

FINAL THESIS

Jorge Hernando Michael Cáceres

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**Evaluation of poverty and economic development
tendencies in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county during the
period 2014-2020 of LEADER Programme**

Insider consultant:

Dr. habil Krisztian Ritter PhD

Insider consultant's

Institute/department: Institute of Rural Development and
Sustainable Economy/ Department of Rural and Regional Development

Created by:

Jorge Hernando Michael Cáceres

Gödöllő

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1. INTRODUCTION

Europe has a focus on developing rural areas and improve quality of life for its citizens. Via a bottom-up approach, the LEADER program was founded at the beginning of the 90s by a group of officials in the European Commission (EC) to solve the problem to higher demands of rural population and giving alternative ideas to the top-down approach that ruled the policy making during the second half of the XX century.

“The LEADER approach is based on community development principles since it assumes that local actors know in detail the needs and the problems of the territory in which they live” (Prusa, Konecny, Hrabak, 2022: p. 2).

Hungary joined the EU in the middle of 2004, and just then, the country, as a member state, and its citizens could be eligible to participate in this program. LEADER had 2 phases prior the accession of Hungary in the European Union, the first one between 1991-1993 and the second between 1994-1999, leaving the country in situation of disadvantage compared to its European peers considering the decade of delay compared to its European peers.

However, by 2007-2013, when the program took a key role in the rural development policy of the EU, Hungary could be included to apply and since then, Local Action Groups (LAGs) and communities started its journey to work with the LEADER approach to improve rural areas.

In the phase 2014-2020, LEADER included the Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) to add a more holistic approach and let the rural communities to apply for multiple funds, “CLLD may be applied under the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund (EMFF), the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)” (ENRD, 2021).

Europe has seen a general increase of people moving to urban areas, despite this tendency have lost speed since the beginning of 2000, the population, between the period of study, living in urban areas saw a significant increase.

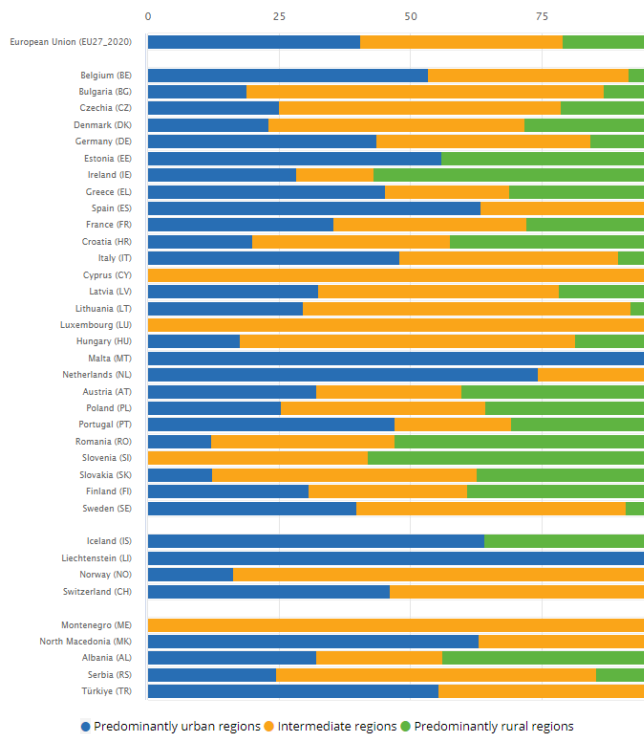
Hungary is not an exception of this phenomena, and the country has longstanding traditions based in their rural areas, its population is proud of their roots, their unique language and culture and keeping rurality wellbeing is a key element to keep them intact.

According to the World Bank, by 2014 the rural population in Hungary represented 29.8% of the total population and by the end of 2020 these proportion decreased to 28%.

By 2021, 30.5% of EUs population lived in rural areas with big differences among EU members, with Slovenia having 44.5% of its population living in rural areas while Malta had only 2.5%. Hungary remains, with other countries, in the middle of the balance, having less than 30% of their population living in rural areas.

Figure1: Distribution of population according to the urban-rural typology in EU member countries, 2021 (%)

Source: Eurostat (2021), 2024



According to the Hungarian national census of 2022, 70.16% of the population lives in urban areas, while only 29.84% lives in rural areas. However, the census also concluded that “housing stock now stands at 4.6 million dwellings, 21% of which are in Budapest, 52% in rural towns”.

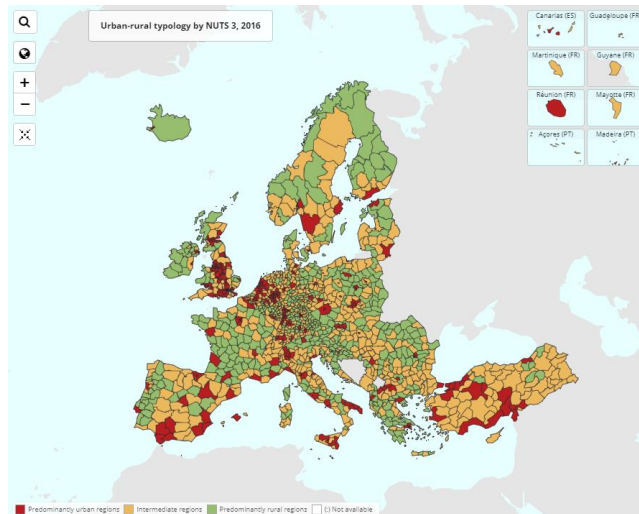
The European Union, in connection with international organizations have developed 3 types of territorial typologies to collect data that can be later used for analysis and creation of policies that

will impact millions of people, these are: Grid typologies, Local typologies and regional typologies.

The main characteristic of these methodology allows to have information that can be cluster, and divided by, e.g.: rural grids, urban centres, etc. It also divides the territory of the EU-27 in LAU's (Local Administrative Units) that mainly comprise, or communes and it can be used to refer the degree of urbanization to identify cities from towns or rural areas. Finally, with NUTS (Nomenclature units for statistics) allow officers, policy makers and universities to collect information in aggregated levels, also known as NUT1,2 and 3 were NUT3 is the smallest and detailed unit of information.

Figure 2: Urban-rural typology, by NUTS 3 regions in EU member countries

Source: Eurostat-Gisco (2021), 2024

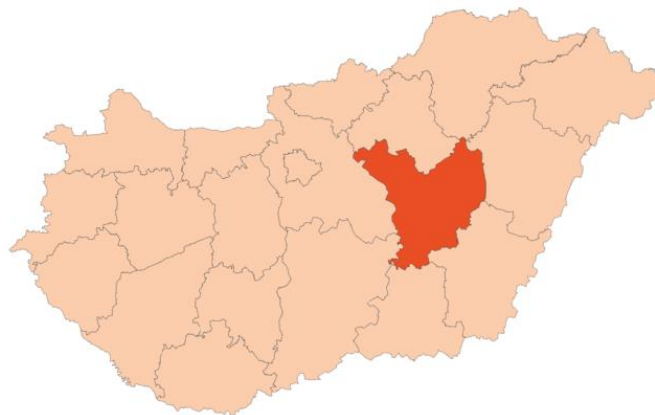


Specifically, Hungary can be divided in 3 NUT1, 8 NUT2 and 20 NUT3. For the purpose of these research, the NUT3 of Jász-Nagykun will be subject of the review as part of the territorial place of action of the 5 LAGs or HACS (in Hungarian), Közép-Tisza-Zagyva Vidékfejlesztési Egyesület, Tiszazugi Leader Egyesület, Nagykuságert Vidékfejlesztési Egyesület, Jászagi Kistérségi Helyi Közösség Egyesület and Tisza-menti LEADER Közhasznú Egyesület, to assess the development trends of the LEADER program in this NUT3 to contribute on reducing poverty and promoting

economic development in rural areas in alignment with the Rural Development Program (RDP) for Hungary during the period 2014-2020.

Figure 3: Census 2022 – territorial data of Hungary by NUT3, county Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok

Source: KSH (2024), 2024



The goal of the thesis was to evaluate the impact the LAG Közép-Tisza-Zagyva Vidékfejlesztési Egyesület (KTZVE) in its territorial scope, using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodology, via questionnaires to the local communities, local authorities and members of LAG, and deep analysis of secondary data, however, the language and economical limitations for a foreign student without the proper assets to move between Budapest and Szolnok did not allow reach the main goal.

Due to the above mentioned, this thesis will focus on evaluating the development tendencies in the NUT3 Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok where these 5 LAGs as the local instruments of LEADER have presence, to reach two of six pillars of the Rural Development Program (RDP) for Hungary in the period 2014-2020, through a quantitative analysis of the poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas.

Understating the impact of programs such as LEADER, can set a good example to other regions in the world such as Latin America, where Colombia and Venezuela (my home country) have a

key role considering their geographic location in the northern part of the region and the size of the border they share. The development of rural communities can boost the economy of both countries and reduce levels of poverty and criminality that are a main problem nowadays in the rural areas.

1.1 Problem statement

Despite being a country with an average rural population, compared to its European peers, Hungary is facing an important migration from their rural areas due to lack of employment, deindustrialization and the lack of education and social life, among other reasons.

For the period 2014-2020, the RDP for Hungary outlined how the country had to set its priority for the use of 8.5bn EUR from the European Union, national co-funding and national financing, *“putting emphasis on actions related to restoring, preserving and enhancing ecosystems, promoting food chain organizations and risk management in agriculture and promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas”* (European Commission, 2022, a, p.1.).

However, the country has a strict policy to rural fundings, making it difficult for rural communities to receive grants and resources to develop their local areas, generating a disparity with the cities and more urban areas. Therefore, the ability of organized communities via LAGs to receive these funds and instrumentalized the six pillars of the RDP may not be as efficient as it could.

The LAGs as per EU data that have an active participation in the country are 103, (ENRD, 2024). The NUT3 Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County counts with a total population of 355.809 persons (2011: 325.024 persons) with a population density of 64 persons/km² and is under this territory that 5 HACS have an active participation to fulfill RDP goals and objectives and improve the quality of life in rural areas.

Good quality life can be related to education and job opportunities, as well as access to health care system, and Hungary faces problems to fulfill these requirements in rural areas. By 2020 32% of the settlements had no kindergartens, reducing *“Educational outcomes in Hungary (that) are below the EU average. At the age of 15, mean levels of basic skills are significantly below EU averages,*

and have even decreased since 2009, with the sharpest declines occurring in science” (European Commission, 2021, b, p. 50), concentrating education in big cities and the capital cities, increasing the migration from rural areas.

Young population see the big cities as a hope or the place to find better opportunities and the trend is to remain there, due to this fact, the implementation and evaluation of LEADER programs in rural areas makes it more important to proof the impact that it may have in rural areas to maintain their communities, enhance social capital and provide opportunities to the young generations, becoming an attractive destination to settle down.

The social added value of LEADER is taken under review in the academia, due the difficulty to get reliable data *“the debate on the merits of the programme remains open. Part of this controversy could be attributed to the difficulties of generating a concrete hybrid between exogenous and endogenous approaches”* (Chatzichristos, Perimenis, 2022, p.366).

Based on the above mentioned, understanding the impact that LEADER have on poverty reduction and promoting economic development in rural areas by using a quantitative analysis can give clarity to policy makers as well as empiric lights to LAG members and local communities to better address the instrumentalization and use of EU and national funds.

1.2. Goals of the thesis

- My general goal is to assess the development indicators of rural areas such as reducing poverty and promoting economic development in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county, Hungary during the LEADER program 2014-2020. To be more specific, the goals of the thesis are as follows:

1. Investigate the development tendencies on poverty reduction in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County, Hungary during 2014-2020 of LEADER program.
2. Establish the role of LEADER programme in fostering economic development in rural areas of Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County, Hungary.
3. Interpret the results of poverty and economic development in the NUT3 Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County, Hungary

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Eurostat, a rural area is an area where more than 50% of its population lives in Rural grid cells, as used in the degree of urbanization, where Rural grid cell is: “*grid cells that are not identified as urban centres or as urban clusters*” (Eurostat, 2018).

Degree of urbanization as “*the degree of urbanization classifies local administrative units (LAUs) as cities, towns and suburbs or rural areas based on a combination of geographical contiguity and population density, measured by minimum population thresholds applied to 1 km² population grid cells; each LAU belongs exclusively to one of these three classes.*” (Eurostat, 2023).

Hungary defines rural areas as “a city, a town or village (that) has less than 10.000 inhabitants or has more than 10.000 inhabitants, but the part of the city is an outskirts and there are rural settlements”. The “rural areas” definition covers more than 3000 cities, villages, towns, more than 4 million inhabitants and over 84,000 km² area. The definition recognizes the existence of mixed rural/urban areas” (OECD, 2020).

Is under these conditions and criteria of rurality and rural areas where LEADER program and the LAG’s have their spectrum of action, defining LEADER “the EU’s participatory and bottom-up approach to involve rural people in community led local development through local strategies, local projects, and decision-making processes” (EU CAP Network, 2022).

The RDP support is the second pillar of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) where programs such as LEADER are entitled to receive funding, to achieve their goals. By the period 2014-2020 the amount of public support allocated to the RDP was 8.524.929.333 EUR and to achieve the two goals under review the allocation of funds reached 1.329.800.931 EUR, representing 15.6% of the total budget, expected to create 4.000 jobs in supported projects and 500 jobs via LEADER, which received 236.497.944 EUR or 2.8% of the total RDP.

