

DemNet

Citizens' Assemblies in Hungary



FIDE Autumn School

Tartu, 13-14 October, 2022





Climate related assemblies



Budapest (2020): How should Budapest tackle the climate emergency?

Miskolc (2021): Air! We pollute it, we inhale it. What can we do to collectively improve the quality of air in Miskolc?

Érd (2022): Roads and escape routes - how to solve the challenges Érd is facing stemming from the rapid growth the city has been undergoing in recent years as part of the Budapest agglomeration (transport and infrastructure)

Similar in structure, more and more refined methodology

- 50 participants (Érd: +6 substitutes, live streamed sortition)
- 2 weekends (Érd: +1 afternoon with the experts)
- 2 lead experts
- 7-8 recommendations



Miskolc - preparation and the topic



- 6 months of preparation
- three organizing parties: Municipality of Miskolc, Dialog Association, DemNet
- co-financed by DemNet and the municipality
- a topic jointly chosen with the municipality in several rounds of consultation

A topic that

- helps the city's sustainable development,
- that is particularly important for the residents of Miskolc and
- can help the Municipality in planning future policies.

Air! We pollute it, we inhale it. What can we do to collectively improve the quality of air in Miskolc?

The question of air quality is something that

- can be understood and tackled at the local level,
- which also has a larger scale impact (can slow down global warming) and
- every resident experiences personally

Miskolc under a blanket of smog



The quality of air is worse in North Eastern Hungary and Miskolc than it is in other parts of Hungary

Air quality is linked to the issues of

- public transportation,
- the use of waste incineration for heating purposes, and
- home energy use



The Miskolc Citizens' Assembly



- 10,000 invitation letters (data requested from the Ministry of Interior Deputy State Secretariate for Data Registers, a sample representative of the overall population of Miskolc above the age of 18 in terms of age, gender, educational degree and location of residence)
- 420 responses (2 weeks for registration)



Inclusive from the beginning



How to make sure that you attract vulnerable groups and keep them in the process?

Keep the **invitation letter** as simple as possible

- one pager from the lead experts
- emphasize that no specific knowledge is required to take part
- no complicated GDPR stuff

Onboarding process

- contract - in person, explained
- offer home care, child supervision
- venue suitable for wheelchair
- keep sending messages and emails



Complex topic - simple language



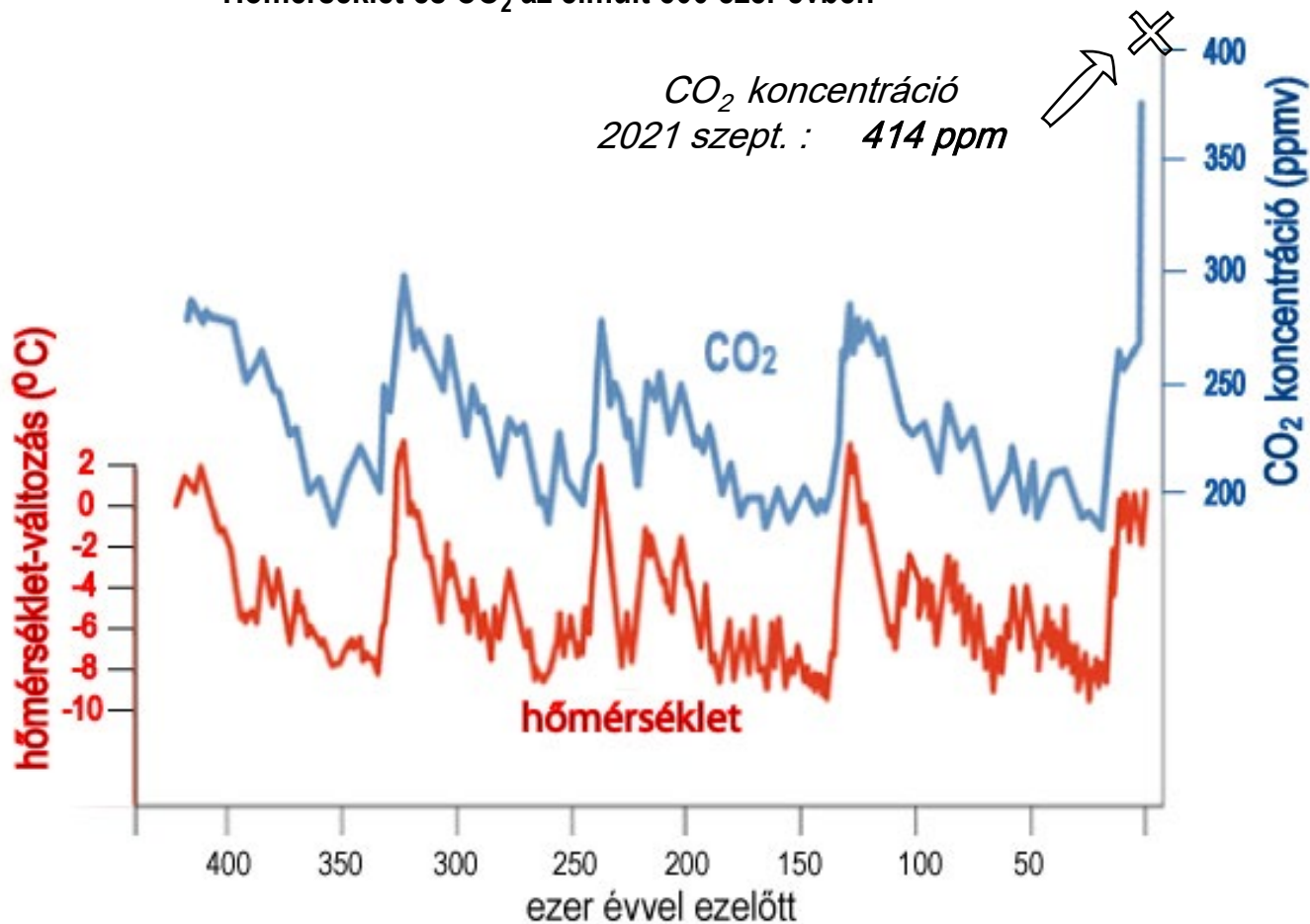
- Prep call with the experts
- One pager on the Dos and Don'ts:
 - no long, heavy sentences
 - no abbreviations
 - no English phrases or anglicisms
 - no graphs, no charts
 - use pictures
 - give examples and best practices

