**Populism and rural Hungary**

(abstract)

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At the parliamentary elections, in 2018, populist parties won most rural votes in Hungary. 58 percent of the villagers voted for FIDESZ, which is much higher what right-win party coalition received in cities. In the most underdeveloped districts, 65 per cent of the votes were taken to FIDESZ. Most of the supporters of the radical populist JOBBIK were among small town voters. FIDESZ (government party) dominates the vast majority of rural municipalities.

The rise of populism is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, and its analysis should be extended to most relevant factors (power structure, identity, development sources, social inequality, role of the media). The Hungarian case shows that poverty and social inequalities, disintegration, hierarchical local power structure with dominance of economic–political oligarchy, weak participation, monopolization of local and non-local media, racialization of poverty are enabling factors of populism. From other side local (cultural) identity making, active top-down, alternative forms of collaborative public sector-led social policy, project-based management of unemployment and poverty, propagating locality and stability as values (against the outside world), social integration of local society which is influenced by innovative development programs and as the local elite and other groups of the local society are motivated for participation and operation of new social integration or in contrast middle class demand for changing the power system are facilitating and legitimizing factors.

In responding to the above assumptions, using an example of a small rural town and village cases, the paper aims at analysing motivations, interests, benefits and profits of populism in fragile Hungarian regions. The paper also presents community actions, alternative movements, new rural-urban relations which may be antidotes to negative outcomes.