Furmankiewicz et al (2021), explored dynamics of selection process at local level and how the decision making influenced on the funding allocation for the programs. As she wrote, the goal of LEADER program is “*that actors responsible for local development act in compliance with EU rules and structures (e.g. transparency in EU funds management, ensuring share of non-public*

stakeholders in project selection councils, social minorities inclusion idea), while pursuing their own local goals” (Furmankiewicz, Krzysztof, Macken-Walsh, 2021, p. 359).

The study was conducted over 15 LAGs in rural Poland using qualitative research and a non-probability sample for the sampling selection. The result showed that *“A project was considered compliant with the Local Development Strategy (LDS) when it was first compatible with at least one general objective”* and that *“a broad tendency for public sector representatives to allocate funding for village renewal project across communes”* (Furmankiewicz, Krzysztof, Macken-Walsh, 2021, p. 362). Showing that in eastern Europe is still a tendency where public officers has a more active role in the policies and local action than organize local communities.

To finally concluded that the *“analysis evidences unwritten but widespread rules favouring allocation of funding proportionately and fairly across territories rather than on the basis of project application scores, which is the procedure prescribed at EU level”* (Furmankiewicz, Krzysztof, Macken-Walsh, 2021, p. 363).

Fernandez, et al (2019), studied the best methodology to set a prioritization order of funds received to LEADER in Lagodekhi, Georgia. To demonstrate the best way to set priorities, they compared the ANP methodology with an unsophisticated prioritization methodology.

Highlighting that key organizational driver of the LEADER program in a community is the LAG, where the *“Local Action Group (LAG) has the objective of promoting the development of the territory from an integrative, participatory, and multifunctional perspective. And is the LAG who shall lead”* the *“road map that establishes the strategic lines that allow the transition towards development. This instrument usually takes the form of a strategic plan for the development of the territory”* (Fernandez, Nekhay, Estepa, 2019, p. 1).

The results showed that, the ANP methodology followed a stronger consistency according to its territory and suggesting the use of funds to diversify local economy and fulfill multiple objectives, in contrast with the other methodology which suggested that use of funds should be used on civic and agricultural improvements, having these two, low relationship with the rest of needs of the community.

Concluding that Processes that fail to consider elements from various spaces generate results that are inconsistent with the actual interests of an area and LEADER aid must be carefully spent on

the links among the economic, social, and environmental dimensions ..., to foster production diversification within and outside the farming areas (Fernandez, Nekhay, Estepa, 2019, p. 1-7).

Valqui (2009) investigate the work done in a town in Denmark under the LEADER+, with the purpose of highlighting best practices to structure, design and implement projects for local development, and that these projects followed the RDP and EU policies.

He stated that, the Agricultural Council has endorsed the EU strategic guidelines for rural development. These guidelines outline a strategic framework and various priorities and choices that Member States may incorporate into their national strategic plans and rural development programs. At the EU level, these strategic guidelines hold significance in alignment with other EU priorities (Valqui, 2009, p.803-810).

In this paper, the author also emphasized that, with LEADER as a local support of agriculture and manufacture industry in the form of small and medium enterprises play a key role for local development and it has been already an effective European Union program that has engaged with communities and individuals, while also integrating agriculture, food production, local development, environmental considerations, and overall quality of life.. (Valqui, 2009, p.803-810).

Concluding that, numerous initiatives were present in the fields of art, culture, ecology, and tourism. Yet, there was a noticeable absence of innovative projects within small industries and IT. This highlights the importance of promoting the LEADER+ programme within the small industries and IT sectors. (Valqui, 2009, p.803-810).

Chevalier et al (2022), evaluated the governance of EU program in France, Spain and Hungary, using an assessment of excess amounts to delineate and assess territorial governance, along with an examination of learning phenomena, revealed the following: *“In terms of LAGs, as a percentage of overall employment, the quantity of jobs generated or sustained equates to 0.2–2% of total employment. This figure remains quite insignificant, underscoring the limited influence of LEADER on the net creation of jobs”* (Chevalier, Vollet, 2022, p. 173).

In the case of Hungary, the *“LAGs are structured around a handful of local elected representatives and managers. The lack of social capital circulating in the network weakens the cohesion of the partnership and the possibilities for convergence of local arrangements”* (Chevalier, Vollet, 2022, p. 178).

The extensive use of the LEADER program for strategic purposes in Hungary generates limitations to the independency of local communities, whereas in France and Spain, the higher level of autonomy given to local population in establishing partnerships influences their operative approach (Chevalier, Vollet, 2022).

By getting a deeper knowledge on the results of the LEADER program in the effectiveness of Rural Development can be a hard task, as considering that during the period between 2007 and 2013, the incorporation of the LEADER programme into the EU rural development policy (known as 'mainstreaming') generated a mix of positive and negative outcomes.

A significant downside appeared to be the relatively low job creation rate and the high costs associated with each job established. Similarly, while success stories were often presented, they were frequently viewed as products of pre-existing social factors such as strong social capital, community empowerment, decentralized governance structures, and successful entrepreneurial endeavors (Chatzichristos et al, 2022).

LEADER shall not be seen as a primary source of funding of settlements or regions as this responsibility must remain on the official government, in local, regional or national level, therefore, LAG's should just "supplied the funding that was lacking to finance everyday activities in the locality, which continued to focus on "business as usual" and that complementary role means being a help of current national policies, poverty and marginalization is not a consequence of bad LEADER approaches.

However, the bottom-up policies must be kept under the radar and results of the analysis shall be Incorporated within fluid and continuous operations, this methodology is known as 'developmental evaluation' (DE) and has been increasingly embraced within social capital and social innovation spheres (Chatzichristos et al, 2022).

Finally, if policy makers want to give a better support to the poorest areas of their countries, they shall allocate more funding to LAG's in these regions, considering that Support is primarily allocated to territories that are more developed, even though LEADER (and rural development in general) is typically linked to underdeveloped and peripheral areas (Prusa et al, 2022).

Tremblay et al (2020), used a developmental evaluation (DE) to develop a model of supportive housing for teen families, as they stated, "*DE emerged as a promising means for addressing*

complex issues” and that this evaluation method has been used “over the last 20 years as an approach to evaluating complex, emergent initiatives in the early stages of development” where the process is to gather “*evidence ... and used to inform program design and implementation decisions and to guide adaptation to the dynamic, ever-changing realities in which community initiatives are often situated*” (Trembley et al, 2020, p. 1).

The research highlighted to be efficient under an environment where is difficult to “*attribute changes to specific programs given the multiple confounding variables in complex environments*”. (Trembley et al, 2020, p. 2) They collected data from different resources such as minutes, focus groups and photovoice’s and they analyzed it using cyclical and iterative process like ongoing feedback.

The results showed that DE Offered a versatile method for nurturing learning to swiftly adjust programs and allowed for continuous evaluation of program progress, identification of effective strategies, recommendations for adjustments, and guidance on future approaches (Trembley et al, 2020) and concluding that this evaluation process helped to develop solutions to families with the use of data collection in complex conditions.

Shea, J et al (2017), explained how they used of developmental evaluation is an efficient system of organizational learning in the context of San Francisco, USA. The, explained that DE as designed to suit the characteristics of emerging programs. In doing so, it embraces the notion that the program theory is itself emergent, potentially incomplete, and may require a transformative process that involves challenging assumptions, norms, and goals of the program (Shea, Taylor, 2017).

However, DE also accepts that changes are not always desirable, for that reason, the goal of the DE is that the evaluation process is useful and efficient for the group, team, or organization.

Some of the results showed how The DE team gathered data and participated in reflective dialogues, through which they pinpointed a potential source of error: a discrepancy between two outlined program objectives - enhancing the leadership skills of community members and establishing the necessary network connections to foster long-term community resilience (Shea, Taylor, p 84-93, 90), but they also highlighted as limitations that this method is time and resource intensive, so the success of these method will depend on the commitment of the community.

Gonda et al (2023), studied the case of Hungary and how “*how agricultural initiatives such as Community Supported Agriculture, ... can help situate questions of sustainable rural politics into a broader agenda of democratic governance*” (Gonda et al, 2023, p.1). For this purpose, they used qualitative research using interviews in the country.

The results showed that since 1990, Agricultural subsidies in Hungary do not facilitate the advancement of non-conventional farming practices. Following Hungary’s accession to the EU, Hungarian farmers welcomed the CAP’s agro-environmental program. In 2004, around 25% of utilized agricultural land participated in the agro-environmental program. However, as of 2017, this figure decreased significantly to just 8% of utilized agricultural land remaining under agro-environmental measures (Gonda et al, 2023).

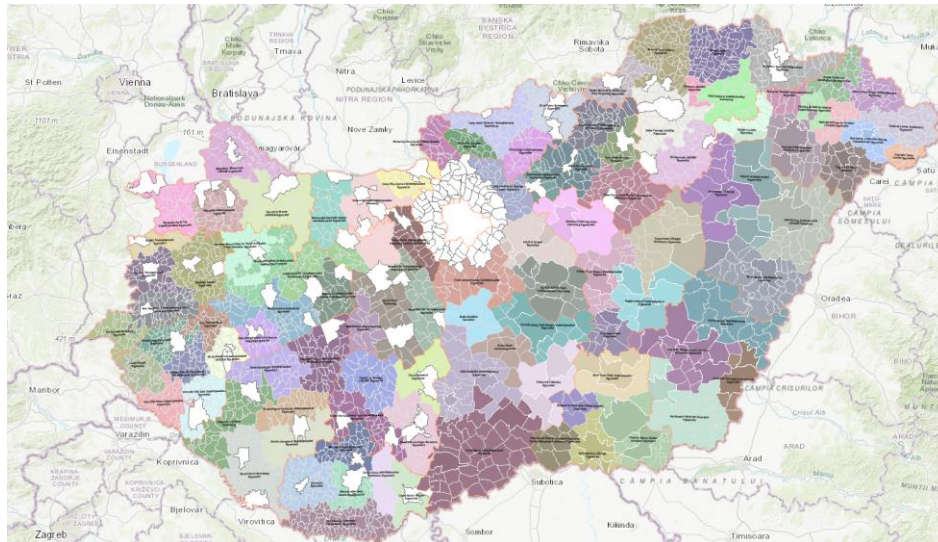
And concluded that, one of the challenges that the Hungarian case is essential in food democracy because even as the best form of locality meanings need to be questioned and repoliticised. Additionally, as governance and ownership issues need to be more effective, organized, and formalized it is important to have them at the regional level and develop strategic international alliances as it may even create important solidarities between places and nations (Gonda et al, 2023).

From those results, we can imply that in the Hungarian context, the LAG’s, as the instruments of communication across social actor such as, enterprises, local authorities, and NGO’s, can play a key role in “*collectively re-think the industrial food system and educate consumers so that they become a political community rather than an individual one (mindful consumers)*” (Gonda et al, 2023, p. 10). Where this aim could lead to a higher participation of Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) in rural areas.

The LAG (Local Action Group), or HACS in Hungarian, Közép-Tisza-Zagyva Vidékfejlesztési Egyesület (KTZVE) is 1 of the 103 HACS as per EU data that have an active participation in the country (ENRD, 2024). Founded in 2008 It covers 17 settlements with a population on 38.285 inhabitants out of which 16.507 live in cities. Having all these settlements the Tisza River as a common denominator and with 44 members registered, their goal is to enhance social capital in the community, while improving quality life and supporting local traditions.

Figure 4: Map of 103 LAGs in Hungary (2014-2020)

Source: Lechner Tudásközpont, 2024



The second HACS, Tisza-menti LEADER Közhasznú Egyesület goal is to help the region catch up and slow down its decline. To achieve these goals, we want to seize the opportunities of the LEADER program and to build the future of the region based on the resources found locally, its territory of actions contains 21 settlements in the eastern part of the county impacting 48.249 people under a surface of 1672,57 km².

The third HACS, Tiszazugi Leader Egyesület, located in the southern part of the territory of the county have a direct impact on 11 settlements: Cibakháza, Csépa, Kunszentmárton, Nagyrév, Öcsöd, Szelevény, Tiszaföldvár, Tiszainoka, Tizsakürt, Tizsasas, the center is Kunszentmárton, and their strategy to achieve LEADER and RDP goals are the reorganisation of the region's economy, with tourism and the economy based on it as the main trend.

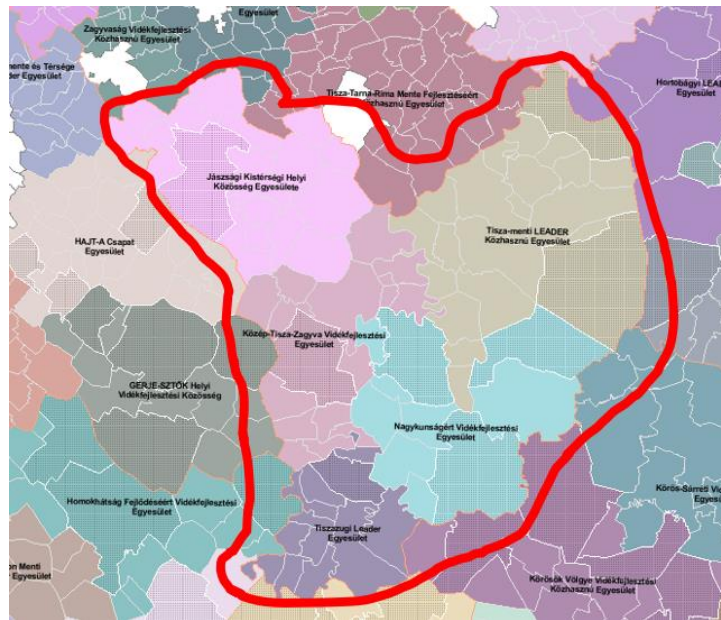
The fourth, HACS Jászsági Kistérségi Helyi Közösség Egyesülete, founded in 2008 was established with 49 members with the objectives of “support changes in rural areas, diversify farming activities towards non-agricultural activities and develop non-agricultural sectors, promote employment, improve basic services, including local access to information and communication technologies, and make rural areas more attractive investment to reverse trends towards economic and social decline and rural depopulation” having a direct impact on 17 settlements of the county.

