Article

Cultural Heritage, Sense of Place and Tourism: An Analysis of Cultural Ecosystem Services in Rural Hungary

Bernadett Csurgó [1,*] and Melanie K. Smith [2]

1   Centre for Social Sciences, Hungarian Academy of Sciences Centre of Excellence, 1097 Budapest, Hungary
2   Department of Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality, Budapest Metropolitan University, 1148 Budapest, Hungary; msmith@metropolitan.hu
*   Correspondence: csurgo.bernadett@tk.hu

Abstract: The paper focuses on three dimensions of Cultural Ecosystem Services—cultural heritage, sense of place and tourism—and examines the relationships between them in a rural landscape context. Sense of place connects to landscapes that foster authentic human attachment, cultural heritage values and elements of local history and culture. This suggests that a sense of place cannot be considered in isolation from cultural heritage. However, cultural heritage has been relatively under-researched in the context of cultural ecosystem services, where it is defined as the tangible and intangible benefits that are derived mostly from landscapes. Researchers in rural development have highlighted the importance of sense of place and cultural heritage in both place-making and tourism development. This study explores these relationships further using three case studies from rural Hungary based on in-depth interviews with local stakeholders. The findings demonstrate that cultural heritage is an inherent part of rural place-making in Hungary and that cultural heritage values strongly shape a sense of place. Social and intangible aspects of cultural heritage are the most important for place-making, especially authentic local traditions. The findings suggest that even though a strong sense of place based on cultural heritage is a pre-requisite for tourism development, initiatives have often been more successful in strengthening social cohesion and cultural identity rather than attracting tourists.

Keywords: cultural heritage; sense of place; cultural ecosystem services; place-making; rural tourism; Hungary

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to explore the relationships between cultural heritage, sense of place and tourism development in rural landscapes. The implications for place-making are then considered using three case studies from rural Hungary. The work uses a Cultural Ecosystem Services (CES) framework for the analysis. There have been many studies on ecosystem services and rural landscapes [1], but relatively few articles have focused specifically on Cultural Ecosystem Services. Our analysis therefore tries to address this gap. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA) [2] research study was the largest and longest international research study on ecosystem services (commissioned by the United Nations); thus, most of the definitions and discussions on CES were initially based on this report. It was stated by the MEA that cultural values and services needed to be recognised more in landscape planning and in the development of CES categories.

This paper focuses on three of the CES categories in particular: cultural heritage, sense of place and tourism. Hølleland, Skrede and Holmgaard [3] undertook a review of 130 articles which focused on Ecosystem Services, and they noted that only 2% of them were focused on cultural heritage (in contrast to 75% on environment and ecology). It was also suggested that relatively few tourism academics had undertaken ecosystem services research [4]. Sense of place has been debated extensively in many academic fields

(almost too numerous to mention) and it also seems to be central to the CES categorisation. According to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MEA) [2] a sense of place connects to landscapes that foster authentic human attachment, cultural heritage values and elements of local history and culture. This suggests that a sense of place cannot be considered in isolation from other CES categories, especially cultural heritage.

MEA [2] stated that cultural heritage values can relate to "historically important landscapes" or "cultural landscapes". Hølleland, Skrede and Holmgaard's [3] meta-analysis of cultural heritage in the context of ecosystem services literature found that 70% of articles defined cultural heritage as "various tangible and intangible benefits derived from the ecosystem, mostly defined as landscape". The research in this paper therefore focuses on landscapes in rural Hungary and the benefits derived from cultural heritage as used to develop a local sense of place, as well as in place-making for tourism.

The concept of a sense of place can be traced back to the works of theorists such as Yi-Fu Tuan [5], Edward Relph [6] and later Creswell [7] who emphasised the importance of human perceptions, experiences and attachments in shaping place. This can include the history of the place as well as the choices that are made within the context of cultural heritage (e.g., what to value, preserve and display). The relationship between sense of place and cultural heritage examined by Wheeler [8] shows how "the perceived character of a place and its people is often associated with its historical connotations". The roots of the place and its identity are inextricably connected.

The type of environment and its natural and cultural characteristics may also shape a sense of place. Lewicka [9] argued that a sense of place is a natural condition of human existence, but one that varies according to the types of places and the people that inhabit them. For example, Liu and Cheung [10] made the point that residents' sense of place is likely to vary from one social context to another and that an urban and rural context is greatly different in this respect. Hølleland, Skrede and Holmgaard [3] suggested that "the combination of the natural environment and cultural heritage sites and objects is likely to enhance the provision of CES", which is especially pertinent for rural landscapes.

It has been argued that a sense of place can impact upon local residents' participation in tourism [11] and various elements of a sense of place can influence residents' attitudes to tourism [12]. The role of a sense of place can also be investigated in terms of its influence on residents' participation in tourism businesses [10]. The research in this paper also analyses the extent to which tourism development or aspirations towards development shape residents' approaches to cultural heritage preservation and promotion, as well as their sense of place.

Different approaches to place-making based on these three elements of CES (sense of place, cultural heritage and tourism) are considered using a series of in-depth interviews which focus mainly on the perceptions and experiences of the places inhabited by the interviewees. The in-depth interviews include public, private, community-based and other stakeholders' perspectives.

1.1. Sense of Place and Place-Making

Williams [13] documented that there has been a plethora of studies investigating place-related concepts such as sense of place, place attachment, place identity and place-making, among others, in a multitude of disciplines. It has recently been suggested that many definitions of facets of place are actually irreconcilable, including a sense of place [14]. Jepson and Sharpley [15] argued that the term sense of place is widely accepted as an umbrella term for place identity and place attachment, and Jorgensen and Sted [16] conceived of a sense of place as "a multidimensional summary evaluation comprising place-specific beliefs (place identity), emotions (place attachment) and behavioural commitments (place dependence)". The importance of fostering authentic human attachment, as well as cultural heritage values is highlighted by the MEA [2] definition of a sense of place.

Graham et al. [17] argued that there is no single theory of sense of place, rather that it is understood in many different ways within the academic literature. The authors in this

paper subscribe to a human geography perspective on a sense of place, which sees it as a combination of social constructions interacting with physical settings [18], consisting of "tangible and intangible dimensions that emerge from the relational interactions between people and places" [19]. These definitions echo the earlier work of Tuan [5], Relph [6] and Creswell [7], and this perspective also takes into consideration tangible and intangible cultural heritage values and human experiences relating to physical locations and cultural practices. This also corresponds closely with the definitions of cultural heritage in the context of CES that were summarised by Hølleland, Skrede and Holmgaard [3], which consider the combination of natural landscapes and cultural heritage sites. A sense of place is subjectively experienced [16], and Lau and Li [20] referred to it as "a complicated set of feelings which are evoked by a particular place", some which are "the product of shared experiences". Meaning is derived from the way in which a culture or community imprints its values, traditions, perceptions and memories onto a landscape, and such processes are partly organic and bottom-up, shaped by everyday practices [21].

However, place-making can also be the conduit through which a sense of place is created, and many approaches tend to be top-down, despite the need for a better understanding of how communities or visitors experience places. Even if it is predominantly a top-down process, the importance of cultural and social values in landscape planning and management was emphasised in the development of categories of Cultural Ecosystem Services by the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment [2]. Rather than simply making sense of the meanings that are attached to a place, place-making becomes a process of understanding how people shape their world into places [13].

The research in this paper examines the place-making processes in a rural landscape context from both a top-down and bottom-up perspective examining the role that cultural heritage plays in fostering a sense of place among residents as well as in developing and attracting tourism.

1.2. Cultural Ecosystem Services and a Sense of Place

Although the benefits of Cultural Ecosystem Services have been noted by MEA [2] and subsequent CES researchers, CES are seen by some authors to be the most elusive to define of all the Ecosystem Services. This can have implications for the communication of their usefulness or value to stakeholders in the decision-making or planning process. It was concluded in one systematic review of 142 papers that there is no consistency in the definitions of CES generally nor in the wording of different categories of CES [22]. Many researchers, including in recent papers [3] have made use of the MEA [2] definition of CES, which is "The non-material benefits people obtain from ecosystems through spiritual enrichment, cognitive development, reflection and aesthetic experiences". The categories of cultural services include a sense of place, cultural heritage, recreation and ecotourism, educational, inspirational, aesthetic and spiritual and religious. However, this paper is based more closely on the definition by Fish et al. [23] that "cultural ecosystem services are about understanding modalities of living that people participate in, that constitute and reflect the values and histories people share, the material and symbolic practices they engage in, and the places they inhabit". This strongly integrates both cultural heritage and a sense of place and further strengthens the choice of these concepts in this research as two of the most important CES categories. It should also be noted that the study focuses on recreation (e.g., local leisure activities such as festivals and events) as well as (eco)tourism, but the term "eco-tourism" has been abbreviated to "tourism" for the purposes of this paper as this more general term tends to be used in both national and local documents and strategies in Hungary.

This study originally aimed to focus on all of the categories of CES (as listed above according to MEA, [2], but it was deemed too ambitious, and it was clear from the primary data that a sense of place and cultural heritage emerged the most strongly in narratives of place-making in rural landscapes. Many existing studies also focused on individual categories of CES rather than the whole spectrum [24]. For example, Wartmann and

Purves [25] and Ryfield, Cabana, Brannigan and Crowe [26] focused their CES research mainly on a sense of place. Ryfield, et al. [26] defined a sense of place in the context of CES as "the attachment of particular emotions, ideas, or experiences with defined locations which had distinctive identities". Previous research showed that strengthening a sense of place can help to connect CES to stewardship and civic engagement as well as community building and education [27]. Similarly, another study emphasised the importance of a sense of place in the practices of landscape stewardship by communities and their responsibility of care [28]. It has been suggested too that cultural heritage can contribute to place identity and a sense of place, which are considered to be part of broader cultural wellbeing dimensions [29]. The concept of identity also emerged from the interviewee narratives in the primary data collection. Those few studies in CES literature that focus on cultural heritage tend to emphasise intangible and social elements rather than tangible or built heritage [3].

1.3. Place-Making and Rural Development

In the context of rural development, place-making, place identity and place branding are important aspects of development. The characteristics of place based on local resources are especially essential for rural development strategies. A sense of place can be defined in terms of cultural territorial identity which is based on attractive local resources which are transmitted through the development of tourist attractions or the marketing of local products [30]. Nevertheless, the territorial identity on which a sense of place is based can be contested and fragmented; therefore, the process of establishing a shared sense of place within a territory can help to foster collaboration and cooperation [31,32]. Rural studies literature suggests that regional economic spaces can be created based on culturally constructed places which provide local stakeholders with diverse development opportunities [30,33].

