have not recognized the importance of joining national and European umbrella organizations in order to protect their interests. In Hungary we have some networks whose main aim is to fulfil this function. We can mention the so called “Civil Bureaus” (It is illuminating that the latest note of the North Hungarian Regional Civil Portal dated in January 2008...). In our region the Pole Programme Network development Bureau in the city of Miskolc is an important institution but its main activity is the formation of clusters.

The aim of the “We Reform and Develop Civil Network” (2009-) is to make popular a principle of energy policy namely publicity and democracy. Indirectly it can contribute to the rational utilization of renewable energy resources and to the growing efficiency of rural development in Hungary.

The network was initiated by the Kárpátikum Közhasznú Alapítvány (Kárpátikum Public Benefit Foundation) from 8 co-operating and 4 supporting organizations. As we may see from the map, the majority of the organizations are from the region, but they can come from another areas as well. (Figure 8)

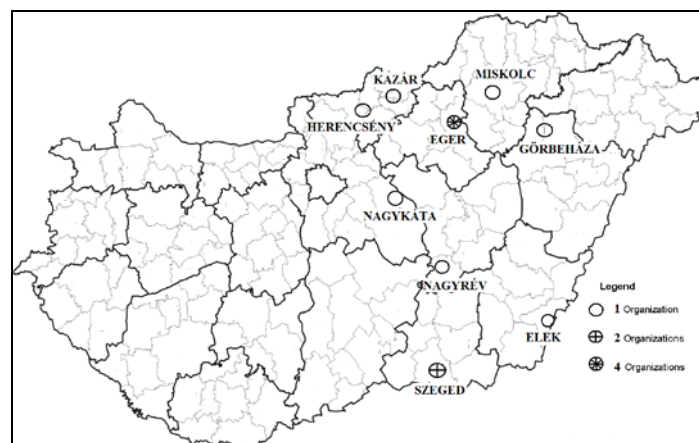


Figure 8 Participants in the We Reform and Develop Civil Network (own edition)

In the first year of existence members of the network completed the following actions:
The organization of three conferences and related workshops where participants got information about the main events, processes and actors of the energy sector of Hungary and

the European Union. Additionally there were presentations and conversations about the principles of energy policy, basic facts about renewable energy resources and the possibilities of the utilization of the tools of regional planning in renewable energy related programmes and projects. Participants of conferences could get information about the theory and practice of network development from experts of regional development. On the other hand experts working in practice and the science spread their experiences concerning the utilization possibilities of solar, wind, geothermic and biomass energy in Hungary.

On the first event 50 and on the second and third ones 30-30 participants registered and the majority took part.

Members of the network made a questionnaire survey among representatives of the NPO sector in Hungary about the National Energetic Concept and the opinions about renewable energy resources.

From the experiences of the conferences and the results of the questionnaire survey an information flyer was edited in 2000 copies. The aim of the flyer is to disseminate the results towards the broader society and to enlarge the network in the close future.

From the researches and the experiences of the first year we may draw the next conclusions.

Conclusions for the operation of energy industry:

- Renewable energy resources are highly accepted by the society;
- professional arguments are overwritten by political ones;
- instead of and „engineer” point of view a liberal business-oriented view is decisive;
- state regulations make the position of SMEs more difficult;
- multinational companies have a big interest-enforcing ability;
- high prices harm the competitiveness of Hungarian economic actors.

Conclusions for the development of the network:

- Many interesting NPOs but only a few inclined to act;
- a strong connection towards some NPOs – key actors
- conditions of unified interest-protection actions are established
- many NPOs look for short-term „profit” (too many promises less actions)
- no tight connection among enterprises and NPOs are established yet

The members of the network should intensify and broaden their connections, additionally everyone must formulate the value-added that they could provide for the programme. In order to start further institutionalization possibilities of a uniform appearance (permanent institution(s), symbolic shape).

The future aims of the network are as follows:

- To set up a long-term co-operation among participants and to broaden the circle of members
- To spread and to use exact knowledge during everyday actions
- To learn system-based approach and to spread environment-friendly and conscious way of living
- To prepare NPOs to join and actively form micro-regional pilot projects concerning decentralized utilization of renewable energy resources

3.3. Value-added partnership in renewable biomass energy (RUBIRES)

Emerging crisis in agriculture and energetics together with threats of climate change mean crucial problems in contemporary Europe. The growing utilization of renewable resources and the improvement of its efficiency can mean a solution for these problems. The Rural Biological Resources (RUBIRES) project aims to develop adjustment strategies for forestry,

agriculture and rural development. Target areas of different RUBIRES partners are rural ones and many of them face problems of high unemployment, decreasing population and declining economic sector.