Finally, the fifth HACS, Nagykunságért Vidékfejlesztési Egyesület is one of the youngest, founded in 2012, have an impact on 8 settlements of the county focus on addressing solutions to the problem of the settlements “struggling with common traditions, common territorial features.

These five HACS have common aims to address the problem of depopulation of their communities, by keeping common traditions intact, improve tourism and economic activity across this sector, support job creation and enhance social capital, all these topics can be explain, understanding the effectiveness on poverty reduction and fostering economic development.

Figure 5: Map of 5 LAGs in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county

Source: Lechner Tudásközpont, 2024



Poverty can be defined as “Persons beset by poverty: individuals or families whose resources are so small as to exclude them from the minimum acceptable way of life of the member state in which they live.”, (Pantazis et al, 2006, p. 30) The European Union (EU) define/identify 3 dimensions of poverty, see table 1.

Table 1: Poverty dimensions

Source: Zemplényi (2022), 2024

Dimensions	Definitions
Income Poverty	indicating those who live in households with a net income lower than 60 per cent of the median income
Severe material deprivation	an indicator describing those who lack at least four basic material goods due to financial reasons out of nine items (such as heating, a telephone, a television set, the consumption of meat every other day, etc.)
Very low work intensity rate	describing the percentage of people living in households where members of the household (aged 18-59) work less than 20 per cent of their total work potential

These 3 dimensions showed a decreasing trend in Hungary between 2012 and 2020 “*severe material deprivation decreased from 27.8 per cent in 2012 to 12.7 per cent in 2020. The relative income poverty rate decreased from 15 per cent in 2012 to 12.7 per cent in 2020*”, showing that low work intensity rates fallen considerably from 10.3% in 2012 to 3.7% in 2020 (Zemplényi, 2022), Poverty can be also defined as “*Poverty means not having a school to go or a clinic to go, not having the land to grow food or not having a job to earn money*” (Dar, Singh, 2022, p. 2).

From these three dimensions, income poverty, with the key word “*net income can be set as an indicator of poverty that can be measured, understanding net income as “the take-home pay after taxes and other deductions are subtracted”*” (Indeed, 2022).

Ansoms et al (2010), used a quantitative methodology to research poverty and the mainland profile based on an extensive number of points and surveys. The case study is in the post-conflict rural Rwanda.

With exploratory tools, such as principal components and cluster analysis, it aggregates the list of points capturing natural, physical, and human, financial, and social resources, along with environmental score points, to locate the value- added groups levels and concluded that “*The main challenge for rural policies vis à-vis all clusters will be to reduce the extremely-high dependence of rural households on subsistence food production*” (Ansoms, Mckay, 2010, p. 597) considering the extreme absence of natural resources, various development trends must be taken into consideration and take part simultaneously.

Augère-Granier (2017) summarized poverty as a multidimensional factor which refers rural poverty as a kind of “human face” of rural inabilities and disadvantages, as they are specifically intense in rural regions. The meaning of rural poverty assesses the state of rural people’s lives and stresses the poverty of individuals inhabiting rural areas. Those groups that appear to be vulnerable to poverty can be similar in rural and urban territories, but the overall issues are different as they are influenced by the specifics of the type of area.

On the other hand, economic development can be defined as “programs, policies or activities that seek to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for a community” (Government of British Columbia, 2023).

In the case of Hungary’s RDP, these programs and policies are expected to contribute on bringing improved services to 68% of the rural population in rural areas” (European Commission, 2022).

The institute for strategy and competitiveness of the Harvard Business School mention also that the economic development in rural areas “*should address and harness the efficient spatial distribution of economic activity rather than attempt to replicate urban economies*”, “*The appropriate economic unit for strategy purposes must include not only rural areas but also adjacent urban centers*”, “*Each community should bear responsibility for its economic success, not the federal government*“ (Harvard Business School, 2024).

The International Fund of Agriculture (IFAD) set the Rural Areas Economic Development Programme with the objective of “*increasing incomes on a sustainable basis for rural people in mountain zones in the provinces of Aragatsotn, Gegharkunik, Lori, Shirak, Syunik, Tavusgh and Vayots Dzor*” “to stimulate sustained economic growth for rural people by providing access to financing for small and medium-size enterprises” having a total cost of 28.72m \$, “*to emphasize rural development, providing opportunities for the many rural poor people*” (IFAD, 2011) which set a key precedent on the importance to understanding and analyzing the impact on poverty and economic development indicators.

Engle et al (2019), explain economic development takes place when economies diversify and more and more types of goods and services are produced and when consumers have more and more

purchasing power, the better standards of living offer younger people more incentives to remain at the spot rather than out-migrate to certain districts in pursuit of better employment and income opportunities.

Kirori (2015) using a descriptive analysis in Rural Development Policies in Kenya, concluded that one of the perceptions brought out by the study about the impact of Kenya's decentralization efforts in the past was that this contributed to different positive changes in the organization and administrative procedures like increased district administrative planning, procedures in planning, budgeting, etc (Kirori, 2015).

Chatzichristos (2022) et al, used a quantitative method which "*consists in introducing an integrated -mixed-method of evaluation for capturing the social added value of Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) LEADER*" (Chatzichristos, Perimenis, 2022, p. 368).

Considering that "*Adding quantitative tools to rural policy research is quite important for monitoring and evaluating rural development programmes*" (Chatzichristos, Perimenis, 2022, p. 368). And concluded that the assessment found that, from a first look, it is more than worth investing in the program., and what is more relevant for the present analysis is that LEADER must be understood as a multiple-step process with a direct impact in social added value.

Leon (1999) presented "*theoretical and methodological aspects of rural development by examining the economic factors which portray the space structuration and its change over time*", using quantitative methods "*which are one of the aspects of the very broad field of public policy evaluation*" (Leon, 1999, p. 14).

And concluded that while those regions that are equidistant from the cities and which have some specific other resources were able to partially compensate the decline of agricultural employment, at the same time the most remote areas from the big urban agglomerations showed significant declines. Over time, this was realized by the public authorities in the first place, and rural development policy was introduced simultaneously with agricultural policies (Leon, 1999, p.1-20).

To understand the long-term impact in small communities, it is important to relate other variables by assessing Quality of Life (QOL) however this can be a big challenge as “most common indices measuring QOL examine rather larger towns, and we only found a few which also analyzed Small medium Size towns SMSTs”. For that “*safety, health, environmental conditions, culture, infrastructure, etc. By integrating various spatial aspects into the analysis, we may gain a more precise picture of how space matters*” (Szabó, Banász, 2020, p. 818).

Migration can be a result of lack of opportunities due to poverty or low economic development in the town or region of origin, in Hungary, migration can be explained in 3 phases “*In the period of the global financial (2008) crisis migration decreased.... from 2010 to 2013 migration to urban cities was stable. From 2014 to 2018 immigrant movement to cities saw a gradual increase. At present, the young generation is moving from small cities to Budapest for employment and educational purposes and they are not showing signs of planning to return to their hometowns*” (Kummitha et al, 2020, p. 74).

Job creation is a key factor, but QOL must be seen in a holistic way as for young Hungarians is the main driver to migrate to urban areas, therefor, local authorities and LAG’s shall work together to increase the jobs in rural areas, considering that “*There is now an emerging trend among migration scholars interested in understanding the emotional influencing factors of young people towards urban migration. The influencing push factors for migration are better financial and work opportunities, better education, and better social life*” (Kummitha et al, 2020, p. 74).

3. MATERIAL AND METHODS

At first hand, the methodology would have consisted of a quantitative approach based on a questionnaire edited by me to members of the LAG Közép-Tisza-Zagyva Vidékfejlesztési Egyesület (KTZVE).

It was possible to make two onsite visits to the members of the LAG and some of the beneficiaries of LEADER programme, focus on three key dimensions: economic, social, and political to have a deeper understanding of the community, annex 1 will refer to these questions.

Later, could set a base to understand key indicators of the NUT3, and the reference of testimonies collected during the visits, understanding testimonies as “to establish differences and similarities between events, give an account of the knowledge that one has of something”.

Due to the limitations for a foreigner student in terms of language barrier and economic limitations to move easily to the region, it was not possible to fulfill this objective as, despite of looking solutions to collect these answers electronically, it was observed that a more efficient approach would be to collect the data directly with the communities during their local meetings and events. And this would be subject of review and the start of analysis and investigation for a further PhD study where it can be possible to evaluate in a better extent the LEADER programme.

Research questions:

The research will focus on answering the following questions in the county Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok:

- Do poverty indicators have a positive trend during the period 2014-2020? What are the most important changes in this regard?
- Does poverty reduction in the county decrease migration?
- Poverty indicators can be measure in Hungary using EU parameters?
- Are there signs of economic development based on EU criteria's?
- If the economic activity is more diversified the economic development increase?

Hypothesis

- Population trend in the county increase if economic development indicators improve.
- Population trend in the county increase if poverty indicators improve.

3.1 Methodology

Based on the above, the final methodology will be quantitative, analyzing data given from the Hungarian National Statistical Office, in accordance with the criteria and guidelines given by the European Commission to Evaluate the Rural Development Programme, setting the variables to review and the indicators under consideration.

The use of the quantitative methodology is not new in social science and can be defined as the dominant research framework in the social sciences. (Sharique et al, 2019). Quantitative research gathers a range of numeric data. Some of the numeric data is intrinsically quantitative (e.g. personal income), while in other cases the numeric structure is imposed (e.g. ‘On a scale from 1 to 10, how depressed did you feel last week?’) (Davenport University, 2021).

By the collection and analysis of the KSH, the evaluation processes shall add a developmental perspective considering the nature of LEADER as a program in constant evolution to involve local communities in a more efficient way, understanding Developmental Evaluation as “*a structured way to monitor, assess and provide feedback on the development of a project or program while it is being designed or modified; that is, where inputs, activities and outputs may not yet be known, or may be in a state of flux*” (Australian Government, 2018) “*in which results are integrated into dynamic and ongoing action. This approach is described as ‘developmental evaluation’ (DE) and has gained momentum in social capital and social innovation contexts*” (Milley et al, 2018, p. 1).

To achieve the general goal stated: Assess, understanding assess as “to make a judgement about the nature or quality of someone or something”, the effectiveness in the specific NUT3 the design the of analysis will be descriptive, where “A descriptive study is governed by the following rules: subjects are generally measured once; the intention is to only establish associations between variables; and, the study may include a sample population of hundreds or thousands of subjects to ensure that a valid estimate of a generalized relationship between variables has been obtained”.

Descriptive statistics is commonly used to “provide summarizing information of the characteristics and distribution of values in one or more datasets. The classical descriptive statistics allow analysts to have a quick glance of the central tendency and the degree of dispersion of values in datasets. They are useful in understanding a data distribution and in comparing data distributions” (Lee, 2020).

The manipulation and review of statistical data from the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (KSH) will be a key source of information that can be reliable as well as provide light to the situation of the hypothesis under review, considering that it has already collected data from the Hungarian population “through polls, questionnaires, and surveys, or by Quantitative research focuses on gathering numerical data and generalizing it across groups of people or to explain a particular phenomenon” (Babbie et al, 2010).

The European Commission provides important guidance and guidelines such as the “Common Evaluation Questions for Rural Development Programmes 2014-2020” to set indicators that could be consider to quantify the impact of LEADER in a region to fulfill RDP objectives.