Cultural heritage can play an important social or symbolic role in place-based identification, as stated by Marsden [34] "New rural identities and cultures may emerge as new social formations take shape in various rural localities. Rural areas offer distinctive ways of life in the post-modern world. For some areas this becomes a basis of the products and services that they sell to the world beyond, whether as tourism or crafts or regional specialities. For certain other areas, the protection of local identity (whether expressed as social or natural attributes) is the reason for rejecting some forms of development. In both instances, cultural identity is redefined". Although Marsden [34] acknowledged that such changes can sometimes lead to feelings of dispossession or debasement within local communities, in other cases the images projected of the locality can also help to define a distinctive identity.

Many scholars have argued that identities around particular events and heritage or place-defined gastronomy and food become fused with economic opportunities or activities and are formed as a strategy for rural development [35–37]. Rural local identities are also fostered by modern urban perceptions of rurality, where the rural and nature are perceived in a romantic sense as a living spiritual entity. Aesthetic aspects of nature and the rural comprise an important social capital and identity for local rural communities [38–40]. Studies have highlighted the changes in rural areas and rural identities, which are occurring in parallel to increasing recreational functions of rural places (e.g., [41]. Recreation function or the characteristics of rurality are strongly connected to tourism, which is an important rural change agent.

The intrinsic values of rural places should be highlighted as well as their use value, because cultural values are difficult to replace once they are lost [42]. Nevertheless, it is a challenge to find out how planners can use the emotional meanings and interactions between people and their environment to construct expressions of rural places [19]. Different actors value rural places differently and it can be difficult to measure implicit social valuation [42].

2. Materials and Methods

Several issues were explored in the context of rural Hungary in the cases below with the following aims:

1. To examine the significance of cultural heritage and sense of place for rural place-making and tourism development.
2. To explore which specific aspects of cultural heritage are valued, selected and used by local stakeholders in rural place-making.
3. To examine the extent to which a sense of place based on cultural heritage developments can form the basis of rural tourism development.

In the following section, three case studies are presented (Figure 1). Case studies were selected where the stakeholders were especially focused on using cultural heritage in identity construction and the development of local goods and services. The research was therefore conducted in the North Great Plain region between 2013 and 2019. The North-Great Plain region is located in the eastern part of Hungary and is characterised by an agricultural landscape and except for the Hortobágy puszta region, the area is not yet a very popular tourist destination in Hungary.
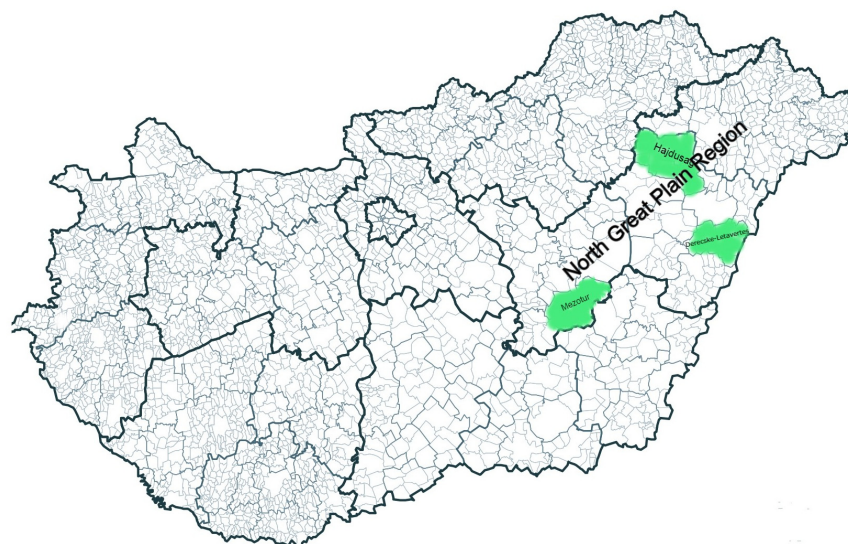

Figure 1. Micro-regions of Hungary. Source: Own creation based on the database of Hungarian Central Statistical Office.

The main research project from 2013 to 2016 was located in and connected to Debrecen University which is situated in the North Great Plain region. Although the region is very rich in cultural heritage and has been used in rural development in almost all micro-regions in the past few decades at different levels, rural tourism has not yet succeeded significantly. The aim of the research project was to understand how cultural heritage use can contribute to the local society's wellbeing and local development through tourism and other heritage-based activities in peripheral rural regions. The case studies were selected according to different types of applied cultural heritage in tourism development as well as the different development levels of tourism.

The figure shows that tourism development is low in the region compared with national and regional data and also in comparison with one of the popular rural tourism regions in Hungary. However, the studied regions are currently at different levels of tourism development.

The research applied qualitative sociological methods for data gathering and analysis. The most important method was semi-structured interviews with key actors (such as local governments, tourism entrepreneurs, cultural institutions, civic associations). A total of 30–50 interviews were conducted in each case study region (Table 1). During the research

project, face-to-face interviews were conducted, and the interviews were recorded and transcribed. The length of the interviews was approximately 1 h. Most of the interviews were undertaken between 2014 and 2016 but some of the respondents in the Mezőtúr micro-region were interviewed later from 2018 to 2019 too. Interview respondents were anonymised, although the geographical context for the interviews was retained.

Table 1. Summary of interviewees by role and region.

	Mezőtúr Micro-Region	Hajdúság Region	Derecske-Létavértes Micro-Region
Local government	9	10	9
Cultural Institution	13	8	6
Civic organisation	15	9	8
Tourism entrepreneur	8	7	4
Farmer	5	3	7
Total	**50**	**37**	**34**

The selection of interviewees in each case study region was based on those actors who play a key role in the development of rural cultural heritage according to a purposive sampling method [43]. Examples of cultural heritage-based resources included local cultural events, local gastronomy, products and crafts and traditional buildings. Desk research was conducted to find the most important actors and institutions for cultural heritage use in each study area. Because the study areas contain several settlements, desk research was needed for each settlement of the selected micro-regions and the institutions and actors were listed for each one. The number of interviewees was not the same in each settlement because they are not equally focused on cultural heritage. The selection focused on the type of stakeholders or actors, such as local authorities, civic organisations, entrepreneurs and cultural institutions, as well as on the type of activities such as festival organisation, community building, tourism activities, cultural education, traditional goods, and services. The main focus was on the role that cultural heritage plays in the sense of place and rural development; therefore, interviewees were selected who held an important position in these activities at a local level. The research also applied other qualitative sociological methods for data gathering and analysis. Promotional materials and administrative documents such as tourism brochures, event brochures, local newspaper issues, local development strategy documents, etc., were collected and photos at events and cultural heritage sites were taken.

Limitations such as the lack of external validity were taken into account in this analysis by applying the same rigorous methods in all three contexts. Interviews were undertaken with very similar actors in each case study region and similar and comparable interview guidelines were used. Common and comparative analyses were applied which provide a more holistic overview of the topic than single case descriptions. Atlas.ti software was used for the analysis of the transcribed interviews. A qualitative text analysis was performed by Atlas.ti software. A total of 52 codes were generated from the terminology used by the interviewees, which were then grouped into themes connected to sense of place, cultural heritage and tourism. Cultural heritage, rural idyll, local tradition, community, local food, built heritage, natural beauty, etc., appeared as themes in the analysis. The content analysis also focused on how the themes of CES and especially sense of place and cultural heritage appeared in local narratives in the context of place-making and tourism development. Another focus of the analysis was the respective role of cultural heritage and sense of place in local place-making and the degree of success in developing tourism.

3. Results

3.1. Place-Making Based on Historical Origins

The Mezőtúr micro-region belongs to the historical and geographical region of Greater Cumania (Nagykunság) and is situated in Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok County (Figure 1). The micro-region is characterised by an agricultural landscape. The area of the micro region is 726 km^2 and the population size is 25,000 inhabitants [44]. The micro-region consists of five settlements. The population is decreasing (Figure A1) and dramatically ageing. (Figure A2) The most important economic sector of the region is agriculture, and the number of agricultural enterprises is increasing (Figure A3). However, the importance of tourism in the local economy is low, e.g., the number of tourism nights is below the county average (Figure 2).
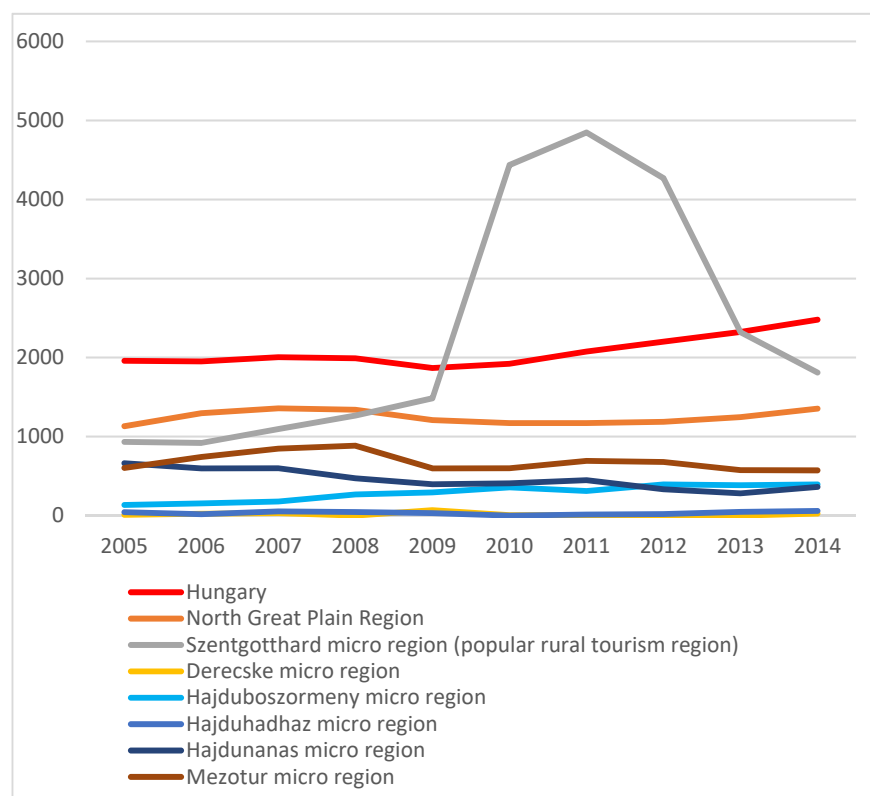
Figure 2. Number of tourist overnights per 1000 inhabitants in the study areas. Source: TEIR.