After the learning phase: handout with the case studies (with links) and pictures

Érd: informal session with the experts after the learning phase



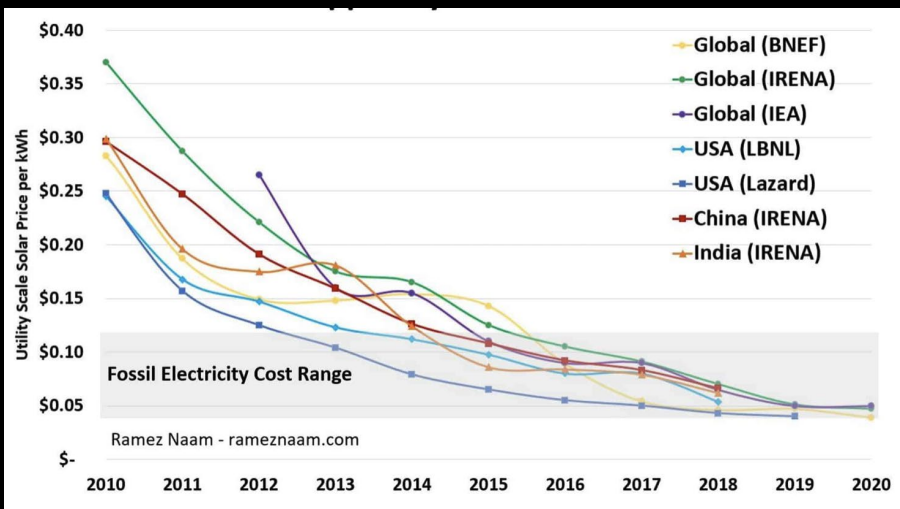
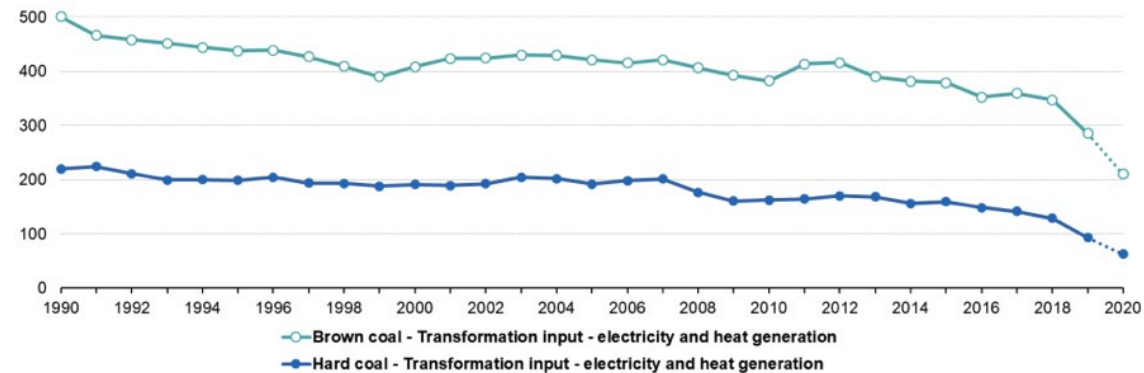
Hőmérséklet és CO₂ az elmúlt 500 ezer évben