One of the EU 2020 Policy objectives which provides fundings to achieve the objectives related to poverty can be seen in table 2, and investigating the results of the NUT3 Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County during the period under review using the information from the KSH can give a lead of the effectiveness of the LEADER program in this regard:

Table 2: Common Evaluation Questions for Rural Development (Evaluation questions related to EU level objectives)

Source: own edition based on European Commission (2015), 2024

EU OBJECTIVE	POLICY OBJECTIVE	EVALUATION QUESTIONRELATED TO EU LEVEL OBJECTIVES	JUDGEMENT CRITERIA	COMMON RD INDICATORS	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
EU 2020 headline targets	The employment rate of the population aged 20-64 should increase from the current 69% to at least 75%...	To what extent has the RDP contributed to achieving the EU 2020 headline target of raising the employment rate of the population aged 20-64 to at least 75%?	• The rural employment rate of population aged 20- 64 has increased	1. Rural employment rate 2. Degree of rural poverty	Employment rate of the population aged 20-64

On the other hand, to establish the role of LEADER programme in fostering economic development in rural areas the EU, establish the parameters to measure this through Rural Development (RD) priority, see table 3:

Table 3: Common Evaluation Questions for Rural Development (Focus area-related evaluation questions)

Source: own edition based on European Commission (2015), 2024

RD PRIORITY	POLICY OBJECTIVE	EVALUATION QUESTIONRELATED TO EU LEVEL OBJECTIVES	JUDGEMENT CRITERIA	COMMON RD INDICATORS	ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Promoting social inclusion, poverty reduction and economic development in rural areas	P6A - Facilitating diversification, creation, and development of small enterprises, as well as job creation	To what extent have RDP interventions supported the diversification, creation and development of small enterprises and job creation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Small enterprises have been created. ○ Small enterprises have diversified their economic activity. ○ Jobs have been created 	1. Jobs created in supported projects	1. % of small enterprises in the non-agricultural sector created with the RDP support 2. % of small new enterprises created with the RDP support

To measure both the poverty and the economic development in the NUT3, several indicators will be used, considering them as a key element of the variables under study, the KSH provides several indicators; contemplating the rurality definition and the need of rural areas as spaces of action of the LAG-HACS in the NUT3 under review, interpretation of the following indicators can describe a common ground for further evaluation. see table 4:

Table 4: Operationalization of variables of the research

Source: own edition based on KSH (2024), 2024

Variable	Definition	Indicator in the KSH
Economic development	Facilitating diversification, creation, and development of small enterprises, as well as job creation	9.1.2.4. Business Demography (number of active enterprises) by industries, county, and region 9.8.2.2. Business demography (number of active enterprises) by county and region 9.8.2.3. Business Demography (number of active enterprises) by legal forms, county, and region
Poverty	“Not having a school to go or a clinic to go, not having the land to grow food or not having a job to earn money” (Farouq & Malkhan, 2022)	20.1.2.2. Economic activity of population aged 15–64 by counties and regions. 20.2.2.5. Unemployment rate by counties and regions, quarterly [%] 20.1.2.8. Average net earnings of full-time employees by location of the employer's head office, by counties and regions

The third and last specific goal will give a context to the results of the investigation, as interpretation can be defined as “present an argument, or a set of arguments, about the significance of your results” the interpretation will also “provide the descriptive statistics, confidence intervals, and sample sizes for each variable as well as the value of the test statistic, its direction, the degrees of freedom, and the significance level”.

The length of this investigation is limited but not for that less relevant, to set “common evaluation elements” that “provide a minimum basis to enable the evaluation of primary and secondary LEADER/DLP contributions and ensure comparability of evaluation results across the EU.”, as stated in the Guidelines – Evaluation of LEADER/CLLD.

This investigation will work to set a starting point for future research and investigation of specific evaluation for each of the 5 LAG’s that have an active participation in their settlements in the NUT3 under study considering that “While it is true that additional evaluation” ... “are needed to complement the common elements, the need may also arise to develop program-specific evaluation elements to reflect LEADER/DLP program-specific effects or to disaggregate the rather general CAP”.

Finally, the lengths and limitations of this investigation, the current methodology and its result will set a key reference for a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of the LEADER program in this

region, taking into account that it will set common grounds based on EU standards, it will provide the HACS with a specific understanding of their region and how they can apply specific evaluation criteria and methods to measure their impacts “For LAGs and Managing Authorities it is an opportunity to link the two levels of evaluation, developing a better understanding of the effects at the local level and their contributions at the RDP level. The development of evaluation elements contributes to make the intervention logic of LEADER/DLP more explicit and to show the importance of the approach and its added value.”

3.2 Data collection

At first, the data collection method would have consisted of a survey through questionnaires to the LAG staffs, members, local authorities, and the local communities to be collected onsite which was going to be reinforced with the interviews to collect the testimonies of the local community.

However, the limitations stated above, did not allow the investigation to achieve this goal. In first place, it was possible to solved the barrier limitations and one questionnaire was sent to the members of KTZVE but it was not possible to obtain a representative sample and the mobility limitations was a key factor to implement the research onsite.

Despite of these limitations, it was possible to make several interviews to board members of the LAG and some active participants of the LAG.

- From active participants of the LAG, two interviews took place in the head office of their organizations:
 - Czepán Monika, president of Munkzut tanya, during the field trip that took place the 15 of June 2023, it was possible to meet her in the field where she do her activities along with her family, the interview took place with a translator and she explained the situation of LEADER in the county.
 - Kálman Szabados, owner of Bodza, a 2 floor building, that is used by other members of the community as head office of their activities, such as, sun beds, massages, bar and pub. The interview took place with the help of a translator, and he could told me his experience while applying to LEADER funding.

- From the members of the LAG, during the field trip that took place on the 28 of June of 2023:
 - Kiss Marton, board member of the LAG KTZVE, it was possible to have an interview in the head office of the LAG through a facilitator who helps as translator during the field trip.
 - Szolovjov Rita, former board member of the LAG KTZVE, during the field trip, she conducts a guide tour through areas of relevance in the surrounding areas of the LAG’s head office, and with the help of a translator, it was possible to talk to her, and collect her opinions of the community and her previous and current experiences.

Based on the mentioned above, the nature of the methodology, the technique utilized will be the collection of information through secondary data, specifically from the KSH in connection with case studies. Understanding that this method is commonly “Using existing data generated by large government Institutions, healthcare facilities etc. as part of organizational record keeping. The data is then extracted from more varied datafiles”.

Interpretation and analysis of these data will help to strengthen the purpose of the investigation and suggest the relationship between the indicators and the effects of the LEADER program to impact the variables under review.

3.3 Population under study

For the investigation and considering the selected methodology, population is defined as “collective of individuals about whom we wish to draw some conclusion” (Faraldo, Pateiro, 2013).

The population will be constituted by the inhabitants of the NUT3 Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok, table 5 will show a detailed information of the population based on age group and share of NUT3 population to the total population of the country between 2014-2020.

Table 5: Resident population by age group in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county, 2014-2020, (thousands of people)

Source: own edition based on KSH (2024), 2024

Resident population by age	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Net variation % 2014-2020	Net variation 2014-2020
0–14 year-old	55.96	55.50	54.90	54.57	54.25	54.15	53.86	-3.91%	-2.11
15–64 year-old	257.85	253.95	250.01	246.89	244.09	241.66	237.28	-8.67%	-20.57
65– year-old	69.68	70.45	71.42	72.17	72.94	74.20	75.77	8.03%	6.09
Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok TOTAL	383.49	379.90	376.33	373.63	371.27	370.01	366.91	-4.52%	-16.58
Grand total	9,877.4	9,855.6	9,830.5	9,797.6	9,778.4	9,772.8	9,769.5	-1.10%	-107.84
Share of NUT3 to the total population	3.88%	3.85%	3.83%	3.81%	3.80%	3.79%	3.76%	-3.38%	-0.13%

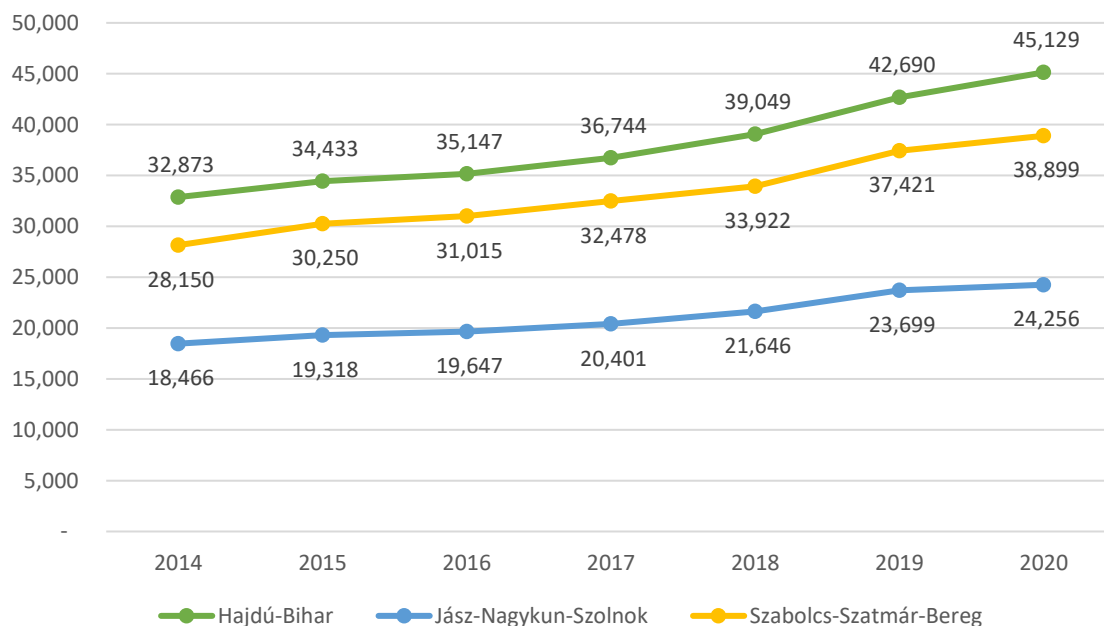
4. RESULTS AND EVALUATION

4.2. Economic development

In the case of Figure 6, the indicator shows a general increase during the period under consideration 2014-2020 in the county, the number of active enterprises increased from 18.466 in 2014 to 24.256 in 2020, representing an increase of 23.87% or a net increase of 5.790 active enterprises during the period under review, where 295 belong to the segment of “Agriculture, forestry and fishing (A)”, representing 5.09% of this net increase.

Figure 6: Number of active enterprises in the Észak-Alföld NUT2 region by NUTS3 counties, 2014-2020

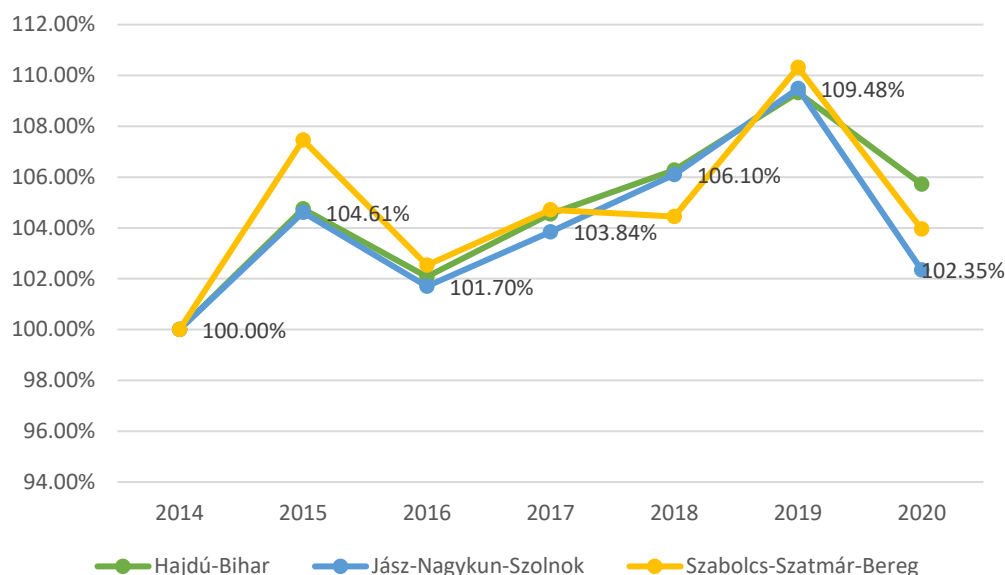
Source: own edition based on KSH (2023), 2024



In a year-to-year variation review, in figure 7, the county shows at first a positive increase between 2014 and 2015, by 2016 the active enterprises showed a positive trend until 2019, but by 2020 this trend had a negative balance. However, the Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county under review has a positive result despite of the significant variations during this period.

Figure 7: Variation of active enterprises in the Észak-Alföld NUT2 region by NUTS3 counties, 2014-2020 (% , 2014=100%)

Source: own edition based on KSH (2023), 2024



In the topic related to diversification, explained by several authors such as Fernandez et al, and the criterias delimited by the EC, the Table 6 show that there is in indeed a diversification in terms of proportionality across the industries, where the top 6 having higher increase between 2014 and 2020 are other services, Administrative and support services, Construction, Information and communications. The agriculture sector shows an average participation with a variation of 23.06%.

However, it is possible to observe that the results of the diversification only have an impact on the so call top 5 industries in the county, and the remaining industries keep a marginal participation rate in the county, suggesting that in terms of activity, the county shall either focus on these 5 industries to develop the local economy or give higher support to the least favourable industries.

Table 6: Net variation and share of per industry between 2014 and 2020 in the Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county.