Settlements of the micro-region except the territory of Mezőtúr town are historical areas where Cumans resided in the 13th century. However, the most famous cultural heritage of the region is not connected to the Cuman past, which is the pottery traditions of Mezőtúr that originated from the 18th Century. Nevertheless, tourism development is not intensive in the region as both the statistical data showed and local stakeholders emphasised. A few domestic tourists visit the spa in Túrkeve or enjoy the nature-based attractions of the region such as fishing, hunting, rowing or hiking. Local events are mostly attended by local inhabitants and regional visitors according to the interviewees' experiences and our participant observation of the events.

A very intensive place-making process started at the beginning of the 2000s as a result of European Rural Development Programs. Tourism development and image-building strategy documents were created by local professional and civic society members. The local Government of Mezőtúr for example initiated a Tourism Round Table to discuss and find out the development goals and strategies. Local actors became active in cultural heritage-based activities in each settlement of the region: they organised festivals, cultural events and professional events and they initiated new services such as local product shops, local

museums, tourist routes, etc. Cultural heritage relating to Cuman history and traditions became the core element of the place-making process, but there is a strong competition between the settlements within the micro-region in terms of sense of place and local identity making. Each settlement and especially the two towns tried to confirm and promote their special and particular cultural heritage such as the pottery art of Mezőtúr and the shepherd culture in Túrkeve during the image creation processes. The interest of local governments wishing to confirm their particular heritage conflicted with the aim of local civic associations when trying to create a joint image which could form the basis for tourism development of the region. They stated that attractions of single settlements are not enough for tourists, and only the whole Greater Cuman region has a chance to develop a successful tourism destination, for which a common image is needed.

> *"Here in this region a single settlement like Mezőtúr or even Túrkeve is not attractive enough for tourists to come. We have to provide something together and the Cuman tradition such as artefacts and especially the memory of Cumans is a common heritage and can bond the settlements into a common tourism attraction (. . .) I know Mezőtúr is not a traditional Cuman place, but villages surrounding it are really Cuman, so this connects Mezőtúr to Cuman history . . . it is not a problem, the goal is to discover our regional tourism attraction together"—stated by a civic association member*

As a result of civic association work, Mezőtúr started to present itself as a part of or even as the centre of Cuman settlements. However, historically Cumans never lived in the territory of Mezőtúr town; only the neighboring settlement was populated by Cumans. Nevertheless, all of the settlements including Mezőtúr use the Cuman term as a common identifying symbol and have installed Cuman Memorial Monuments. For example, there is a Cuman figure statue in Mezőtúr situated in a special heritage site, the so-called Cuman mound (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Cuman Memorial Day 2016 in Mezőtúr at the Cuman Memorial site with the Cuman figure statue on the Cuman mound. Source: mezotur.hu (from authors' research collection).

As a result, intensive debates ensued around the issue of the authenticity of Cuman heritage. Key actors of tourism development of the region emphasised that the Cuman heritage was not rich enough for the basis of local place-making. As a result of the intensive assimilation processes of the Cuman nation over the past centuries, only very few Cuman artefacts, such as linguistic memory pieces and characteristic embroidery motifs remain today. Animal husbandry and a relaxed way of life is strongly emphasised as the cultural heritage of the Cumans.

The content analysis of interviews revealed the following (Figure 4):

- Cuman cultural heritage was emphasised by local stakeholders in the region in the context of place-making as well as tourism development;
- Sense of place and cultural heritage were presented as the basis of tourism development in local narratives;
- Cultural heritage codes included the following: Cuman origins, traditions, peasant and shepherd culture, traditional agriculture, artefacts, language, memory, pottery (some of these were specific to certain settlements only);
- Sense of place was closely connected to cultural heritage (see Figure 3) and included the following codes: local traditions, authenticity, local history, nostalgia, local events, stress-free life, harmony, leisure;
- The unique and core characteristics of place were connected to local history, authenticity and nostalgia, as well as elements of the "rural idyll" based on narratives of a relaxed way of life, as well as community events;
- Development challenges included a lack of clearly identifiable Cuman traditions and an insistence on single settlements which hindered the success of the wider place-making process and subsequently, tourism development.
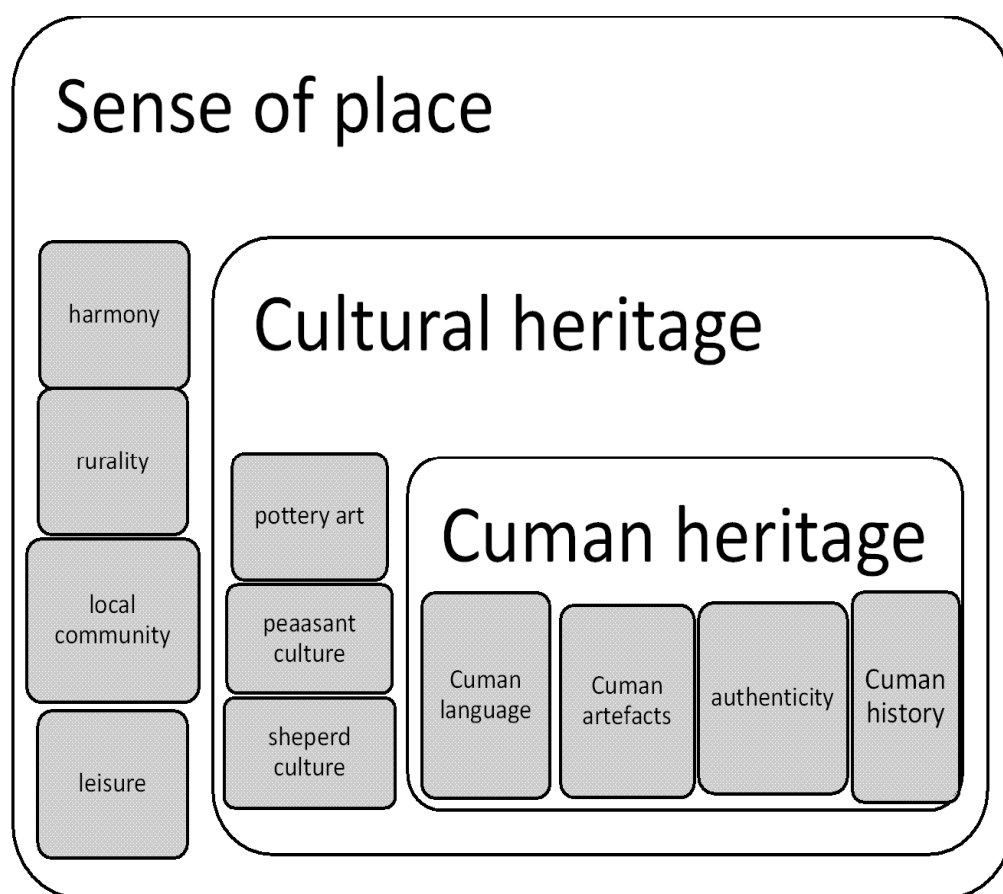
Figure 4. Sense of place and cultural heritage themes and codes in Mezőtúr micro-region narratives.

3.2. Place-Making Based on Peasant Culture

Hajdúság is a historical region in Hajdú-Bihar County in the eastern part of Hungary consisting of three micro-regions (Table 2) with 11 settlements (Figure 1). The area of the historical region is 1155 km^2 and the population size is 89,850 [43].

Table 2. Micro-regions in Hajdúság.

Micro-Region	Population Size	Area (km^2)	Number of Settlements
Hajdúböszörmény	38,627	471	2
Hajdúhadház	22,746	137	3
Hajdúnánás	28,477	547	6
Hajdúság in total	89,850	1155	11

Source: TEIR.

The population is decreasing and ageing in most of the settlements of the region; however, there are some settlements especially in the Hajdúhadház micro-region where the population is increasing because of the suburbanisation process, with newcomers arriving from the city of Debrecen (Figures A4–A9). Agriculture is an important sector in the whole area of the region (Figures A10–A12) and tourist numbers are still very low, but the number of tourism nights is increasing year by year (Figure 2).

It has a special urbanised settlement structure characterised by small towns. This settlement structure and the connected historically privileged status of the settlement from the 17th century, named "Hajdú" towns, provides the most important cultural heritage of this region. Hajdú heritage is strongly connected to traditional peasant and historical military traditions, represented in monuments as well as tangible and intangible heritage. Nevertheless, the most important tourism attraction of the region is the spa tourism and the most popular and developed spa tourism destination of the region is Hajdúszoboszló. However, other small towns also have spa and thermal water.

Several built heritage sites are situated in the Hajdú towns, and historical collections exist in almost all settlements of the region. Interviewees highlighted that Hajdú traditions form a common heritage for the settlements, which creates a very strong sense of place. All of the towns have attempted to identify their unique characteristics and image, which are mainly derived from local gastronomic heritage and food products. Gastronomy festivals and connected special labelled local products are the most important elements of image building in almost all of the settlements. There are several traditional gastronomy-based local events every year in the settlement of the region such as Cabbage days in Hajdúhadház, or Pig killing in Hajdúböszörmény (Figure 5). These events are very popular among locals and so-called "return to home visitors", so they became the main target group for the events. This observation was confirmed by the experience of interviewees.

"We try to come close to the famous Hungarian gastronomic events such as the fish festival in Baja or sausage festival in Békéscsaba, but obviously they already have a very long past and reputation. I think we are slowly catching up with them. I think people do not want to travel to the other end of the country. A lot of people come to our events from the surrounding settlements, but there are also visitors who stay in hotels during the events. We focus on gastronomic tourism. We think the way to a tourist's heart is through his/her stomach!"—stated by a tourism expert in Hajdúböszörmény.

