particularly truth for Italy, where the rich cultural and natural heritage and the outstanding aesthetic qualities of the complex natural landscape have led to become the country one of the most important tourist destination worldwide.

This paper discuss and present a critical overview of some products elaborated in recent time in different geological context in Modena Apennines (northern Italy), highlighting strengths and gaps, and also taking into account the target of visitors they are addressed to. In particular, tourist environmental maps, geotourism maps, excursion and educational footpaths with panels, equipped trails, books in hard copy and digital format, videos, virtual flights, multimedia and audio CDs etc. will be illustrated.

MARGINALITY AND DEPENDENCY – CHANGING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC FUNCTIONS OF RURAL SPACES WITH SCATTERED FARMSTEADS AND ITS DRIVERS

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Keywords: dependency, marginalisation, periphery, scattered farmsteads

Abstract: The phenomenon of marginalisation occurs when compared to mainstream serious differences evolve in the organisation model and functioning of the society. The consequences of the permanently unsuccessful re-integration intentions are the social, economic and spatial isolation of certain places/areas (GIDDENS, A. 1984, LEIMBURGER, W. 2007, SOMMERS, L.M. – MEHRETU, A. 1998). This process reduces chances of market access of local actors, makes more difficult the access to transport and communication systems, which is exacerbated the lower level of public services. Isolation also limits articulation of interest and greatly reduces the bargaining power of people living in the affected area, which further strengthens the different characteristics and daily routines differ from mainstream. These factors reinforcing each other lead to political, economic and social dependency. This can be observed in uneven exchange relations, competitive handicap getting development funds, deterioration in the quality of public services and in permanently remaining accessibility problems. Researches in marginalisation suggested, that economic transformation of rural areas is embedded in complex spatial and social relations. However, spaces with scattered farmsteads show a more specified picture, so in the case of social groups living in these areas, different mechanisms, drivers and reasons may determine the marginalization process compared to other areas. The purpose of our research is to examine the socio-economic change of marginalised spaces with scattered farmsteads. During the research we reviewed the local and governmental re-integration and developmental attempts on settlements with scattered farmsteads in the outskirts, analyse and evaluate the effects of decisions made in different regional levels. The research has been supported by the National Research Fund, Hungary/ OTKA K109269.

COPIING WITH PERIPHERALITY. EXTERNAL KNOWLEDGE ACQUISITION AND INNOVATION ACTIVITIES OF BUSINESSES IN PERIPHERAL SETTINGS

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Keywords: firm, innovation, mobilities of knowledge, periphery

Abstract: Innovations are widely regarded as essential elements for entrepreneurial renewal and regional socio-economic development. They represent knowledge driven processes based on interactions between complementary actors. Models, that conceptualise the (spatial) configurations of such links, suggest, that a balance between closeness and distance is most conducive for activating learning and innovation. However, peripheral regions tend to be characterised by fragmented actor bases that only allow for limited local buzz, suggesting an even higher significance of trans-local channels for acquiring external knowledge.

As most regional innovation studies focus on investigating agglomerated localities, only little is known on whether businesses in peripherised regions compensate for lacking local exchange opportunities, and if so, how associated strategies look like. But insights into the configuration of external knowledge acquisition channels, e.g. with respect to spatial range or actor composition, may contribute to further conceptualise innovation processes that occur outside actor-dense contexts. Connected questions regarding the mechanisms used to initiate external linkages in the first place often remain unaddressed, by taking for granted that firms can readily gain access to external knowledge sources. However, establishing ties to external partners requires competencies and resources, both of which are likely to vary between firms. These often neglected, yet fundamental, processes deserve further investigation and conceptualisation.

Eastern Germany and Estonia will form the regional focus to address the questions raised above. Empirically, they will be approached by a quantitative-oriented business survey and subsequent qualitative interviews with business representatives, which aim at conducting in-depth firm-level case studies.

PUBLIC LEADERS SHAPING REGIONS? ANALYZING PRACTICES, RELATIONS AND DISCOURSES OF PUBLIC LEADERS IN (DE)PERIPHERALIZING REGIONS OF ESTONIA AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC

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Keywords: leadership, peripheral rural areas, Post-Soviet countries, postsocial transition, regional inequalities

Abstract: Most studies on leadership in rural regions have been done in a Western European context and do not consider the specificities of the Central or Eastern European context. Rapid institutional changes from planned Soviet societies to radical neoliberal thinking (even further increasing the already existing disparities within Central and Eastern European countries), but also elements of contingency from the socialist past, have created a very different environment for leadership in addressing regional inequalities. Furthermore the emphasis that has been placed on successful leaders of change does not help to understand these regional development processes and merely result in a confirmation of what is assumed to be the successful regional development. Therefore I will go beyond identifying the “stars” of regional development and analyze the role of public leaders, embedded in (various) institutional environments, and in their (co)shaping of “peripheral” regions. Hereby I will move away from a normative