Source: own edition based on KSH (2022), 2024

Enterprises by industry	2014		2020		Net variation 2014-2020	
	Number	% of total	Number	% of total		
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (G)	3,799	20.57%	4,045	16.68%	6.08%	246
Professional, scientific and technical activities (M)	2,335	12.64%	3,035	12.51%	23.06%	700
Construction (F)	1,641	8.89%	2,970	12.24%	44.75%	1,329
Other service activities (S)	912	4.94%	1,887	7.78%	51.67%	975
Industry, total (B+C+D+E)	1,531	8.29%	1,805	7.44%	15.18%	274
Industry excluding water and waste management (B+C+D)	1,468	7.95%	1,761	7.26%	16.64%	293
Agriculture, forestry and fishing (A)	984	5.33%	1,279	5.27%	23.06%	295
Administrative and support service activities (N)	699	3.79%	1,272	5.24%	45.05%	573
Human health and social work activities (Q)	904	4.90%	1,013	4.18%	10.76%	109
Education (P)	811	4.39%	938	3.87%	13.54%	127
Accommodation and food service activities (I)	900	4.87%	871	3.59%	-3.33%	-29
Transportation and storage (H)	674	3.65%	810	3.34%	16.79%	136
Financial and insurance activities (K)	543	2.94%	734	3.03%	26.02%	191
Information and communication (J)	472	2.56%	731	3.01%	35.43%	259
Arts, entertainment and recreation (R)	375	2.03%	559	2.30%	32.92%	184
Real estate activities (L)	418	2.26%	546	2.25%	23.44%	128
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security (O)	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0.00%	0

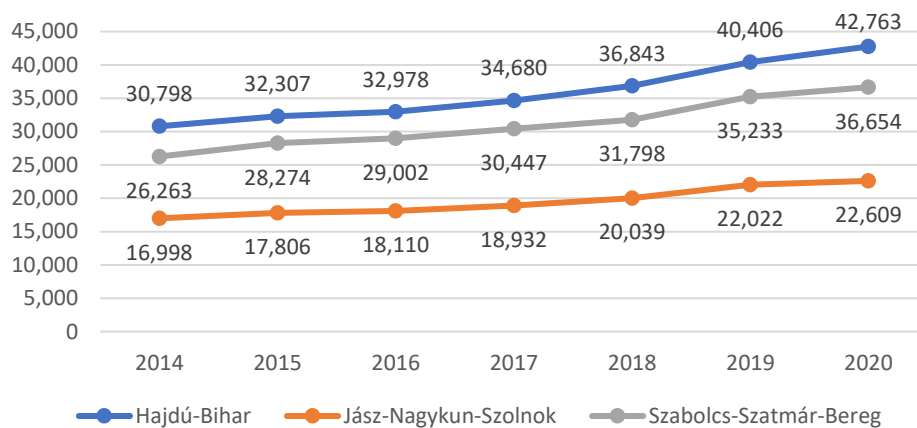
In figure 8, the indicator shows a positive trend during the period 2014-2020 in the case of number of active enterprises, increasing from 16.998 to 22.609 or 24.82%, having a net increase of 5.611 active enterprises. Showing that there it is positive dynamic in the county which goes in connection with RDP objectives, however it is also evident that the county is having a lag in compare with its regional peers.

It is worth to mention the relevant position of disadvantage that the county has compared to its peers in the region, the county has a delay in terms of number of companies due to regional dynamics as well as lack of policies aiming to attract companies into the county.

The county, in this regard has to put either an additional effort to maintain active companies in the territory and focus on the competitiveness and added value that actual companies can give to the local community and the country.

Figure 8: Trend of active companies (by status) in the Észak-Alföld NUT2 region by NUTS3 counties, 2014-2020

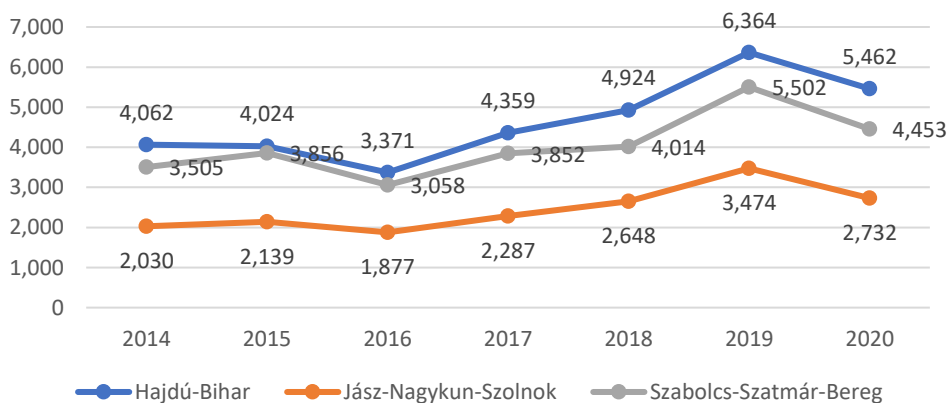
Source: own edition based on KSH (2023), 2024



On the other hand, in the figure 9, the number of recently established enterprises show a similar trend, increasing from 2.030 to 2.732, representing a net increase of 25.7% or 702 new companies, the county is also having a positive environment, creating incentives on the local communities to start a new business, which is expected to increase the economic development of the county, creating opportunities for young population to find a job in their own communities.

Figure 9: Number of recently established enterprises in the Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county during the LEADER period 2014-2020

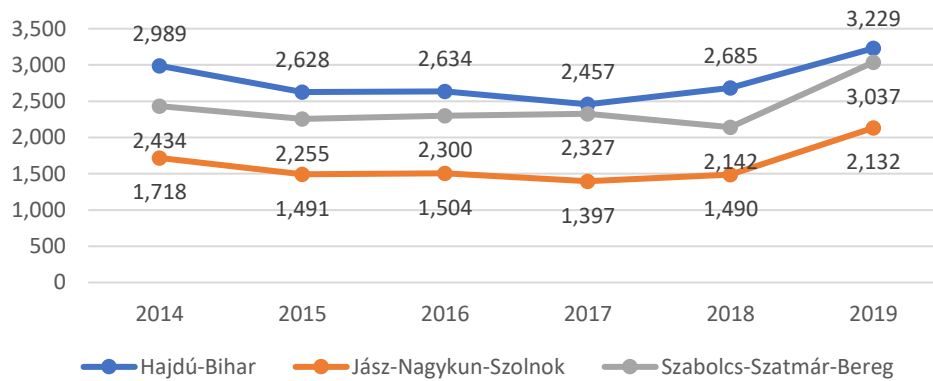
Source: own edition based on KSH (2022), 2024



In the case of number of non-active enterprises in figure 10, it is important to highlight that the KSH does not collected data for 2020, which was excluded from the analysis. This segment shows the same increasing trend, moving from 1.718 dead companies in 2014 to 2.132 in 2019 however it has a lower variation of 414 dead companies or 19.42% if compared to the precedent 2 figures.

Figure 10: Number of non-active enterprises in the Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county, 2014-2020

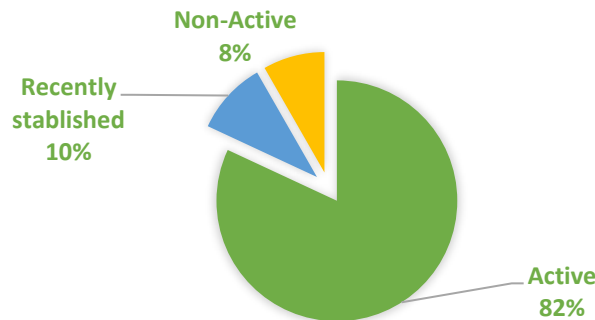
Source: own edition based on KSH (2022), 2024



This indicator, also allow to see the share of the companies based on the status, this feature allow comparing the situation in 2014 and 2020, figures 11 and 12, and it can be highlighted a positive change on the number of active enterprises, moving from 82% in 2014 to 84% in 2020.

Figure 11: Share of the companies based on their status in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county, 2014 (%)

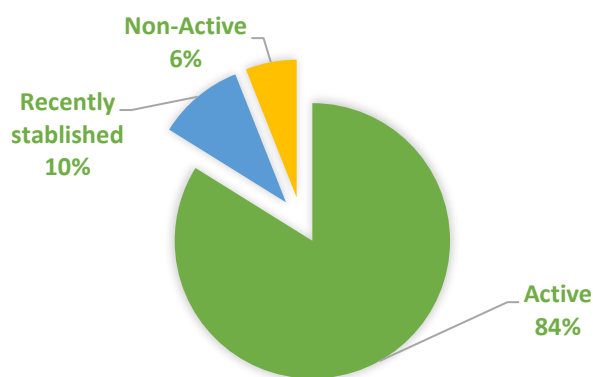
Source: own edition based on KSH (2022), 2024



2020 closed the period under study with a slight increase in compare with 2014, suggesting that businesses tend to have short life cycles due to internal factors impacting the county, lack of professionals, increasing migrations trends, lack of market to achieve positive turnovers, etc.

Figure 12: Share of the company based on their status in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county the status in 2020 (%)

Source: own edition based on KSH (2022), 2024



The last indicator used to describe the situation of the NUT3 to establish the role of LEADER on fostering economic development is 9.8.2.3. *Business Demography (number of active enterprises) by legal forms*, the KSH define 7 types of legal forms: entrepreneur, business partnerships, private limited-liability company, limited partnership, cooperative, limited company, and non-profit business associations.

The evolution of these 7 types of enterprise shows mixed results in table 7, having entrepreneurs the highest positive variation, considering they have the biggest share of total enterprises in 2014: 24.776 (2020: 29.940 enterprises). moving from 9.056 to 14.760 between 2014 and 2020, representing a 38.64% net variation in this period or 5.704 new entrepreneurs, on the other hand, limited partnerships showed the biggest decreased during the same period, having a net decrease of 22.18%, meaning that the NUT3 loosed 420 limited partnerships.

Non-profit associations shall be considered aside, as of 2020 they represented only 0.17% of the total enterprise in the NUT3 but they had an increase of 90% during the period under study, moving from 5 to 50.

This result is to be considered as an important achievement for the local community of the county, considering that, in essence, it may suggest a higher degree of care and willingness of the population to address local problems, the local community is highlighting local problems and see in this form of organizations a way to solve them, therefore, social capital is increasing, which is one of the key goals of LEADER.

Table 7: Enterprise net variation between 2014-2020 by legal forms in the Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county

Source: Source: own edition based on KSH (2022), 2024

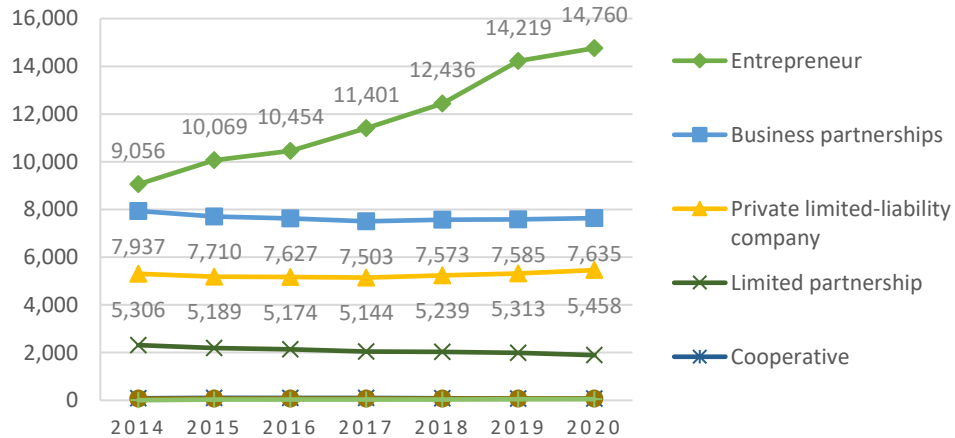
Enterprise legal forms	2014	2020	Net Variation % 2014-2020 (2014=100%)	Net variation (in numbers) 2014-2020
	Number			
Entrepreneur	9,056	14,760	38.64%	5,704
Business partnerships	7,937	7,635	-3.96%	-302
Private limited-liability company	5,306	5,458	2.78%	152
Limited partnership	2,314	1,894	-22.18%	-420
Cooperative	91	75	-21.33%	-16
Limited company	67	68	1.47%	1
Non-profit business associations	5	50	90.00%	45
TOTAL	24,776	29,940	17.25%	5,164

Figure 13 shows the trend of each of the 7 enterprise types, where we can summarize the behavior of the top 3 types: it can be observed the significant increase of entrepreneurs, while business partnerships slightly decrease by the end of 2020 and private limited-liability companies had a flat trend.

The entrepreneurs in the county are having a significant participation in the local community, citizens are having a strong interest in starting a business under the simplest form of entity and while the business partnerships are lowering. This situation could suggest that the communities may have easiest opportunities to open this kind of business rather than a formal version.

Figure 13: Number of enterprises in the Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county by legal forms, 2014-2020

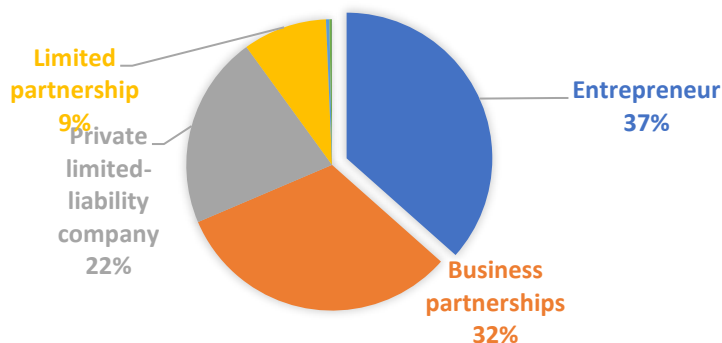
Source: own edition based on KSH (2022), 2024



Figures 8 and 9 describe the share of each of the 7 types of enterprises in 2014 and 2020 respectively, where it can be observed that entrepreneurs, business partnership and private limited-liability companies represented 74.48% in 2014 while in 2020 this share increased to 93.03%, the figures also describe the low share of the remaining 4 types, despite of the 90% increase of the non-profit business associations.