The content analysis of interviewees' narratives revealed the following (Figure 6):

- All elements of the Hajdú cultural heritage traditions are connected to peasant culture, including built heritage, agriculture and gastronomy. Religion was also presented as an important part of Hajdú heritage (Figure 5);
- Codes relating to the theme of cultural heritage included local history, small towns, peasant traditions, peasant gastronomy, traditional agro food and Calvinist religion;
- Sense of place is strongly connected to Hajdú heritage and local narratives included elements of a rural idyll. This included harmonious, stress-free living, home-made products, local community and events. Community events target local visitors as well as returners and provide an experience of a shared sense of place and local identity;
- Overall, a sense of place and cultural heritage are important to local identity building and social cohesion, but tourism only plays a minor role.

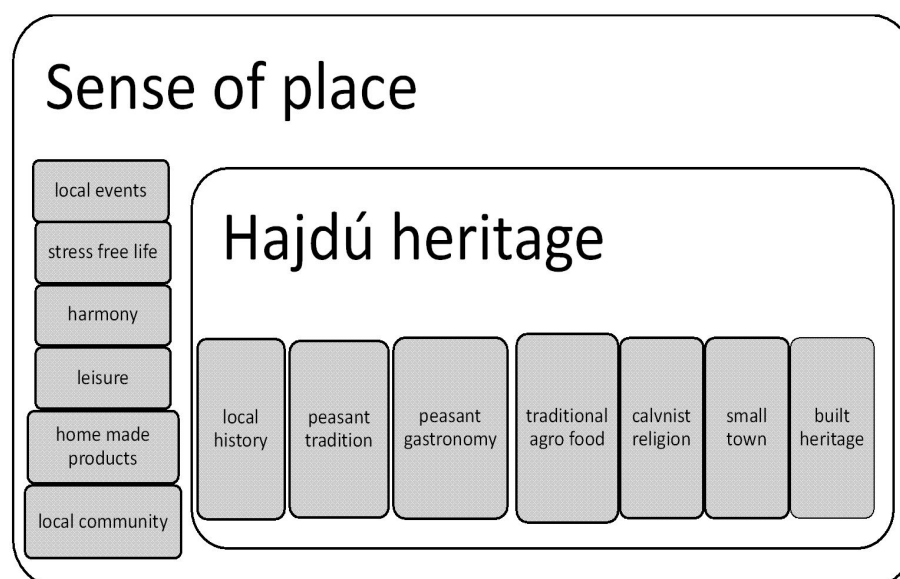**Figure 5.** Pig Killing 2015 in Hajdúböszörmény. Photo: Tamás Horváth.

Figure 6. Sense of place and cultural heritage themes and codes in Hajdúság micro-region narratives.

3.3. Place-Making Based on Agro-Food

The Derecske-Létavértes micro-region is located in Hajdú-Bihar County (Figure 1). The micro-region consists of 13 settlements, its area is 650 km^2 and the population size is 40,899 [44]. The population is decreasing and ageing, but thanks to the closeness of the city of Debrecen, in some settlements of the region the population has started to grow in recent years (Figures A13 and A14). Agriculture is the most important sector in the region (Figure A15); however, the tourism sector almost does not exist, e.g., in 2013 and 2014, no tourist nights were registered in the region (Figure 2). Settlements of the region have several special and particular heritage elements, including folk traditions, castles or local celebrities. However, most of the settlements of the region share a common local image rooted in an agricultural product: the horseradish. The micro-region is the main horseradish-producing area in Hungary and 80% of Hungarian horseradish production comes from this region. Recently, locals have started to consider the horseradish as local

heritage and this resulted in the horseradish becoming a PDO (Protected Designation of Origin) in 2006.

In Derecske-Létavértes, the sense of place was very weak, so an intensive place-making process began in the 2000s based on the horseradish tradition and its symbolic reinterpretation. The most important actor of this local place-making process is the Horseradish Tourist Route Association including eight local governments, four horseradish producers and one local restaurant. The main goals of the Association are to generate tourism activities and to revitalise local cultural heritage related to the horseradish.

> *"Well, many traditions are connected to the horseradish . . . the cultivation itself is a tradition, for example, it is watered at night rather than during daytime, it is a tradition, the traditional cultivation method itself (. . .). Everybody had old things, handmade, manual tools related to horseradish, they had collected and brought them here and we exhibited them. Keeping the horseradish traditions alive, this is the main goal"*— a member of the Association explaining the role of local events and activities.

Interviewees explained that before the Association started its work on place-making, the horseradish only had meaning as an economic resource but it was not regarded as cultural heritage at all. It is important to emphasise that the main goal of the Association is tourism development, so they target tourists with their activities, but until now, mostly locals have been interested in and participated in their activities and events. Horseradish days and a Horseradish Festival are the most important heritage-based events but they have also established local heritage collections and initiated new local dishes and created new and renewed horseradish-based local products (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Lakatos Horseradish—a local product (Lakatos torma—home made horseradish) in the local market of Debrecen is becoming more and more popular among locals. Source: authors' research collection.

Content analysis of interviews revealed the following (Figure 8):

- Although local culture and built heritage appeared in local narratives of a sense of place, it was mainly horseradish-related traditions such as agricultural traditions, cultivation methods, unique food, gastronomy, folk art and peasant culture that were emphasised the most in local narratives (see Figure 8).
- Codes included local traditions, agriculture, food, local community, unique landscape and healthy life.
- Peasant culture, traditional ways of life and folk art have provided a broader context for the symbolic redefinition of the horseradish. This symbolic reinterpretation of local products and sense of place has led to the revitalisation of the local community; however, it has not yet led to tourism development in the region.
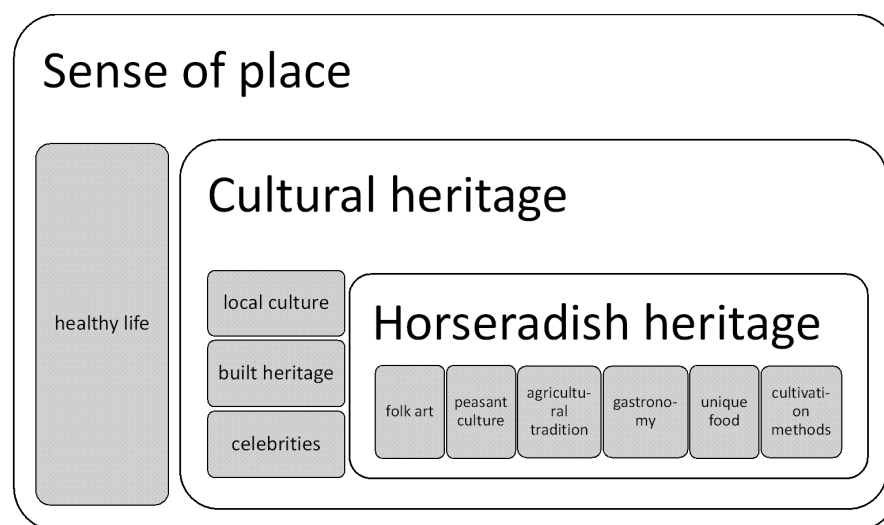
Figure 8. Sense of place and cultural heritage themes and codes in Derecske-Létavértes micro-region narratives.

4. Discussion

The case studies illustrate a wide range of examples of place-making and how far the process integrates a sense of place, cultural heritage and tourism development. There are clear connections between the categories, with cultural heritage often providing the inspiration for a sense of place, which may or may not lead to tourism development directly. Many of the cases adhere closely to Lew's [21] definition of a sense of place which refers to how cultural groups imprint their values, memories and traditions on a landscape. It can be seen that this has been undertaken in various ways and with varying degrees of success. In most cases, the focus has tended to be on the social and intangible aspects of cultural heritage in accordance with other CES studies analysed by Hølleland, Skrede and Holmgaard [3].

Williams [13] highlighted that place-making should focus on understanding how people fashion their world into places. The emphasis here often seems to be on authenticity traditions relating to ways of life or methods of cultivation or cuisine. Case studies that were not so successful in terms of tourism development such as Derecske-Létavértes nevertheless increased their social cohesion through place attachment [45] and place identity [46]. Other studies of CES have emphasised the importance of identity, which emerged strongly in our research, for example, Ryfield, et al. [26] defined a sense of place as "the attachment of particular emotions, ideas, or experiences with defined locations which had distinctive identities". Table 3 provides a summary of sense of place narratives and the outcomes of the place-making process in each of the studied regions.

Table 3. The relationship between sense of place and cultural heritage and the implications for place-making and tourism development in the research areas.

Region	The Main Emphasis in the Sense of Place Narratives	Outcome of the Place-Making Process
Mezőtúr	tourism development	contested and weak tourism development and common regional image creation
Hajdúság	local identity building	recreational events for locals and regional visitors
Derecske-Létavértes	tourism development	strong local community and identity development, but weak tourism development

In the Mezőtúr region, authentic and distinctive cultural heritage is important for place-making; however, small settlements may struggle to attract tourism. The sense of place in such contexts tends to be based more on local community identity building. Although Blicharska et al. [22] suggested that a sense of place and cultural heritage can contribute to recreation and tourism, Bryce et al. [29] also emphasised the importance of their contribution to identity and cultural wellbeing. It seems that the latter elements are more important in this context.

Hajdúság is an example of a location in which a unique and authentic cultural heritage is not essential for place-making. A strong sense of place can also be constructed through close collaborations and complementarity in place-making. This case study suggests that tourism development does not have to (and maybe should not) feature in all aspects of place-making.

The Derecske-Létavértes case study demonstrates that not all place-making strategies can be successful in achieving their original aims. The elements that can provide a strong sense of place for communities, such as the revival of rural and peasant traditions, may not be as attractive to tourists as other elements. Place-making strategies may need to separate what is good for building a community sense of place and identity, and what is unique and appealing enough to attract outsiders.

Overall, it seems that a strong local sense of place is important for place-making, but if it becomes too strong, it may hinder development because there is a refusal to collaborate within the wider region. This may lead to a failure to develop economically and to attract tourism if this is the aim of place-making. This was the case in Mezőtúr. Although place-making may be successful (i.e., retaining or fostering a local sense of place), wider place-making processes relating to tourism may fail. In some cases, a local place-making strategy can also fail in its tourism ambitions because it assumes that what is important for a local sense of place and cultural heritage may be equally attractive for tourists (e.g., the Derecske-Létavértes case study). Rural and peripheral locations should consider very carefully the types of tourists that they can realistically attract, for example, "return to home visitors" in Hajdúság. Place-making strategies may be over-ambitious for the resources and attractions that actually exist (i.e., they may not be unique, aesthetic or inspiring enough) to attract tourists and especially foreign tourists. Sometimes, it may be as fruitful to focus on the sense of place, cultural heritage conservation or the revival of traditions and identity creation for local communities to try to develop tourism.