*Az EU szénfogyasztása
elfeleződött az elmúlt
3 évben*

Deliveries of brown coal and hard coal to power plants, EU, 1990-2020
(million tonnes)



*A napenergia ára tíz év
alatt az ötödére zuhant, és
már jóval olcsóbb, mint a
gázalapú áramtermelés*





a közlekedés jelentősége

“ A húsz éve betiltott ólmozott benzinből származó ólom még mindig kimutatható a brit főváros levegőjében .”

Figure 2.8: Breakdown of NO_x Emissions in Central London in 2010, by Source⁸⁸

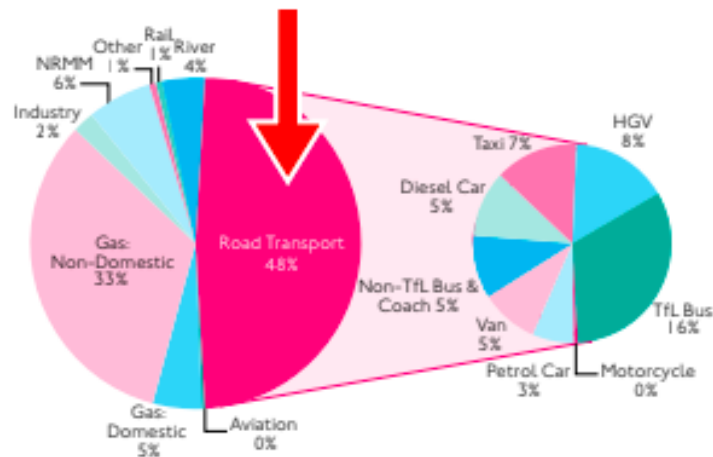
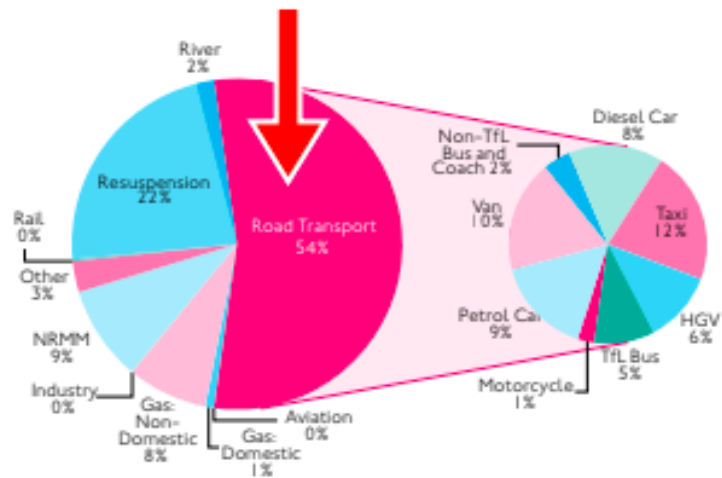