Figure 14: Share of active enterprises by legal forms in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county, 2014 (%)

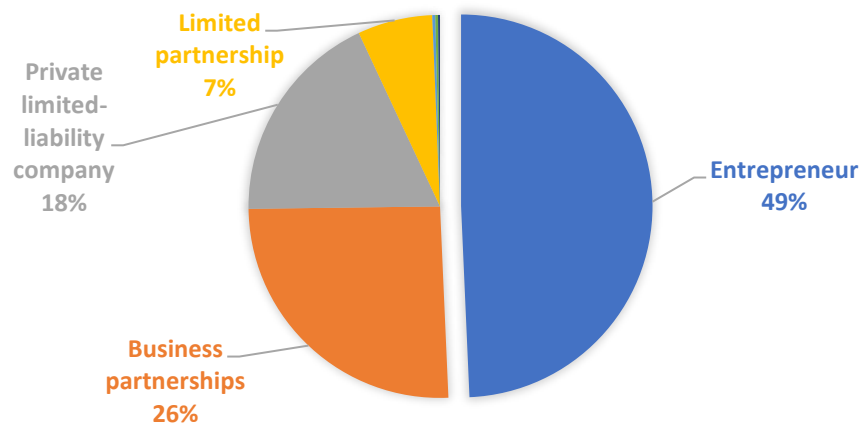
Source: own edition based on KSH (2022), 2024



It can be observed a tendency in the county to decide private activities in the form of entrepreneurs, and this decision of the population may have legal or tax implications, however, what is important to highlight is that from one side, there is a clear intention in the population to register their business but under a structure that does not have a formal organization compared to business partnerships.

Figure 15: Share of active enterprises by legal forms in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county, 2020 (%)

Source: own edition based on KSH (2022), 2024



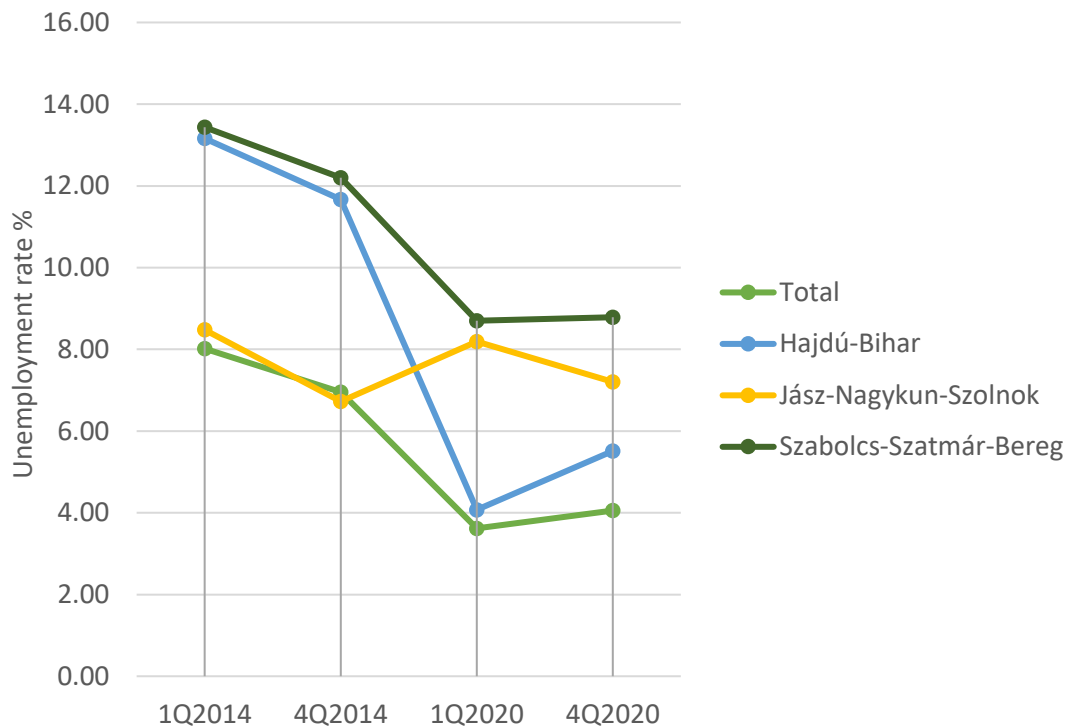
4.3. Poverty

Hungary has seen a reduction in the unemployment rates that can be observe in figure 10, meaning that the job creation has been consistently increasing in the past years. Between 2014 and 2020 the national rates decreased from 8 to 4%. This indicator shows the situation of unemployment in a quarterly basis and allows reviewing the unemployment in specific times of the year. The NUT3 shows mixed results, in first place, if we compare the results in the 1Q14 and 1Q20 the NUT3 had a decrease of 0.28%, in other words, there were more people working the first three months of 2020 than in 2014.

On the other hand, if we observe the results of 4Q14 and 4Q20, the unemployment increases 0.48%, meaning that there were more people working during the last three months of 2014 than in 2020. However, if we see the indicator in 1Q14 and 4Q20, the result is a decreasing trend of 1.27%.

Figure 16: Unemployment rate in the Jász_Nagykun-Szolnok county compared to Hungary trend (2014-2020) (%)

Source: own edition based on KSH (2024), 2024



Regarding the indicator *Average net earnings of full-time employees by location of the employer's head office, by counties and regions*, it has a limitation as the KSH has available data since 2016, however is still significant to give a light over the trends during the period under study.

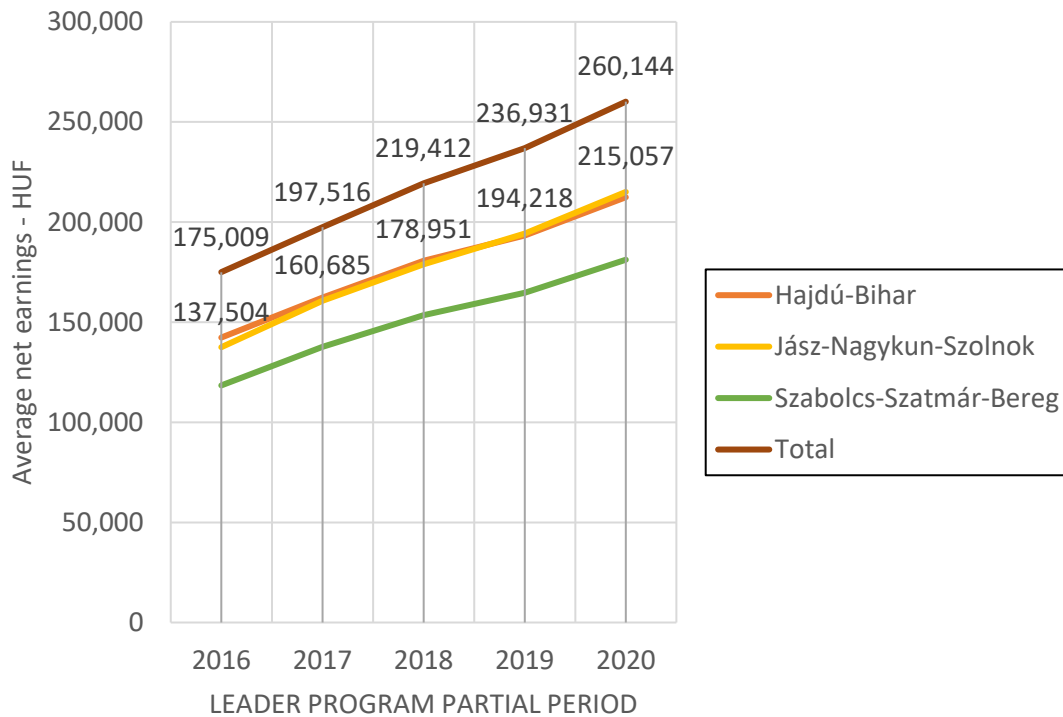
In figure 17 it can be seen an important increase in the net average earnings of the population, having a national net increase of 48.65% by 2020. In this regard the Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok had mixed results as in absolute terms, in 2016 the net income of the full-time employees working in

the NUT3 was 137.504 HUF, by 2020 the net income of the population increased to 215.057 HUF, one of the lowest in the country.

In relative terms, the NUT3 had a higher increase compared to national results, considering that the county increased 56.4% during the period under study while Hungary increased 48.65%.

Figure 17: Average net earnings of full-time employees in the Észak-Alföld NUT2 region by NUTS3 counties, 2014-2020 (HUF)

Source: own editing based on KSH (2024), 2024



The indicator *Economic activity of population aged 15–64 by counties and regions* show two different results, in figure 18 it can be observed the net loss of population of 8.9% or 20.646 in the NUT3 during the period 2014-2020, moving from 256.100 inhabitants to 232.000 inhabitants. The employment rates on this segment of the population had an increase of 3.3% between 2014 and 2020 moving from 63.1% to 66.4%, while the unemployment increased 0.2% from 7.5% to 7.7%.

Figure 18: Population aged 15–64 in the Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county, thousand people. Employment rates and unemployment rates (%).

Source: own edition based on KSH (2024), 2024

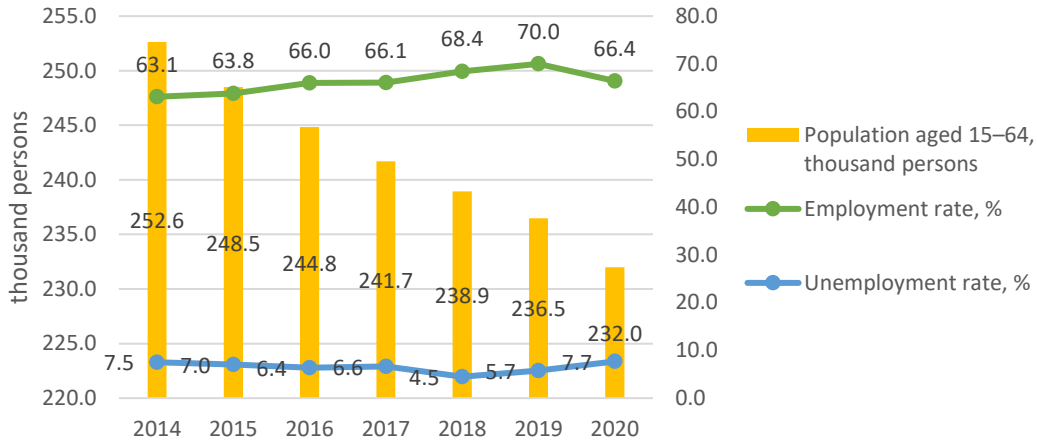
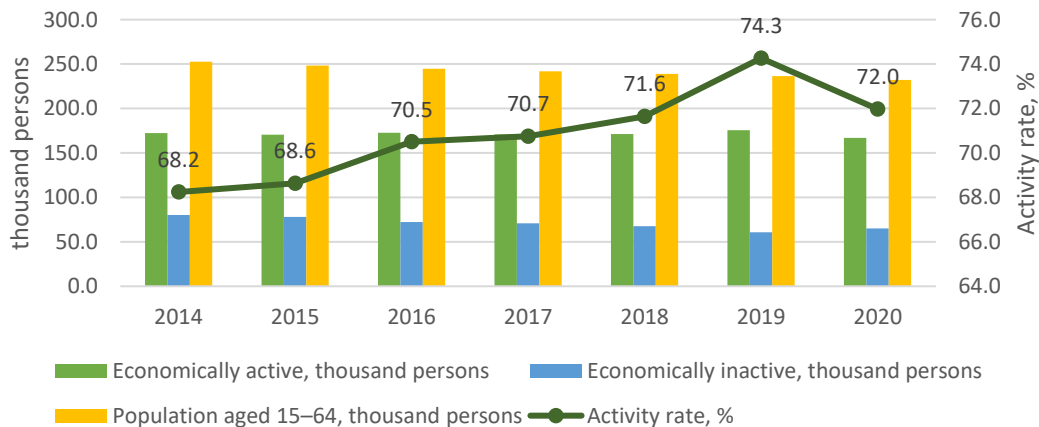


Figure 19, using the same indicator shows that for the same segment of the population, the activity rate has a significant increase of 3.7% moving from 68.2% to 72%, while the economically active persons decreased from 172.400 to 167.000 persons, decreasing in 5.400 persons or 3.25%, similarly, the economically inactive population decreased from 80.200 persons to 65.000 persons, losing 15.200 persons or a 23.41%.

Figure 19: Activity rate of population aged 15–64 in the Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county, 2014-2020 (%)

Source: own edition based on KSH (2024), 2024



4.3. Interviews of LAG members collected

Despite of the limitations coming from working in such a complex investigation and the inability to collect a representative sample of the population, it was possible to make two onsite visits to the LAG KTZVE, where it was possible to meet personally several members of the association, and it was possible to collect their opinion about the Hungarian rural support, such as *“the (Hungarian support) system has a much more centralized management than other EU members, as a result, it is less flexible to the new needs that arise”*

One of the key testimonies collected during the visits, made a significant relevance on the indicators selected for the quantitative methodology analysis and give lights for a further investigation: *“the statistical indicators that can be measured in all EU member countries, (such as) staying of communities, the effect of stopping aging on young people, making entertainment and other opportunities available locally, have a significant multiplier effects and benefits from the point of view of the people living here”*

Finally, from the same testimony, it is possible to collect that *“In EU countries richer than Hungary, the capital concentration is even higher in the small and medium-sized business sector. Support for new, innovative, but resource-poor enterprises is also extremely important in Hungary, just like elsewhere. However, in addition to financial support, the transfer of knowledge and professional help of LEADER groups is also very important to the implementers.”*

During the second visit, it was possible to collect an additional testimony from one active collaborator and former LAG member, in her opinion, the LEADER programs enable a win-win situation between local authorities and local communities, but she mentioned that the bottom-up approach has lose power in the past years.