5. Conclusions

This study aimed to fill a gap that was highlighted in previous research, which is connected to capturing social and cultural values in landscape planning and management as well as identifying ways in which planners can use the interactions between people and the rural landscape to inform place-making. This research attempted to fill these gaps in a previously under-researched context (rural Hungary) using a previously under-used framework (CES). Although the relationship between a sense of place and cultural heritage has been researched extensively in other rural contexts outside the CES framework, CES helped to justify the choice of focus as well as the relationships between the phenomena. Our case studies emphasised the values and histories that people share, especially intangible cultural and heritage practices. According to our research, cultural heritage is clearly an essential resource used to shape a sense of place and identities in rural place-making and potentially, tourism development. Tourism development is desirable because it not only affords economic benefits but it can also contribute to creating a sense of place which helps to retain young people, prevent outmigration and over time, create new economic and social opportunities.

Of course, one of the limitations of the study was that it did not focus on all categories of CES (e.g., aesthetics, inspiration, education, religion and spirituality), but these elements did not emerge as strongly from the documents and interview narratives as sense of place and cultural heritage. The emphasis often seemed to be more on the authenticity of

experiences relating to ways of life or traditional methods of cultivation or cuisine, rather than aesthetics or inspiration. Education appeared to be somewhat under-emphasised in these case studies, but it is often the case that formal educational activities are unnecessary in contexts where cultural heritage and traditions are already embedded into local ways of life (i.e., they are learnt by practice and handed down from generation to generation). Spirituality is usually connected to religious traditions in these regions (e.g., in Hajdúság), but in some cases, rural landscapes may inspire feelings of (non-religious) nature-based spirituality. However, this would require further research.

Overall, the research shows that cultural heritage is an inherent part of rural place-making in the imprinting of community values, traditions, perceptions and memories onto landscapes. The research also aimed to capture data about peoples' emotional experiences of places and their role in the construction of sense of place, which has also been relatively under-researched in a rural context. Overall, the relationship between cultural heritage, sense of place and tourism has been explored in greater depth than in many previous CES papers. It emerges strongly from this research that a sense of place and cultural heritage are important resources for recreation and tourism development. The research indicates that a strong sense of place based on cultural heritage is an important pre-requisite for tourism development, even if it is not always entirely successful in practice.

Place-making is not always fully successful in its aims as it may be over ambitious or even inappropriate for the context (e.g., in creating an international image and attracting foreign or even domestic tourists), but this does not mean that there will be no benefits from place-making for local or incoming residents. Cultural heritage clearly contributes strongly to the stories that are being told through place-making and the majority of these tend to emerge from existing or revived traditions (even if they are enhanced somewhat to make them appear more attractive).

However, the ownership of touristed landscapes is not always clear-cut. Tourists themselves may contribute to place-making, especially if they demand local and authentic experiences, for example, in gastronomy, which has become increasingly popular in rural destinations such as these. However, an absence of tourists can be equally telling for a location, indicating that the place is not unique or attractive enough to warrant a visit or has not been promoted well enough. People often engage with place-making because they feel passionate about a place, its heritage or local attractions and want others to experience the same feelings. For this reason, cultural heritage tends to play a central role in both a sense of place and place-making and is arguably the most important dimension of cultural ecosystems services when developing rural places.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.
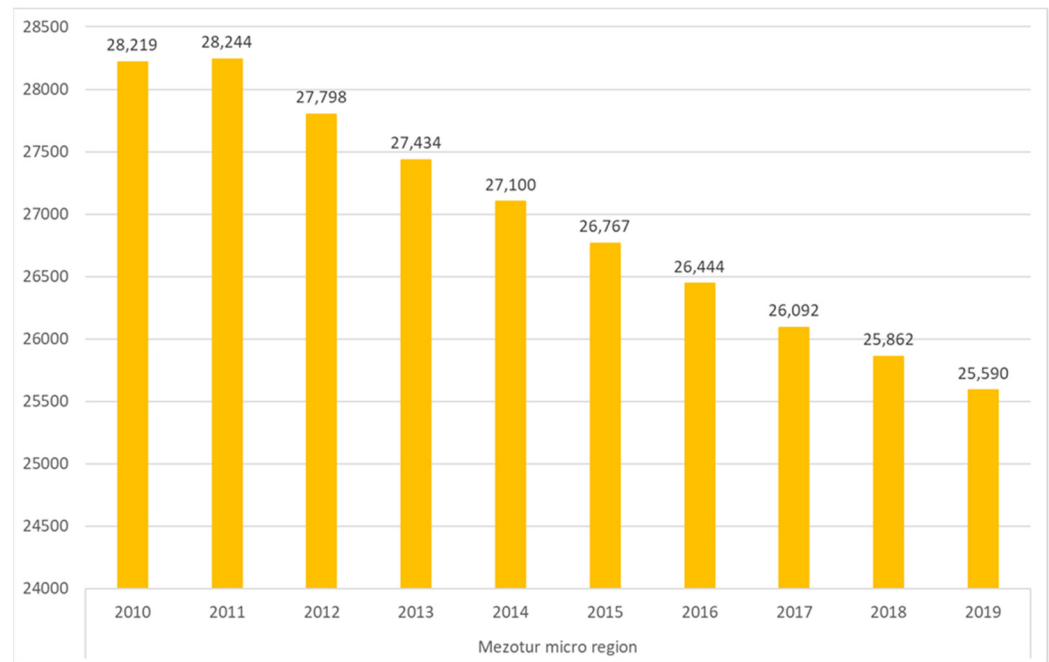
Appendix A

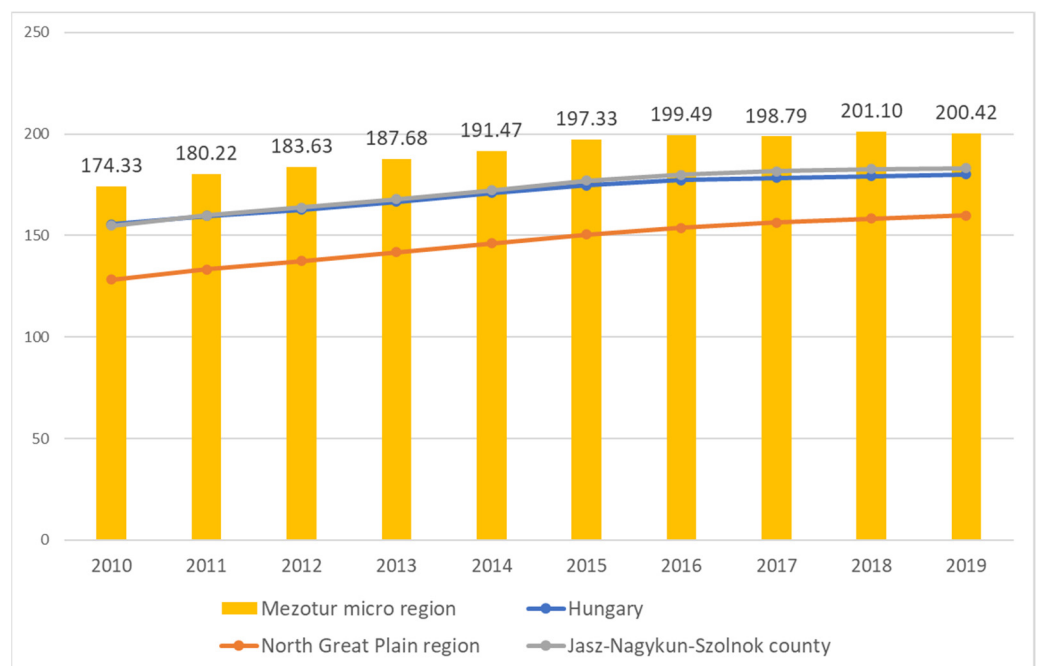**Figure A1.** Population in Mezőtúr micro region.