The purpose of RUBIRES is to develop and implement strategies for a sustainable use of renewable resources and so increase regional added value. In order to reach these goals, new methods have to be developed and implemented. For example land use management is crucial to gain a sustainable local energy production. Some partners operate developed land use management system, while others are lagging behind so the transfer of knowledge is important in an international frame. The transnational exchange of knowledge can lead to a much faster regional development than it would be on a local or even national level.

The project is divided into different working packages (WP), and all partners must work in every working packages.

The WP 1 contains project management and coordination including the communication among the partners and towards EU authorities. These tasks mean the coordination and preparation of conferences/workshops/partner meetings, the writing and checking of reports, official representation of the project, financial management, project controlling and monitoring. The responsible (lead) partner is the Regional Planning Authority Altmark in Germany. This working package is about administrative processes that is why there is no space for NPOs partnership.

WP 2 is about communication, knowledge management and dissemination. The aim is to grow consciousness on using renewable resources. The actions of this WP offer qualifications for enterprises and stakeholders operating in the regional added value chains. An Internet website is edited (www.rubires.eu) to serve as an inner and external forum for the exchange of information. NGOs and NPOs are of great importance in this package. To gain wide public attention a competition for schools is going on. Civil partners are asked in many project partners to take part in it the judgement of student projects. For these actions the responsible partner is the Eszterházy Károly College in Hungary.

WP 3 is about material flow management, it focuses on the development and improvement of methods of regional biomass potential and manage material flow. The WP contains a regional analysis and assessment of material flows of agriculture and/or forestry and additional biomass potentials together with the demand of energy. The responsible partner is Havelland-Flaeming region in Germany.

WP 4 concerns regional land-use management, it concentrates on approaches to new instruments for an optimized land-use management.

In this package project partners analyse, compare and evaluate the regulatory framework and present planning instruments for territorial planning and their eligibility for legally binding regulations in terms of saving and developing biological resources. The responsible partner is La.mo.Ro in Italy.

WP3 and 4 need competences of agriculture and environmental sciences. Strategic documents of material flow and land use management made by experts must be discussed with different regional stakeholders. In our case in Hungary the participation of quango-type organizations is huge (eg. Regional or micro-regional development agency), the bottom-up type NPOs rarely participate.

The WP5 focuses on regional value added partnerships, to support regional economy through the implementation of management tools for chosen regional added value chains. During these actions different groups of stakeholders form strategic alliances (so called regional value-added partnerships) promoting an increased use of renewable resources. A further aim is to start so called follow-up projects in the future based on value-added partnership. The responsible partner for the management of WP5 is the EU Regional Management East-Styria in Austria.

This WP is the most important in RUBIRES from a partnership point of view. Without an active involvement of different social and economic partners there is no hope set up a sustainable and economically efficient value-added chain.

As we may see on the stakeholders' table the majority of (potential) partners seem to be beneficiaries of the aims of RUBIRES project. (Table 8) On the for-profit side the most important partner is the "Egererdő Close Corporation", a state-owned big company who tends the majority of the region's forests. They active in wood industry as well and plan to extend to the energetic side of dendromass utilization.

There are many SMEs in the area expressing their interests towards energetic utilization of biomass. The Industrial and Commercial Chamber of the county is the main link between RUBIRES and SMEs. The Chamber functions in other areas as an initiator and promoter of partnership (they initiated the so called „Geotermic Cluster” in Eger) On the other hand traditional energetic companies supply fossil energy seem to be disbeneficiaries. In the table the category "civil organization" include bottom-up organized NPOs. Their purpose can be divided into two parts, some of them interested in the development of local/ regional society and economy and others define themselves as green environmentalist ones. NPOs of this later category very often try to prevent any project concerning energy sector.

Table 8 Table of stakeholders of the RUBIRES projekt

Name of the organisation or person involved	Beneficiaries or disbeneficiaries	Interests, requirements	Potential cooperation	What should be done to further activate the interest group?
Inhabitants of the micro-region	+	Cheap energy, clean environment	As energy consumers in the distant future	They need to be motivated, raising of awareness
Municipalities of the micro-region	+	Cheap energy, local tax incomes, employment	Owners of pilot projects	Workshops and personal visits, study tours
Chambers	+	Extending enterprises	Contact towards enterprises	Closer involvement in the establishment of partnership
Development Agencies	+	Promote regional development	Professional background, experiences in project management	Closer involvement in the establishment of partnership
Eszterházy Károly College	+	Increasing competences	Professional background,	More intense communication towards the management
Civil organization	+/- (radical green organisations)	Cheap energy, environmentally friendly appliances, social and environmental susceptibility	Establishment of legitimacy	Closer connection in the elaboration of the concept
Egererdő Close Corporation.	+	Market, increase of incomes	Providing base material and processing, connects of entrepreneurs	Market establishment for base materials
Other enterprises	+/- (involved in the use of fossil fuels)	Higher profit for those intend to join the chain, insignificant changes for adverse parties	Increasing the local added value within the value chain	Demonstration of exact business opportunities, establishment of connections to an already existing chain