She stated that *“in 2017 there were many trainings and workshops but since then, these trainings have disappeared, the qualifications of the staffs and leaders have change to worse, there are not strategies or project planning, and before many students used to come to make surveys and investigations.”*

Another testimony, of one of the beneficiaries of LEADER in the period 2014-2020 collected was from the owner of a local establishment called BODZA, the intervention of LEADER was aimed

to fund the installation of solar panels to create energy of the building, where 10 citizens are able to work in their business under the legal form of entrepreneurs, during the visit it was possible to make an interview, where he explained that: *“I open the business under the legal form of entrepreneur in 2004, and I received the funding in 2020, but the process was too complex”*. He also mentioned that:

- The tender process was too complicated and had to complete three evaluation reviews and audits handled by the national authorities.
- he had to make three different quotations and collect the relevant evidence for each of the items he intended to use the funds for, in case he could not fulfill these criteria, the request could be rejected by the national authorities.
- He stated that, due to the long and tedious process, he would not apply again to the programme.

It was possible to collect a second testimony from one of the members of Mundkzut tanya, an NGO founded in 2008 focus on the cultural activities for youngster of the local communities and the surroundings where they make yearly events during the summer season to teach children the ancient Hungarian traditions.

During her testimony she explained that she *“applied twice to LEADER funds, the first time I was rejected in 2015, and I got a new approval in 2018, the funds where use to buy water heaters, showers, materials to build a garage, and some additional tools”*. from her testimony it was also possible to collect:

- Despite of the obstacles during the tendering process, she is willing to keep applying on another occasion as it is the single option to receive funds.
- She stated that bureaucracy is reducing the will of the community to apply on these programmes.

4.4. Evaluation of development trends in the Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county based on RDP criterias during the LEADER period 2014-2020

Based on the three judgmental criterias set by the EU taken under consideration for the purpose of this investigation it is now possible to compare the results of the situation of the NUT3 and set common indicators for the five HACS in the territory.

In terms of economic development table 6 shows that there is no diversification on the enterprises based on the industry in the NUT3, considering that five of the 17 industries concentrated almost 60% of the economy in the region.

In this regard, it worth also to mention that the county has two challenges, 1. The county with lowest active companies in the region, 2. A strong concentration of the economic activity, therefor, the efforts of the rural policies and entities such as LEADER shall be focused on the promotion of these local entities with the lowest participation in the local economy, considering that the can be a strong pillar of source of income in the county.

The Hungarian trend of LEADER and LAGs to support business in the food production and small businesses could have been a significant factor to increase the net variation in the segment “industry, total (B+C+D+E)” considering that it contains these types of enterprises and the NUT3 closed 2020 with 293 new enterprises in this segment. The results show in the analysis, in terms of achieving RDP goals in creating jobs in rural areas in the NUT3.

It is also relevant to study the increase on the “Arts, entertainment and recreation” segment, as the period closed with 184 new enterprises, which increase the offer of culture and recreation for the citizens in the NUT3 and one of the key objectives of LEADER and the RDP.

Finally, all sectors show an increase by the end of 2020, except for Accommodation and food services that decreased in 29 enterprises. From these results, it is possible to set the % enterprises that each of the HACS could have supported during the period 2014-2020.

The evaluation sets a key starting point for a deeper evaluation of LEADER in the region and the impact can be evaluated with common criteria given in the analysis.

However, the fact that NGO increase to 50, suggests that there is a higher degree of social capital within the community, in connection with one of the goals of LEADER and rural policies, and while LEADER cannot be directly related to this trend, it remains certain that the community has a higher willingness to work together for their local problems.

Table 8: Comparison and net variation across economic sectors in the Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county, (2014-2020)

Source: own edition based on KSH (2022), 2024

Enterprises by industry	2014		2020		Net variation 2014-2020	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total		
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (G)	3,799	20.57%	4,045	16.68%	6.08%	246
Professional, scientific and technical activities (M)	2,335	12.64%	3,035	12.51%	23.06%	700
Construction (F)	1,641	8.89%	2,970	12.24%	44.75%	1,329
Other service activities (S)	912	4.94%	1,887	7.78%	51.67%	975
Industry, total (B+C+D+E)	1,531	8.29%	1,805	7.44%	15.18%	274
Industry excluding water and waste management (B+C+D)	1,468	7.95%	1,761	7.26%	16.64%	293
Agriculture, forestry and fishing (A)	984	5.33%	1,279	5.27%	23.06%	295
Administrative and support service activities (N)	699	3.79%	1,272	5.24%	45.05%	573
Human health and social work activities (Q)	904	4.90%	1,013	4.18%	10.76%	109
Education (P)	811	4.39%	938	3.87%	13.54%	127
Accommodation and food service activities (I)	900	4.87%	871	3.59%	-3.33%	-29
Transportation and storage (H)	674	3.65%	810	3.34%	16.79%	136
Financial and insurance activities (K)	543	2.94%	734	3.03%	26.02%	191
Information and communication (J)	472	2.56%	731	3.01%	35.43%	259
Arts, entertainment and recreation (R)	375	2.03%	559	2.30%	32.92%	184
Real estate activities (L)	418	2.26%	546	2.25%	23.44%	128
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security (O)	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0.00%	0

When we review the situation of the enterprises base on the status in table 8, it can be observed that the NUT3 has a positive performance, taking into account that had 2020 more companies active than in 2014. In this regards the role of LEADER can be set as its capacity of the region to foster the development of the region, and how many companies did the HACS support for its creation in the period.

The role of LEADER to support current economic environment rather than creating new enterprises is also relevant in this regard, considering its key objectives in the RDP and one of the core missions of LEADER is perpetuating the existence of business and jobs in their areas of action.

The NUT3 and LEADER specifically must implement policies that supports decreasing the number of dead enterprises, and the HACS as the key element of communication across the settlements could support identifying the nature of these companies and the sector they used to belong.

Table 9: Comparison and net variation based on enterprise status in the Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county, (2014-2020)

Source: own edition based on KSH (2022), 2024

Enterprise by status	2014		2020		Net Variation 2014-2020	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total		
Number of active enterprises	16,998	81.93%	22,609	89.22%	24.82%	5,611
Number of newly born enterprises	2,030	9.79%	2,732	10.78%	25.70%	702
Number of dead enterprises	1,718	8.28%	..	0.00%	19.42%	414

Reviewing the last indicator to establish the role of LEADER in regards of rural development in table 9, a key observation is the significant increase on entrepreneurs and individual job creation, understanding them as small and medium enterprises considering that this segment of the workforce is typically denominated by the private economic activity of individuals.

It is again, a mix result that characterizes dynamic economic environment and a constant result when evaluating LEADER and its results, considering that is a positive sign the more and more citizens decide to start a business by their own, the decreasing trend of the population, is possible to relate that the citizens are focusing on working on their initiatives and adapting to the dynamic environment.

It may also suggest a lack of social capital, understood as the trust among the community and to work together to improve the local situation. LEADER and the LAGs shall focus their efforts on the review of these segment of the population and work on programmes and closely to policy makers that can consolidate the private initiative into more structure enterprises that can generate a higher added value in the NUT3.

However, it is also remarkable the increase in non-profit businesses as the indicator of % of these organizations in the total a determined population is related to the boost in social capital and the commitment that citizens have with their communities.

LEADER program and the LAGs shall also focus their effort on prioritizing the attractiveness of their local entrepreneurs, promoting their work and the opportunities of investment of external

capital while creating spaces to support their initiatives, such as local markets, digital marketing campaign and local or regional fairs.

Table 10: Net variation based on enterprise type in the Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county, (2014-2020)

Source: own editing based on KSH (2022), 2024

Enterprise by legal forms	2014	2014	2020	2020	Net variation 2014-2020	Net Variation 2014-2020
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total		
Entrepreneur	9056	36.55%	14,760	49.30%	5,704	38.64%
Business partnerships	7937	32.04%	7,635	25.50%	-302	-3.96%
Private limited-liability company	5306	21.42%	5,458	18.23%	152	2.78%
Limited partnership	2314	9.34%	1,894	6.33%	-420	-22.18%
Cooperative	91	0.37%	75	0.25%	-16	-21.33%
Limited company	67	0.27%	68	0.23%	1	1.47%
Non-profit business associations	5	0.02%	50	0.17%	45	90.00%

When trying to investigate if the policy objectives to reduce poverty in rural areas, the indicators showed that the NUT3 has increased the employment rates in the population aged 15-64 in 5.01% however it has still a gap to cover considering the employment rates in 2020 were 66.4% while EU expectations was to meet 75% of employment in this segment of the population.

It is also important to see that the total amount of people under this segment of the population is also decreasing, while in 2014 where around 159,000 people, by the end of 2020 the population on this segment decreased to 153,000 people, so it is possible to say that the employment rates are increasing over a population that tends to decrease due to migration of the locals to other regions.

A similar result can be seen while reviewing the amount of people economically active on the same segment of the population and there is a general increase of absence of people who can be in conditions to work as there are less employed and unemployed people living in the NUT3.

While talking about economically inactive population, the situation shall be reviewed with high priority by LEADER and the RDP considering that there the NUT3 has also a reduction of students, pensioners housewives and seasonal workers, and the result of this indicator can be linked to the fact that more entrepreneurs are active in the region, the social capital as a net of trust is not working as it could to improve other ways to boost the economic activity in the county.

Also, the quarterly review arise a seasonality factor on the employment as in 2014 and 2020 there was a higher amount of people unemployed in contrast with a lower unemployment in the last quarter of each year, in this regard, it is also a key message to policy makers, LEADER and the HACS that there is a tendency to have less people working during the period of winter, that could be linked to jobs in tourism and agriculture.

Finally, and despite incomplete data due to the nature of the KSH indicator, it is possible to observe that policies taken in the NUT3, as well as the national economic environment, during the period under study have had significant increase in the net salaries of the population showing that the actions taken during this period gave a positive support on reducing poverty.

Table 10 also shows how the gap between local salaries compare to salaries in the capital city and national level tend to decrease and that the NUT3 had a better performance if compared to Budapest and the country average, LEADER and the LAGs must use this indicator as a key element while analyzing which type of enterprises are boosting the salaries as this will allow them to boost the impact of their activities in the most productive sectors of the local economy.

Table 11: Average net earnings of full-time employees in the Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county. 2016-2020 (Euro)

Source: own edition, note: 1EUR= 353HUF (ECB, 2024) based on KSH (2024), 2024

Name of territorial units	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Net Variation % 2014-2020	Net variation 2014-2020 (EUR)
Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok	389.53 €	455.20 €	506.94 €	550.19 €	609.23 €	56.40%	220
Budapest	640.31 €	709.91 €	779.81 €	839.31 €	919.79 €	43.65%	279
Hungary	495.78 €	559.54 €	621.56 €	671.19 €	736.95 €	48.65%	241
Share of Budapest average salary	60.83%	64.12%	65.01%	65.55%	66.24%	8.88%	-
Share of National average salary	78.57%	81.35%	81.56%	81.97%	82.67%	5.22%	-

5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The descriptive analysis following the judgment criteria of the EU and the RDP can set a starting point to make individual analysis of each of the LAGs in the NUT3.

- The creation of common indicators that all the LAGs can follow to measure their trends is possible using KSH data, in terms of poverty and economic development, as it has been standardized to measure the variations in a specific period.

The mixed results in both economic development and poverty are a constant sign of dynamic environments as well as LEADER programme and the developmental evaluation of the situation is key to explain what can be done or suggest.

- Poverty indicators improved in terms of net salary during the period 2014-2020 having one of the best performances of the NUT2 and in Hungary
- Unemployment rates, show a small decrease, and the tendency during the period 2014-2020 has important volatilities, that may be caused to the nature of the legal enterprises, migration or lack of qualified personal.
- Economic development has a positive trend, in terms of number of active enterprises in the county, however there is no diversification, considering that 5 industries concentrate more than 50% of the activity in the county.
- Diversification of the industries does not has a relevance to improve economic development, considering there county has an increase in salaries and in number of active enterprises.
- Despite the overall positive results in poverty and economic development, there is a decreasing trend of the population, suggestion that the local communities are still no comfortable with the current situation in the county.
- The decreasing trend of the population is leaving the county with high activity rates, suggesting that people in segments considered as dependent (youngsters and elderlies) are leaving the county.
- It can be said that the NUT3 and the LAGs shall put their efforts to improve diversification in its economic sector, aiming to catch those enterprise and sectors with the highest increase in net salaries and higher survival rates in the long term.

- LEADER shall focus on fostering and supporting economic and legal transformation of the legal entities, the period 2014-2020 had a positive result over the private initiative, which is important to consolidate the financial foundations of a community, through entrepreneurs.

It is not less relevant the increase of NGO's, this result is important, considering the nature of these entities and their goal to work around common problems and try to find solutions. They are also an important player in the community as they show that social capital is improving as the will of change or to get organize is a common share among locals, such as keeping alive their traditions and their ways of living.

- LEADER should foster strategic relations with these entities to increase the participation of local communities while balancing the presence of local authorities in their organizations.
- LEADER could also focus on education in the form of workshops to support entrepreneurs to improve local business structures, culture in the form of recreation in connection of the importance of these company types to create leisure and entertainment to certain groups of the population, such as elder people and youngsters.
- The LAGs shall set common goals in promoting the attractiveness of their region considering that the population is losing youth people but also population in elderly ages that are looking for other towns or cities with better standard conditions.