Figure 2.10: Breakdown of PM₁₀ Emissions in Central London in 2010, by Source⁸⁸



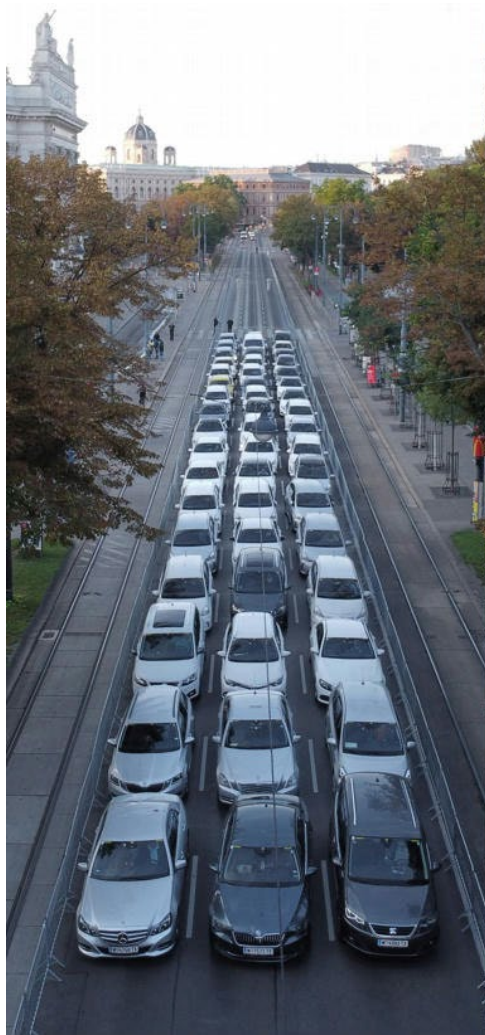


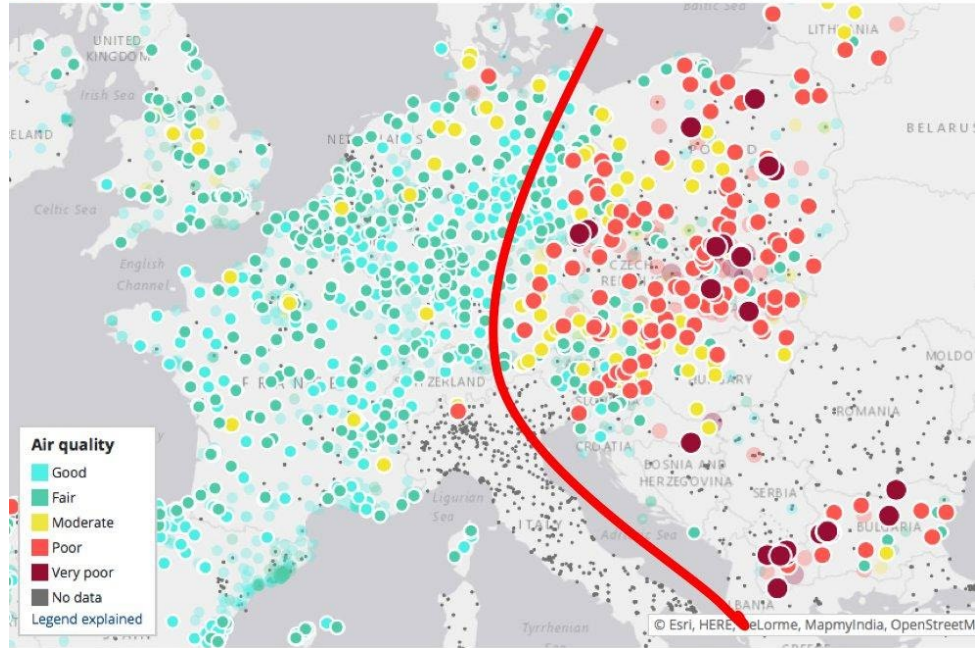


Image by Arvin Estrada



European Air Quality Index

The European Air Quality Divide



Recommendations



- Creating a bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in specific parts of the city, building a network from these routes
- Creating a one-stop consultancy office for all energy related issues
- Dynamic and effective public transportation (rethinking bus schedules, bus sizes, P+R parking)
- Adopt a strategy for greening the city (strategy should be co-designed with citizens)
- Launching a green campaign to raise awareness among people (with special focus on the youth)
- Creating a North-South electric public transport line
- Pilot project for the replacement of outdated heating systems targeting those affected by energy poverty in specific districts of the city

Impact and follow-up



The CA started a **wide ranging public debate** in Miskolc

Survey (representative of the adult population of Miskolc in terms of gender, age and level of education) after the CA with 720 randomly selected Miskolc residents:

- 46 percent of people living in Miskolc had heard about the CA and considered it to be an important initiative

- 64 percent said they believe that the Municipality will make better choices in the future regarding decisions affecting local air quality because it will take into consideration the proposals made by the Citizens' Assembly

Anonymous survey after the event: participants' desire to have a say in public affairs increased

Impact and follow-up



Municipality appointed so called **climate ambassadors** from those who had participated in the assembly. Their task is to work together with the city for the period of a year in order to help implement the recommendations

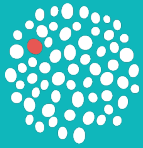
Not long after the event, Miskolc adopted its first official **citizen participation strategy**

The CA also created a **community**

participants got out of their own bubbles and talked to people with whom they would otherwise not necessarily interact







DemNet

<https://demnet.hu/>

<https://kozossegyules.demnet.hu/>



THANK YOU!

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