Figure A2. Ageing indicator in Mezőtúr micro region (number of 60 years old or older permanent inhabitants per 100 0–14 years old permanent inhabitants).
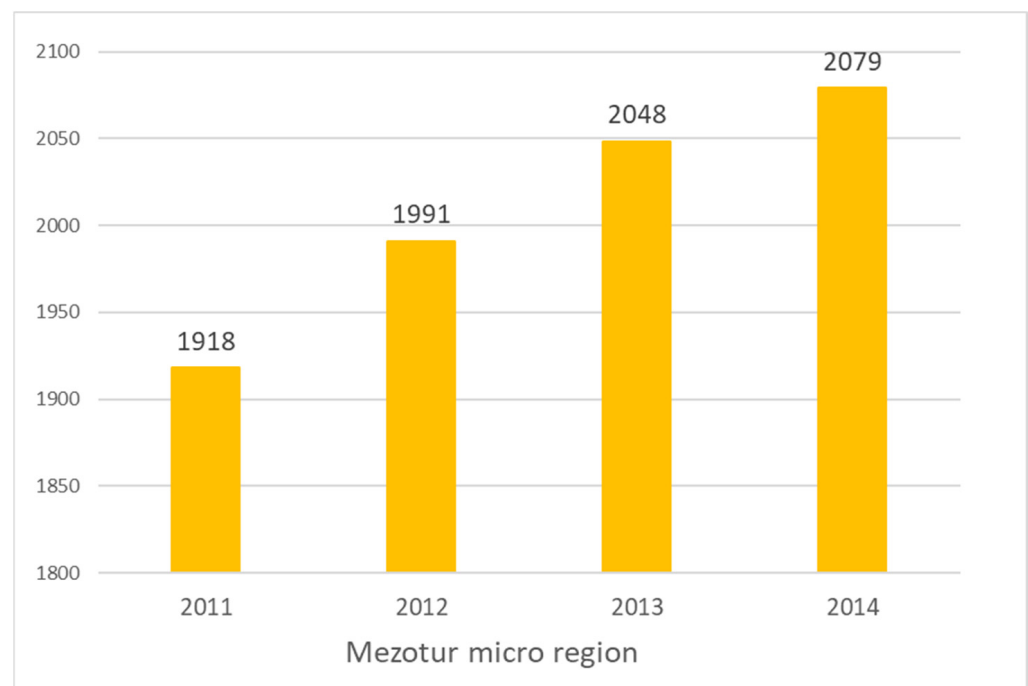
Figure A3. Number of enterprises in agriculture, forestry and fishery in Mezőtúr micro region.
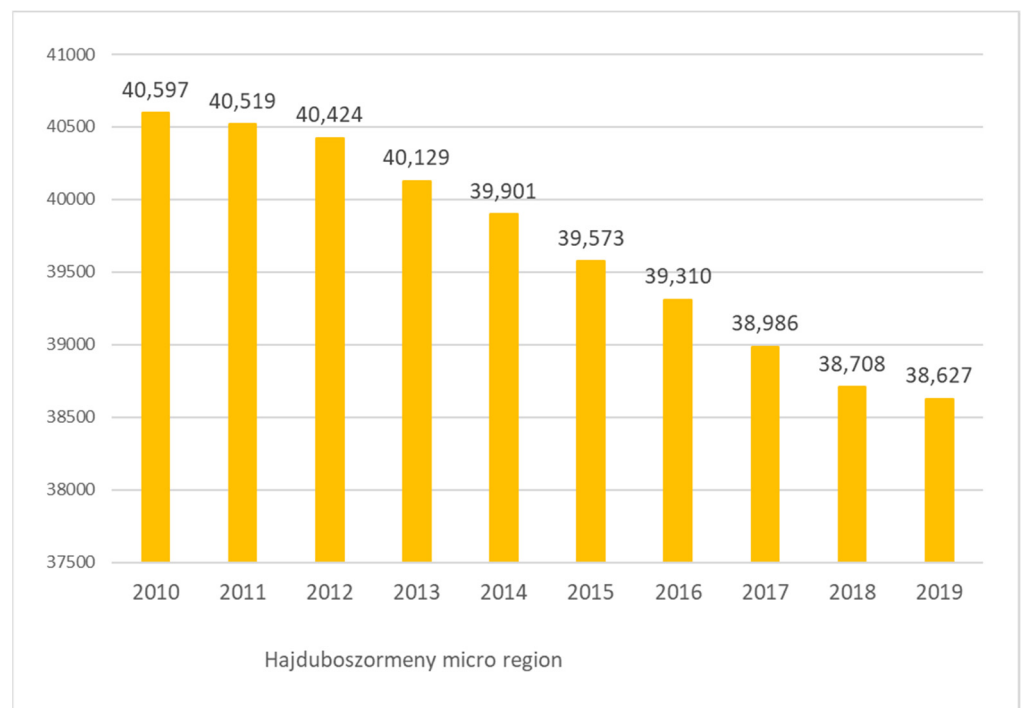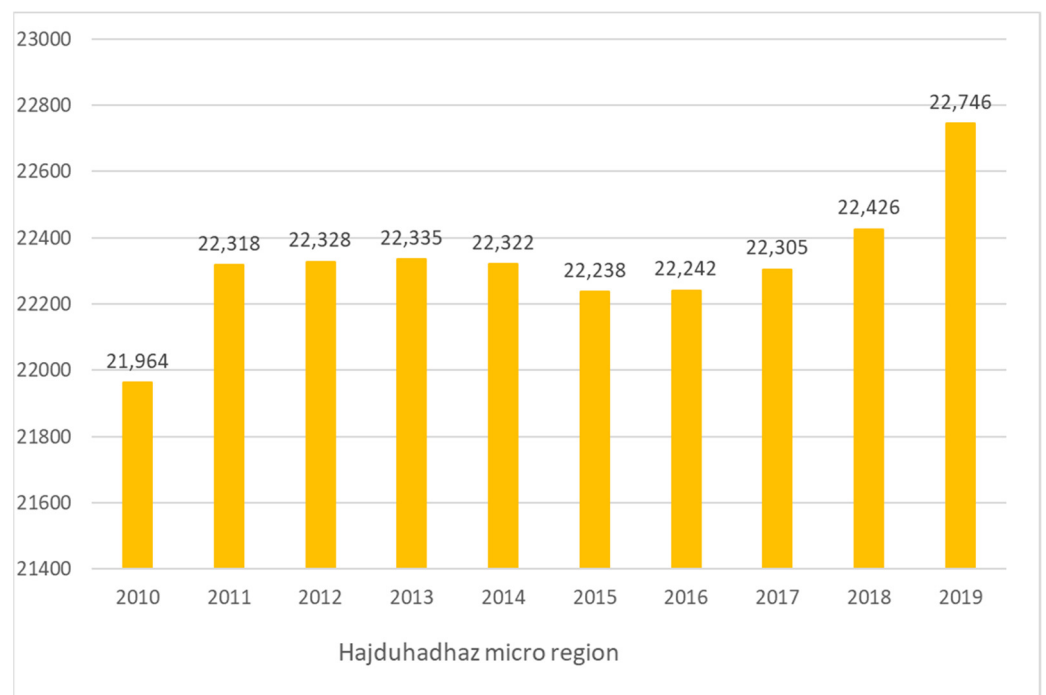

Figure A4. Population in Hajdúböszörmény micro region.

Figure A5. Population in Hajdúhadház micro region.
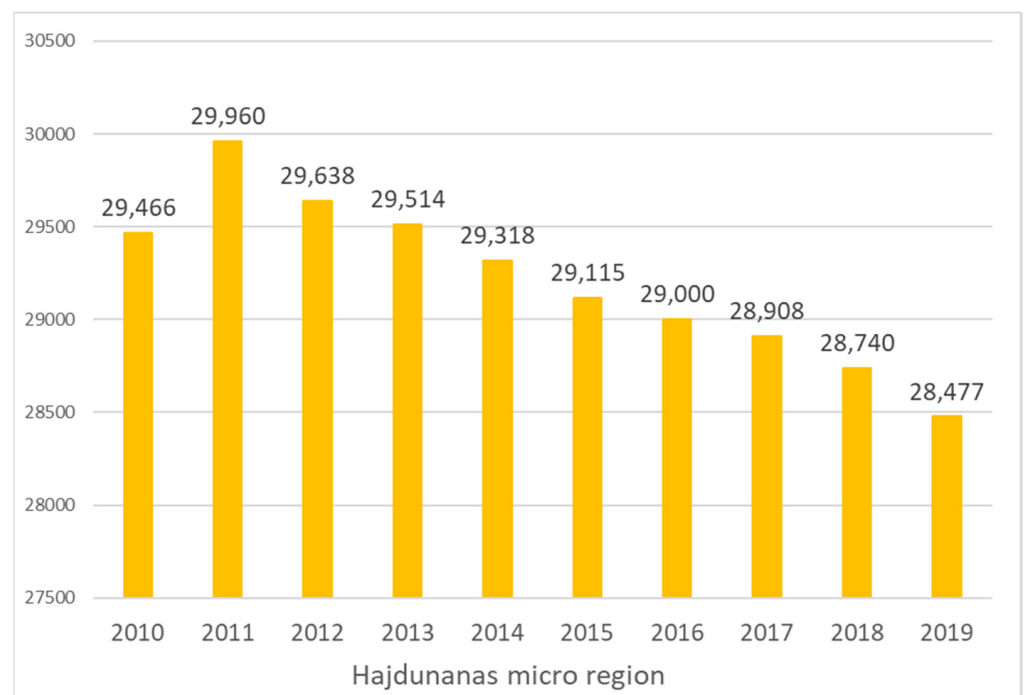
Figure A6. Population in Hajdúnánás micro region.
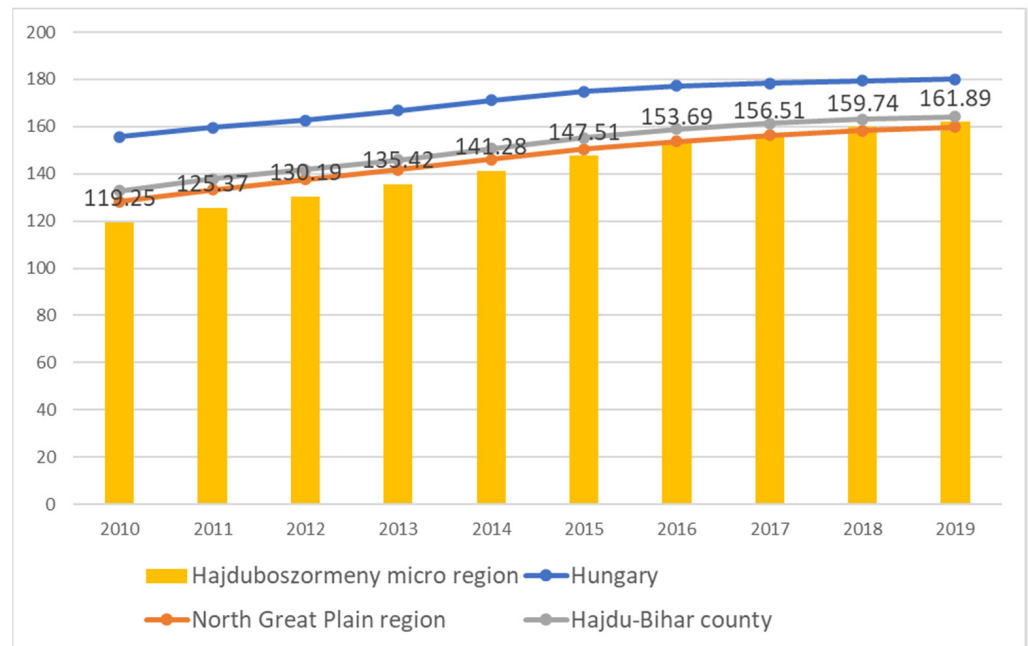
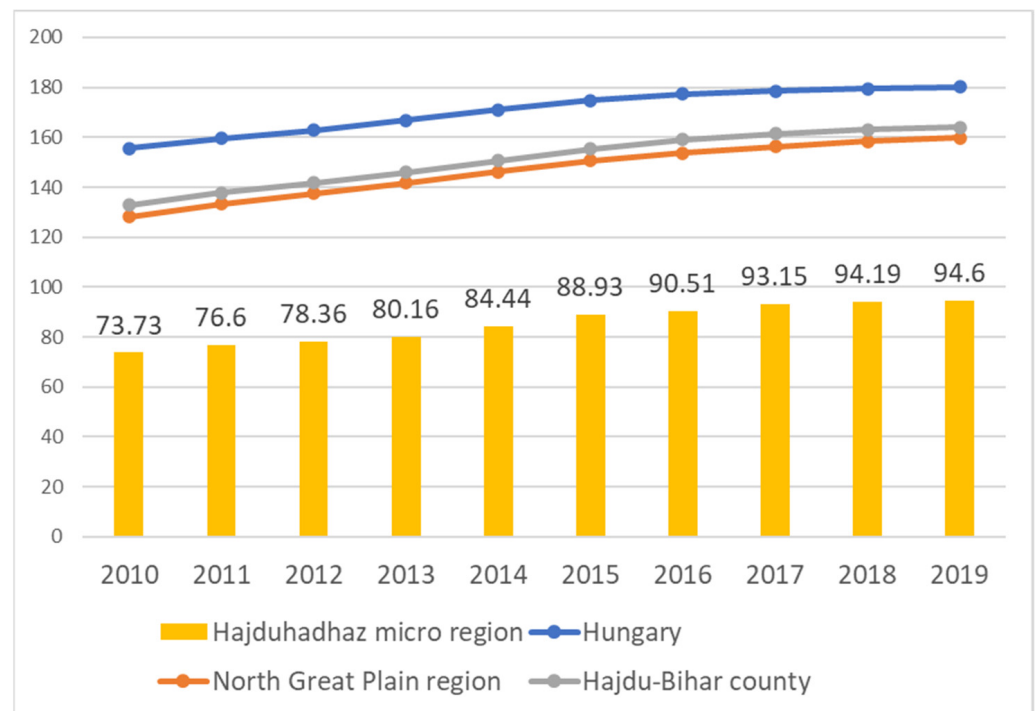**Figure A7.** Ageing indicator in Hajdúböszörmény micro region.

