

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Between tourism and migration – spatial inequality of foreign property owners in Hungary

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Introduction

Tourism and migration are increasingly important elements of human mobility, but surprisingly little effort has been made to investigate the interrelationship between these in Hungary. The developmental phases, causes and consequences of migration are not independent of another, and more recent form of mobility, tourism, and *vice versa*. Changes in the volumes and directions of tourism and migration often complement and substitute each other. Property acquisition by foreigners is examined from a macro perspective, using secondary, register-based data. The main emphasis has been placed on analysing the spatial patterns of the phenomena studied.

Literature review

Researches on tourism and migration have tended to develop independently of one another in the second half of twentieth century (Bell and Ward 2000). Some types of the growth of tourism activity are increasingly considered to be a sub-type of migration in some areas of migration research. This is against a background of widespread increase in the numbers, formats, and spatial distribution of tourism. The energy of tourism researchers was devoted to investigating the new flows, and the causes and consequences of the emerging phenomena (McKercher and Lew, 2004). And exploration of the interrelationship between tourism and migration systematically started from the 1990s.

The continuum metaphor has become very popular in the literature, which deals with the tourism-migration nexus. Longino and Marshall (1990 233) found that vacationers anchored one end of the continuum of tourism-migration, while permanent migrants anchored the other. Warnes (1994), studying the displacement of Northern Europeans to Spain, combined the analysis of mobility forms with an assessment of the tourist background and different types of housing ownership and use. This resulted in a number of forms, ranging from the one-week hotel holiday to permanent residence. O'Reilly (1995 29) used the category of time spent in the destination, together with the way of life, to classify the international foreign community in Fuengirola, Spain. She identified five categories: expatriates, residents, seasonal visitors, returners and tourists. Later she distinguished migrant from tourist in terms of orientation to home, and identified four main groups: full residents, returning residents seasonal visitors, and peripatetic visitors (O'Reilly, 2003 305). These two kinds of typologies, produced by the same author researching a single area, reflect the fluidity of tourism-migration in reality.

Williams, *et al.* (2000) created a provisional continuum where international retirement migration ranged from permanent legally registered residents, non registered seasonal migrants, owners of second home staying for short period, to long-term tourists. Bell and Ward (2000) stated that tourism, as temporary movements, and permanent migration formed part of the same continuum of population mobility and proposed a unified classificatory framework, with time and space dimensions. Rodríguez (2001) stated that, in practice, there was a continuum of situations, which were difficult to assess quantitatively, but did not generate new categories of international retirement migration. Krakover and Karplus (2002 117) argued those potential immigrants represented a special case whereby their status on the tourist migrant continuum was not fixed but, rather, was changeable and conditional. Williams and Hall (2000a 3) also placed tourism-led migration and migration-led tourism at two ends of the continuum of personal mobility. After a decade of research, it seems that a general consensus has emerged as to the existence of blurred or grey zones between permanent migration and tourism, involving complex forms of mobility (Williams and Hall 2000b 20).

There are a large amount of questions to be addressed concerning the relationships between migration and tourism, particularly relating to where the dividing line or zone can be drawn between the two phenomena (Bianchi, 2000). This overlapping zone has tended to grow due to a process of convergence between work and leisure time activities (Clarke, 2004), the increasingly changeable labour markets, and rapid ageing in the developed societies, combined with changing income streams, the development of transport and telecommunication facilities and globalisation tendencies (Hall, 2005).

Additionally, connections between tourism and migration have been examined in relation to Hungary's geographical position, historical heritage and resulting geopolitical relations, together with the natural resources waiting to be exploited by the tourism industry (Bora and Korompai, 2001). There are however major gaps in our knowledge, which demand further research into a number of specific topics.

Data

The data for this paper were prepared at the Geographical Research Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. The original data files on tourism flows were provided by the Hungarian Central Statistical Office and are based on border and commercial accommodation statistics. The data on foreign property purchases originated from the legal register of the Local Governments Department of the Ministry of Interior. The original data files were selected, checked and harmonized by the authors.

Method

The research has quantitative method. Except for the general description of the context, we utilized shares and rates as statistical tools in the analysis. This avoids the distortions that are associated with relying on absolute numbers and facilitates an analysis of underlying processes. The spatiality of new second home owners was compared to the territorial distribution of international tourists and international migrants. Cartographic presentations are also used to explore further spatial interrelationships between migration and tourism.

The aim of contribution

The aim of this presentation is two-fold. Firstly, we analyse the spatial distribution of their new owners according to nationality. The spatiality of new second home owners was compared to the territorial distribution of international tourists and international migrants. Secondly, conclusions are discussed about the relationships between tourist and migration flows, set in context of the European Union's freedom of movement provisions, and the implications for Hungary in terms of near future.

Preliminary results

The distribution according to the nationality of purchasers shows that the majority of foreign-owned property (nearly half) belongs to Germans, while further significant participants are Austrians (nearly one-fifth), Romanians (nearly one-tenth) and Dutch people (nearly one-tenth). If we examine the national groups, which dominate the various counties of Hungary, we come to so interesting results. Germans represent the majority of foreign property owners in 12 counties and in Budapest. Austrians dominate in the common borderland. Not surprisingly, Romanians are in a majority in two counties in the southeast part of Hungary. Ukrainians dominate near the border just as citizens of Serbia and its predecessor.

These indicators allow us to conclude that Germans can be considered potential buyers in the whole of the country, and do not display particular territorial preferences. One of the factors explaining the dominance of German purchasers, and their spatial distribution, is likely to be the presence of other German-origin buyers in Hungary. As an example of the role of ethnic networks, they recruited new investors from their circle of friends and relatives due to their positive experiences of property ownership in Hungary. A similar trend also seemed to be occurring in Sweden (Müller, 2002b 178), although this is derived from a substantially different set of circumstances. Other citizens, mainly those from the surrounding countries, prefer to buy in the counties near the border with their own country, which is probably motivated by access considerations, combined with different attractions. Moreover, the possibility of circulation between the countries would play an important role.

It is interesting that Romanian citizens dominate in Pest county, surrounding the capital, relatively far from the Hungarian-Romanian boundary. This can be explained in terms of commuting to Budapest, where they are employed dominantly. Another motivational factor is the low prices of real estate in rural areas. Additional explanatory factors include the network of mainly ethnic Hungarians, who immigrated earlier this county and provided reliable information for the newcomers. Ethnic networks could play an important role in most of the neighbouring countries, where ca 3.5 million ethnic Hungarians live. Naturally, if foreign purchasers find a desirable environment near the border, they are unlikely to add to their expenses by travelling to more distant areas within Hungary. These facts show the strong distance dependency, which characterises purchases by foreigners. There is one characteristic exception, namely Slovakia. Despite the long common boundary and the substantial ethnic Hungarian community, there is no Hungarian county where Slovakian citizens are the dominant buyers. (In the previous chapter we detected that the seasonality of Slovakian arrivals and tourists were very characteristic but the extent was limited.) The level of international immigration to Hungary is very low compared with Romania, Ukraine and Serbia-Montenegro. These facts could reflect the influence of mobility experiences upon foreign property purchases. The distance dependency is high (for similar findings, see Müller 2002b), but the purchasing power and ethnic network of buyers - together with the uneven economic, social spaces in the receiving country - could modify the quasi-linear relationship.