Source: Regional Concept of the Eger Micro Region Concerning Renewable Resources – draft version (2010)

One part-aim of the working package 5 of the RUBIRES is to create a working paper along which a future value-added partnership could be organized. The writing of this type of documents is not a regular tool of spatial planning, so in developing this concept the main principles were prepared together within an international partnership.

In our case professionals of the Eszterházy Károly College together with external experts paying attention to the discussion with the broadest possible partnership in the framework of RUBIRES programme would like to outline regional value-added chains using different types of biomass in the Eger Micro Region as a target area. Preliminary researches were done in the second half of 2009 (questionnaires, interviews, the analysis of available statistical data). Experts working in other working packages of RUBIRES partly finished their researches concerning biomass material flow management and land use management. So some intermediate results were available in the analysis of possible value-added chains.

Among the value-added chains we are willing to examine the traditionally existing ones in the region adequate to natural and social-geographical conditions of the area.

The most probable value-added chain in our target area is the one based on dendromass: According to researches the regional dendromass potential is considerable and in spite of intensive (but in total harmony with environmental and ecological stability and regularities) utilization it is not fully exploited. The biggest forestry company of the region is the Egererdő Close Corporation. Its activities are complex and is planning to diversify it further towards the energetic utilization of dendromass. (Figure 9)