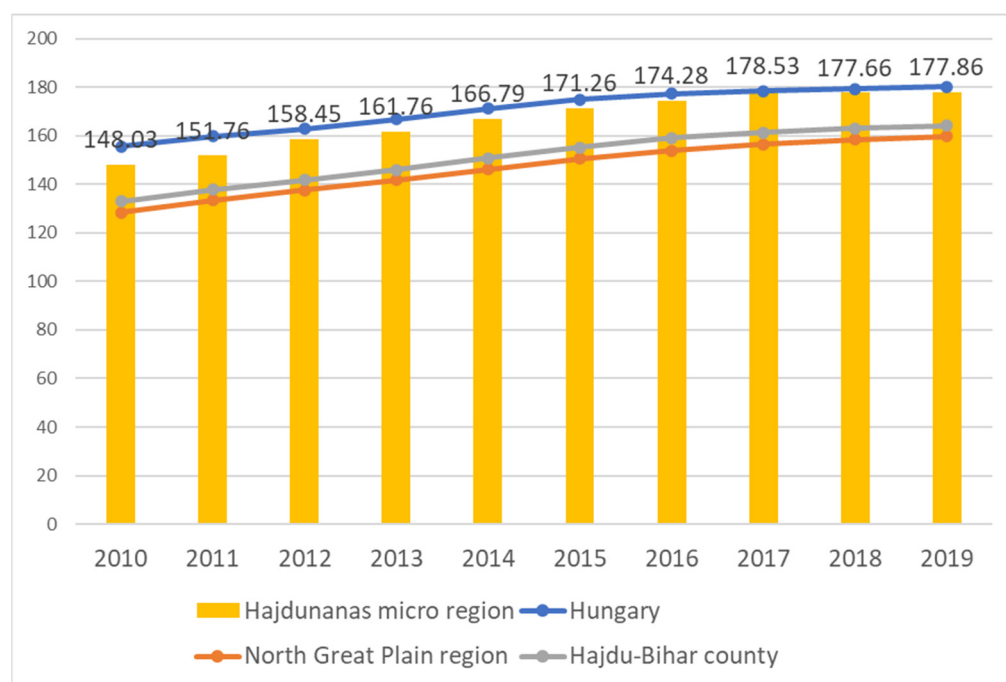**Figure A8.** Ageing indicator in Hajdúhadház micro region.

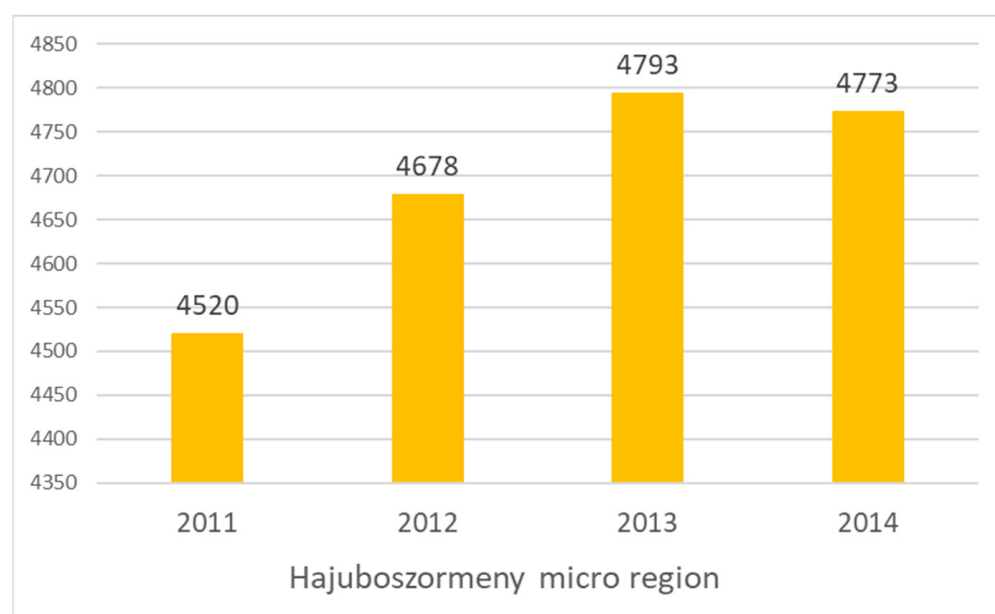**Figure A9.** Ageing indicator in Hajdúnánás micro region.

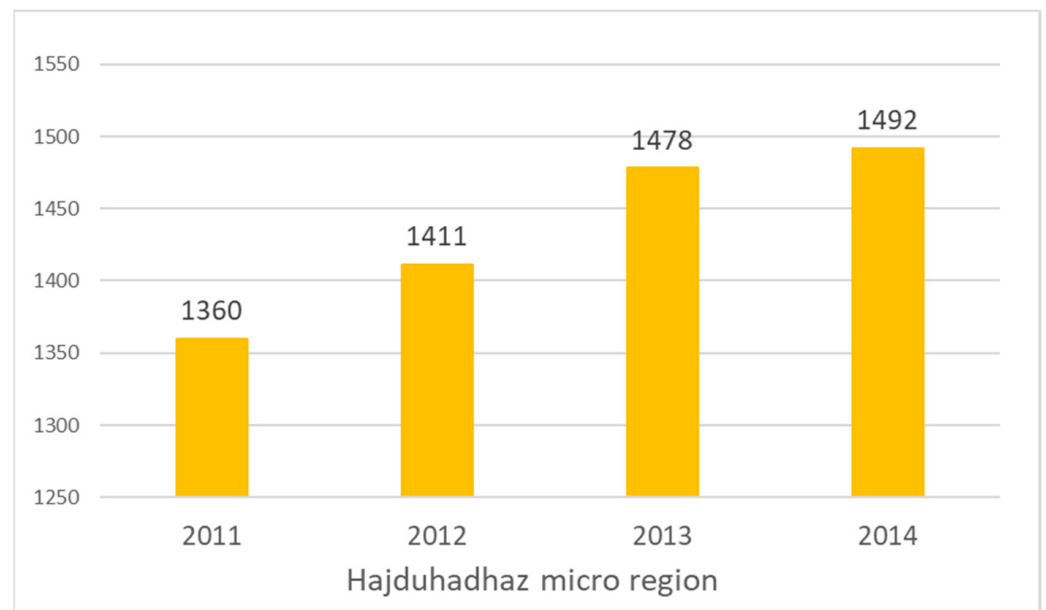**Figure A10.** Number of enterprises in agriculture, forestry and fishery in Hajdúböszörmény micro region.

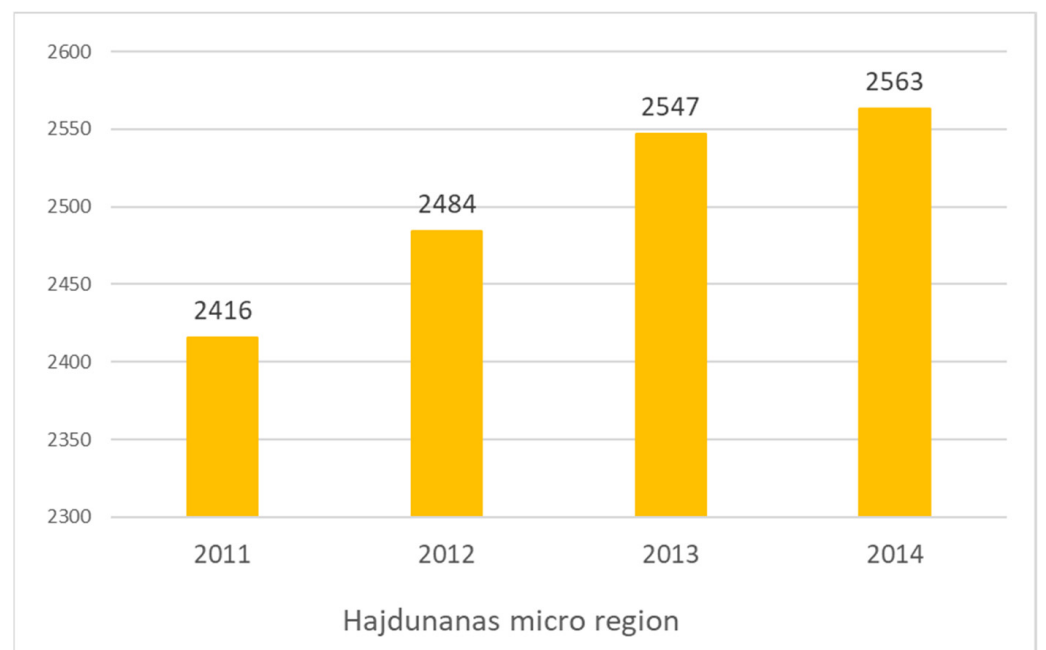**Figure A11.** Number of enterprises in agriculture, forestry and fishery in Hajdúhadház micro region.