The extent of the impact the LEADER as whole has in the NUT3 still have pending tasks, but now it can be possible to set a common ground to determine in which extent has each of the LAGs have done to achieve RDP objectives, allowing them to see the strengths and opportunities to improve and also to clearly see the best of the practices they have implemented during the period 2014-2020 and prioritize their efforts in common objectives.

In further evaluations, it can be possible to determine the impact that each of the LAGs could have on the results over diversification in the economic sectors and the increase of entrepreneurs. The testimonies are not enough to prove scientifically the results but give a light on the above mentioned and a key precedent of detailed investigations that can be applied in the five LAGs.

The deep analysis of these indicators shows that the county keeps a decreasing trend of their population despite of the overall positive results in terms of poverty reduction and economic development.

The two-hypothesis tested are not met, if we consider that population trend does not increase if poverty indicators improve nor economic development indicators, hence it is possible to emphasize that improvement on these areas are not by themselves enough to retain population in the county.

It can be also said that population trends must be addressed from another angle, rather than poverty and economic development, the county, its local authorities, and organizations living there shall formulate strategic plans that take into consideration this problem in a holistic way.

It can be said that QOL does not answer positively to these two indicators and the population still looks for better opportunities outside the county. The county shall focus their efforts on keeping the positive trend of the indicators in order to improve a degree of independence in economic terms, and thus, create better opportunities to the local communities.

The county has also important challenges to face, considering that it is below its regional peers in terms of active enterprises, however, the study of the results can lead to focalized solutions in terms of addressing efforts on the most relevant enterprises.

Finally, considering that, the county has important improvements in terms of net salaries, it can be said that policy makers and organized local actors shall use work on keeping these trends and use it as the main promotion to attract and retain population.

LEADER program as one of the main instruments of rural development in Europe shall create strategic approach in connection with local authorities to improve QOL to complement the positive results of poverty reduction and economic development and the county will be able to improve their capacity to retain and attract young talent and capital.

6. SUMMARY

Evaluation of LEADER remains a difficult task, empirical analysis is not enough, as main actors of each programme are human beings, and because of that the social capital that is created in each community plays a key role to keep their roots and traditions alive, but the ability to measure the results shall follow a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches.

However, the analysis of numbers, helps to give some objectivity to the human subjectivity, or at least, tries to keep an impartial picture of human activity. In this regard, it is important to highlight that Rural Development remains an open task to governments and policymakers in Hungary.

The NUT3 can be describe as a rural county with a decreasing population following the regular trend of Europe and its rural areas. However, it shows a positive trend in NGO and entertainment enterprises, as well as local population with considerable activity rates.

It was also possible to determine that despite of job creation in the form of enterprises and reduction of poverty in the form of higher salaries is not enough to stop migration of the local communities to other regions, Budapest, or the rest of Europe.

The county of Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok with a population representing almost 4% of Hungary's population, showed a decreasing trend between 2014-2020 despite of the efforts made on increasing net salaries and constants employment rates, it also reflects that the salary gaps need to keep under the radar of local and national authorities, as well as showing that this problem must be seen from difference perspectives.

This situation can be explained, in one hand to the concentration of enterprises in the legal form of entrepreneurs, which suggest that while people is looking ways to work, the NUT3 is working overall with an individualistic mindset, losing the opportunities that more structure companies can bring in terms of external investment as well as social cooperation, also, the constant migration is a key challenge to build a long term community trust.

The interviews collected during the field trip are an important factor to considered, as all the interviewees agree that Hungary has strict rules to apply on LEADER program, and it is a key

limitation for local communities to implement bottom-up strategies that could focus on stopping or decreasing the migration trend.

The excess of bureaucracy is also an important element that reduce the willingness of companies to apply to funds that can support the formalization of entrepreneurs into business partnership, that can attract external capital and become new source of jobs for the younger population in the county.

Now, after the deep analysis of the development trends, it would be possible to set local criterias that will allow the investigators and local actors to measure their performance, this is the objective of a future investigation that can be pursue during my PhD studies and can give and added value not only for the NUT3 under evaluation, but also to all the NUT3 in Hungary and will allow to set clear evidence to the European officers and national actors on the importance of Hungarian LAGs and their efforts to improve the quality of life in Hungary and maintain a balance territorial policy.

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9. ANNEXES

Annex 1: The planed questionnaire

Magyar Agrar Elettudományi Egyetem - Evaluation A KÖZÉP-TISZA-ZAGYVA LAG's LEADER PROGRAM 2014-2020 közötti időszakának értékelése - Tanulságok

Venezuelai hallgató vagyok, a diplomamunkám részeként próbálom elemezni a vidékfejlesztés tényezőit, az Ön közössége a vidékfejlesztés egy érdekes esete, és az Ön segítségével, a kérdőív kitöltésével befejezhetem az elemzést, amelyet Magyarország más részein vagy hazámban, Venezuelában is fel lehet használni. Muchas gracias

** Indica que la pregunta es obligatoria*

1. Correo *

2. 1. Korcsoportok *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- 18 év alattiak
- 18 és 25 év között
- 26 és 35 év között
- 36 és 50 év között
- 51 és 65 év között
- 65 év felettiak

3. 2. Nemek *

Marca solo un óvalo.

Férfi

Nő

4. 3. Iskolai végzettség *

Marca solo un óvalo.

Általános iskola

Érettségi

Középiskola

Bachelor BA(alapszak)

Master MA(mesterképzés)

Nem fejezte be az általános iskolát

5. 4. Lakóhely (város vagy falu) *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- Szolnok
- Újszász
- Rákóczi falva
- Tószeg
- Szajol
- Zagyvarékas
- Besenyszög
- Rákócziújfalú
- Nagykőrű
- Kőtelek
- Tiszajenő
- Tiszavárkony
- Tizzaszék
- Szászberek
- Vezseny
- Csataszög
- Hunyadfalva

6. 5. Foglalkozás *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- Tanuló
- Alkalmazott egy vállalatnál
- Közalkalmazott
- Magánvállalkozó
- Nyugdíjas
- Munkanélküli
- GYES, GYED
- Otro: _____

7. 6. Egy 1-től (egyáltalán nem) 4-ig (nagyon) terjedő skálán, mennyire bízunk abban, hogy a helyi önkormányzat foglalkozik a közösség problémáival? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4

Egy: Nagyon

8. 7. Egy 1-től (egyáltalán nem) 4-ig (nagyon) terjedő skálán Ön szerint a helyi önkormányzat aktívan együttműködik a lakosokkal a közösség fejlesztése érdekében? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4

Egy: Nagyon

9. 8. Bátran fejt ki véleményét a helyi fejlesztési kérdésekben a nyilvános fórumokon? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

Igen

Nem

10. 9. Egy 1-től (soha) 4-ig (nagyon gyakran) terjedő skálán milyen gyakran vesz részt helyi ügyekkel kapcsolatos nyilvános találkozókön vagy rendezvényeken? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4

Sohi: Nagyon gyakran

11. 10. Úgy érzi, hogy a helyi döntéshozatal során meghallgatják és figyelembe veszik véleményét? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

Igen

Nem

12. 11. Magabiztosan érzi magát, amikor különböző háttérű emberekkel érintkezik a közösségben? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

Igen

Nem

13. 12. Egy 1-től (egyáltalán nem ért egyet) 4-ig (teljesen egyetért) terjedő skálán, *
úgy gondolom, hogy a különböző nézeteket való emberek tiszteletben tartják
ebben a közösségben.

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4

Egy: Teljesen egyetért

14. 13. Volt már tanúja vagy tapasztalja a közösségében az etnikai vagy vallási alapú *
megkülönböztetést?

Marca solo un óvalo.

Igen

Nem

15. 14. Magabiztosan hagyja őrizetlenül a holmiját egy nyilvános helyen a *
közösségében?

Marca solo un óvalo.

Igen

Nem

16. 15. Általában biztonságban érzi magát, ha éjszaka egyedül sétál a településén? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

Igen

Nem

17. 16. Úgy érzi, hogy az Ön közösségének minden lakosa egyenlő mértékben fér hozzá a minőségi oktatási lehetőségekhez? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

Igen

Nem

18. 17. Egy 1-től (nagyon elégedetlen) 4-ig (nagyon elégedett) terjedő skálán mennyire elégedett a közösségében elérhető egészségügyi szolgáltatások minőségével? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4

Nag Nagyon elégedett

19. 18. Egy 1-től (nagyon elégedetlen) 4-ig (nagyon elégedett) terjedő skálán mennyire elégedett a közösségében elérhető alapfokú oktatási szolgáltatások minőségével? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4

Nag Nagyon elégedett

20. 19. Küzdenie kell azért, hogy megengedhesse magának vagy családjának a legszükségesebb dolgokat, mint az élelmiszer, a lakhatás vagy a ruházat? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

Igen

Nem

21. 20. Egy 1-től (nagyon kényelmes) 4-ig (nagyon nehéz) terjedő skálán, mennyire nehéz Önnek anyagilag megélni? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

1 2 3 4

Nag Nagyon nehéz

22. 21. Igénybe vesz valamilyen állami támogatást vagy szociális segélyprogramot?

Selecciona todos los que correspondan.

- Helyi
 Országos
 Európai
 Otro: _____

23. 22. Ismeri a LEADER uniós programot vagy az annak keretében az Ön közösségében végrehajtott kezdeményezéseket? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- Igen
 Nem (ugorjon 25. kérdésre)

24. 23. Ha igen, egy 1-től (nagyon alacsony) 4-ig (nagyon magas) terjedő skálán mennyire érzi úgy, hogy a LEADER program hatással volt a közösségére (ha egyáltalán)?

25. 24. Ha igen, néhány szóban írja le mit tud a LEADER programról.

26. 25. Ismeri a KÖZEP-TISZA-ZAGYVA HACS Egyesületet? *

Marca solo un óvalo.

- Nem, nem ismerem, nem hallottam róla (Ebben az esetben a felmérésnek vége! és elküldheti a válaszait.)
- Hallottam róla, de nem ismerem a tevékenységeit
- Igen

27. 26. Pályázott már LEADER uniós támogatásra?

Marca solo un óvalo.

- Igen
- Nem

28. 27. Ha igen, milyen intézkedésekre pályázott?

Selecciona todos los que correspondan.

- Az életminőség javítása a vidéki területeken
- kulturális, közösségi beruházások javítása
- A turisztikai tevékenységek javítása
- Mezőgazdasági termékek feldolgozása és hasznosítása
- Könnyűipar, szolgáltatások, népművészet és kézművesség

29. 28. Elnyerte?

Marca solo un óvalo.

- Igen
- Nem (ugorjon a 30. kérdésre)

30. 29. Ha sikeres volt a pályázata, mennyit nyert?

Marca solo un óvalo.

- 100.000 - 2.000.000 HUF
- 2.000.000 - 5.000.000 HUF
- 5.000.000 - 15.000.000 HUF
- 15.000.000 HUF vagy tovább
- More

31. 30. Milyen szerepet játszik a KÖZEP-TISZA-ZAGYVA HACS Egyesület az Önök településének fejlődésében?

Marca solo un óvalo.

- Nem tudom
- Nincs szerepe
- Kisebb szerepet
- Fontos szerepet
- Kulcsszerepet

32. 31. Mennyire elégedett a HACS munkájával?

Marca solo un óvalo.

- Nem elégedett
- Kevésbé elégedett
- Inkább elégedett
- Teljesen elégedett
- Nem tudom megítélni

Annex 2: Declaration on authenticity and public assess

DECLARATION

thesis

Jorge Michael

Student's name: _____

Student's Neptun ID: PC3P4E

Title of the document: Evaluation of poverty and economic development tendencies in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county during the period 2014-2020 of LEADER Program

Year of publication: 2024

Department: Department of Rural and Regional Development

I declare that the submitted final thesis is my own, original individual creation. Any parts taken from another author's work are clearly marked, and listed in the table of contents.

If the statements above are not true, I acknowledge that the Final examination board excludes me from participation in the final exam, and I am only allowed to take final exam if I submit another final master's thesis.

Viewing and printing my submitted work in a PDF format is permitted. However, the modification of my submitted work shall not be permitted.

I acknowledge that the rules on Intellectual Property Management of Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences shall apply to my work as an intellectual property.

I acknowledge that the electric version of my work is uploaded to the repository system of the Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

Place and date: Budapest year: 2024 month: April day: 28



Student's signature

Annex 3: Request for confidentiality

REQUEST FOR CONFIDENTIALITY

I, the undersigned Jorge Michael (Neptun code: PC3P4E) student at Rural Development Engineering programme request that my diploma thesis titled Evaluation of poverty and economic development tendencies in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county during the period 2014-2020 of LEADER (name of supervisor(s): Dr. habil Krisztian Ritter PhD) be encrypted by applying point c) of Section 95 (5) of the Study and Examination Regulations of the Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences (hereinafter referred to as 'SER'). I understand that if my request is approved, the encryption of the thesis / diploma thesis will cover 5 years following the successful defence, in accordance with point c) of Section 95 (5) of SER.

Done at: Budapest, 2024 April 28.



Student's signature

I APPROVE / REJECT the request for confidentiality.

Reasons for rejection: _____

Done at: _____, _____

Programme leader's signature

Annex 4: Consultation declaration

DECLARATION

I, Dr. habil Krisztian Ritter PhD as a consultant, I declare that I have reviewed the final thesis and that I have informed the student of the requirements, legal and ethical rules for the correct handling of literary sources.

I recommend / **do not recommend** the final thesis to be defended in the final examination.

The thesis contains a state or official secret: yes no

Date: 2024. április 25.



insider consultant