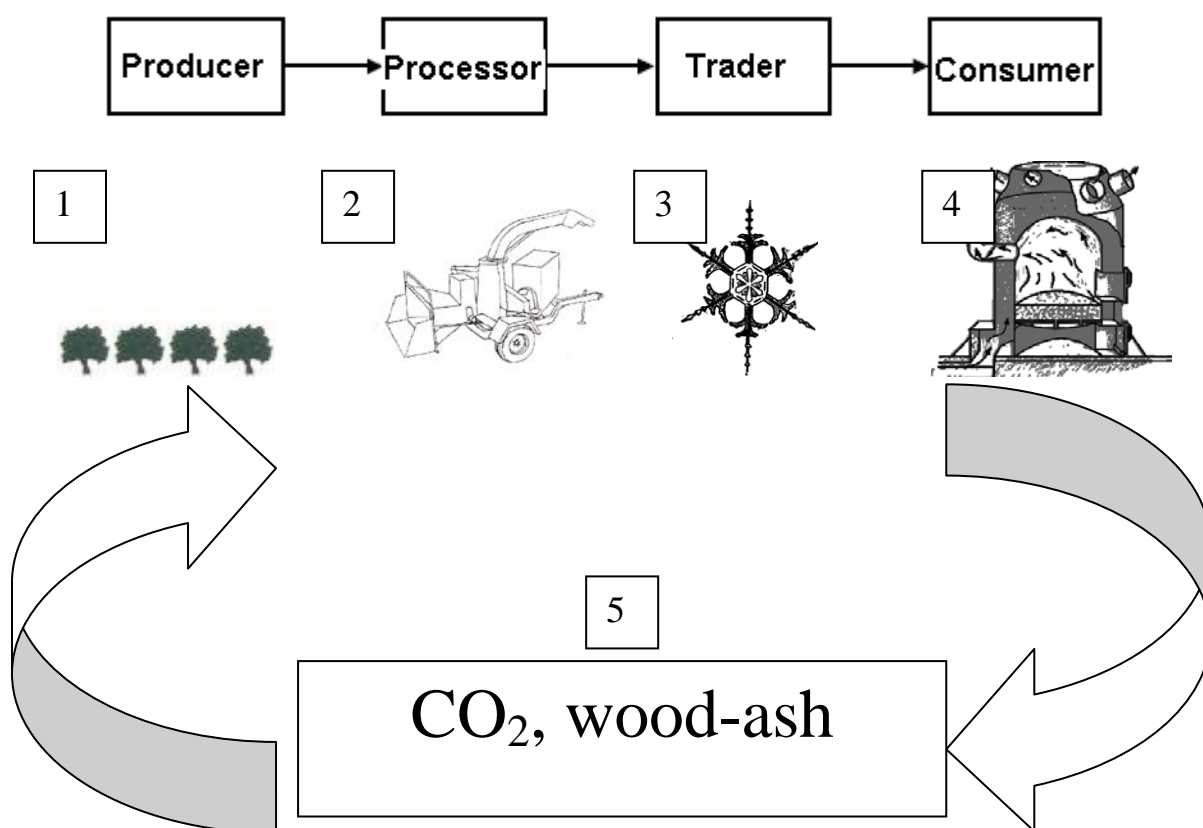


Figure 9 The graphic representation of a possible value-added chain. (Source: Regional Concept of the Eger Micro Region Concerning Renewable Resources – draft version (2010))

In this way the value-added chain would content timber production, to manufacture woodchops, to dehydrate and to store it. In the first round we would like local self-governments to invent heating systems based on woodchops. It would reduce their heating

costs, some jobs could be created and these projects would publicize these technologies among inhabitants. The question of wood-ash seems to be crucial from an environmental point of view. According to some experts it is a valuable natural fertilizer, but others qualify it as a dangerous waste. The Eszterházy Károly College has laboratory capacities to analyse the composition of wood ash and evaluate its grade of dangerousness.

Another possible value-added chain is based on vineyard prunings: Conditions of the target area, the Eger Micro Region (wine-growing area) theoretically would make the utilization of prunings for energetic purposes. Recent crisis of vineyard economic branch and the elementary stage of research towards this direction make it impossible to present even draft plans yet.

During the evaluation of the Regional Concept we rely on analyses and results of RUBIRES working packages 3 and 4, and on interviews (with enterprises, NGOs, self-governments and other institutions) made in the preliminary researches. In order to further develop our concept additional personal meetings, interviews and target-group oriented national workshops will be organized.

The recent form of the concept is the result of the work of internal and external experts working on the RUBIRES project. In the forthcoming months further nationalization and popularization will be made with interested partners resulting the development of the concept, the setting up of the operative stage of regional partnership and management.

The result of planning work is a document created by the target groups and experts together and as a utilization of that the starting and working of the value-added partnership in the target area.

4. Conclusions

The original purpose of this paper was to draft tasks of RUBIRES project and to answer the question what type of organization could be useful and realizable in the region in recent conditions. The North Hungarian Region and Heves County are one of the most backward areas in Hungary and in the European Union. Its economy is weak and the social conditions deteriorated in the last decades.

As we saw, the importance partnership grew in different phases of regional development. The form of it can vary from formal negotiations of the development of national and regional development document till the principally intensive and operative co-operations of LEADER programme. We pointed out that the modern Hungarian non-profit sector has a history of more than 20 years. Its composition is diverse according to the legal status or circle of interest. A dual structure could be showed in it with a small number of state-influenced and partly government-financed and influential organizations (including quango-s) and a huge number of NPOs with small financial background, but representing real bottom-up interests.

At the for-profit side clusters and networks are present in the region in many industries. Clusters are supported by the national and EU development sources and in North Hungary many applied for these tenders. For the implementation of the aims of RUBIRES project a cluster could be a proper way. In our opinion from the for main types of clusters we presented an institution-based cluster could be useful to be organized because of the dominant position of Egererdő Close Corporation in the area.

On the other hand the involvement of NPOs in RUBIRES is a must. It seems to be a problem that their opinion about energy industry mirrors a distorted picture (formed primarily by mass media) compared with professional opinions and local conditions. In consequence of this conflicts can be predicted around projects on biomass based renewable energy production.

To decrease harmful effects of these conflicts a co-operation is needed between the NPOs and the for-profit sector. Experiences of the “We Reform and Develop Civil Network” can be a proper starting point to establish an atmosphere of co-operation. On the other hand mutual information flow between the two sectors is only the first step, in a more institutionalized stage representatives of both sectors must be part of the guiding body of a future cluster.

In the RUBIRES different working packages contain different tasks to be done. In general responsible partners are the ones who own the proper experiences of the given profession. Results of WP3 and WP4 (a biomass potential document and a programme on land use management) can help to establish a broad partnership among different actors. Through these documents a management situation can be formed where partnership will be sustainable.

With successful follow-up projects the target area can be a test-ground for a “renewable energy region” thus promoting environmental issues and balanced socio-economic regional development. In a longer term this could be a model for other regions in Hungary or abroad as well.

RUBIRES project is now in halfway, but partnership development is going to take place in the next year. Ideas we presented here are only imagined things now, in order to realize them we must adapt experiences of our international partners, work hard together with different local stakeholders.

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