Figure A12. Number of enterprises in agriculture, forestry and fishery in Hajdúnánás micro region.
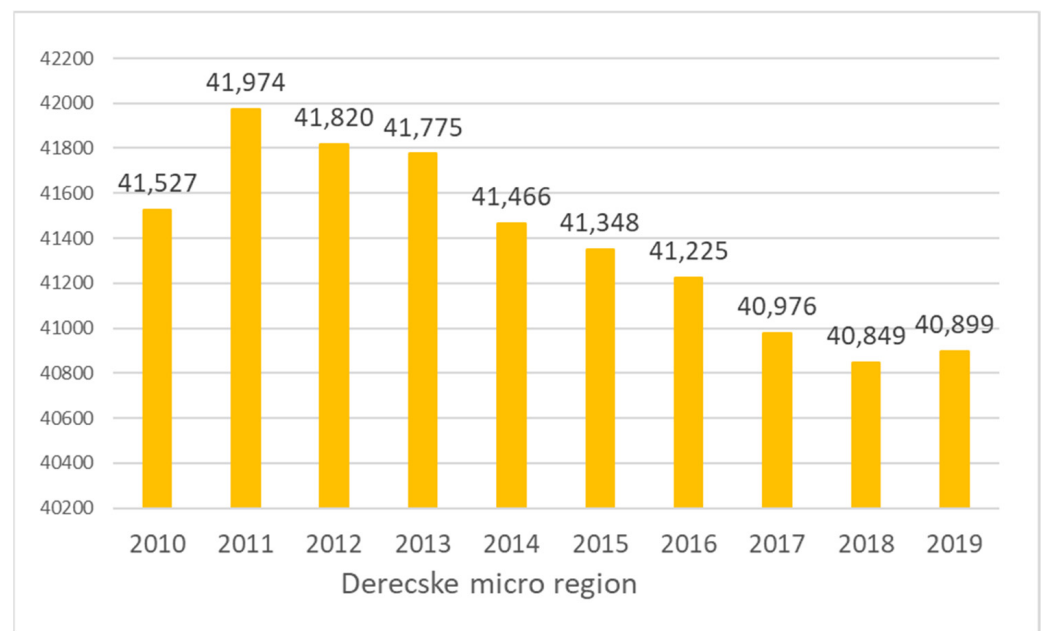
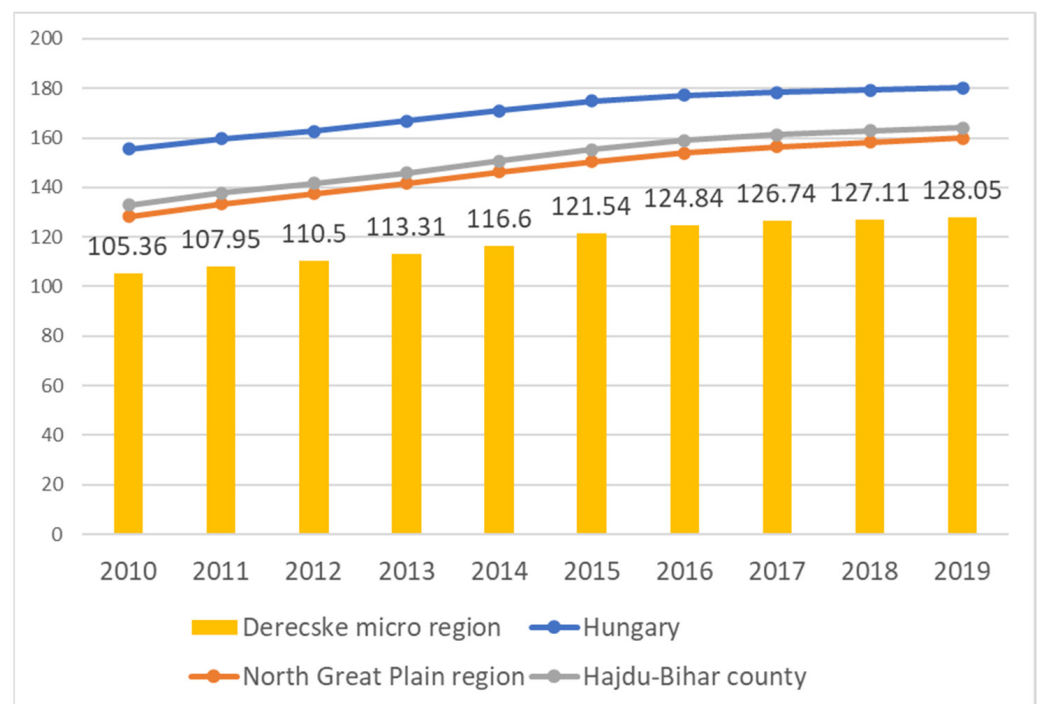**Figure A13.** Population in Derecske micro region.

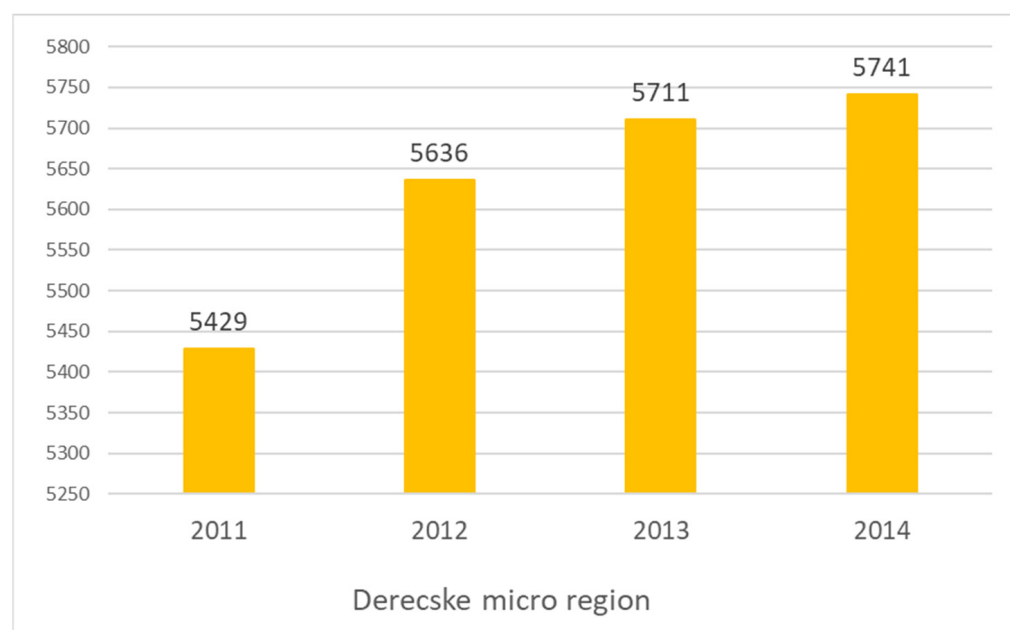**Figure A14.** Ageing indicator in Derecske micro region.

Figure A15. Number of enterprises in agriculture, forestry and fishery in Derecske micro region.

References

1. Castro-Pardo, M.; Azevedo, J.C.; Fernández, P. Special Issue: Ecosystem Services, Sustainable Rural Development and Protected Areas. *Land* **2021**, *10*, 1008. [CrossRef]
2. Assessment, M.E. *Ecosystems and Human Well-Being: Wetlands and Water*; World Resources Institute: Washington, DC, USA, 2005; ISBN 1-56973-597-2.
3. Hølleland, H.; Skrede, J.; Holmgaard, S.B. Cultural Heritage and Ecosystem Services: A Literature Review. *Conserv. Manag. Archaeol. Sites* **2017**, *19*, 210–237. [CrossRef]
4. Church, A.; Coles, T.; Fish, R. Tourism in Sub-Global Assessments of Ecosystem Services. *J. Sustain. Tour.* **2017**, *25*, 1529–1546. [CrossRef]
5. Tuan, Y. *Topophilia: A Study of Environmental Perception, Attitudes, and Values*; Prentice Hall: Englewood Cliffs, NJ, USA, 1974.
6. Relph, E. *Place and Placelessness*; Pion: London, UK, 1976; Volume 67.
7. Cresswell, T. *Defining Place. Place Short Introd*; Blackwell Ltd.: Malden MA, USA, 2004; Available online: https://www.academia.edu/12725809/Place_a_short_introduction (accessed on 10 June 2022).
8. Wheeler, R. Local History as Productive Nostalgia? Change, Continuity and Sense of Place in Rural England. *Soc. Cult. Geogr.* **2017**, *18*, 466–486. [CrossRef]
9. Lewicka, M. Place Attachment: How Far Have We Come in the Last 40 Years? *J. Environ. Psychol.* **2011**, *31*, 207–230. [CrossRef]
10. Liu, S.; Cheung, L.T.O. Sense of Place and Tourism Business Development. *Tour. Geogr.* **2016**, *18*, 174–193. [CrossRef]
11. Zhang, H.; Lei, S. Effects of Place Attachment on Participation Intentions for Local Tourism Development. *Sustain. Tour.* **2010**, *139*, 501–509. [CrossRef]
12. Wang, S.; Xu, H. Influence of Place-Based Senses of Distinctiveness, Continuity, Self-Esteem and Self-Efficacy on Residents' Attitudes toward Tourism. *Tour. Manag.* **2015**, *47*, 241–250. [CrossRef]
13. Williams, D.R. Making Sense of 'Place': Reflections on Pluralism and Positionality in Place Research. *Landsc. Urban Plan.* **2014**, *131*, 74–82. [CrossRef]
14. Hamzei, E.; Winter, S.; Tomko, M. Place Facets: A Systematic Literature Review. *Spat. Cogn. Comput.* **2020**, *20*, 33–81. [CrossRef]
15. Jepson, D.; Sharpley, R. More than Sense of Place? Exploring the Emotional Dimension of Rural Tourism Experiences. *J. Sustain. Tour.* **2015**, *23*, 1157–1178. [CrossRef]
16. Jorgensen, B.S.; Stedman, R.C. A Comparative Analysis of Predictors of Sense of Place Dimensions: Attachment to, Dependence on, and Identification with Lakeshore Properties. *J. Environ. Manag.* **2006**, *79*, 316–327. [CrossRef]
17. Graham, H.; Mason, R.; Newman, A. Literature Review: Historic Environment, Sense of Place, and Social Capital. English Heritage, UK. 2009. Available online: https://eprints.soton.ac.uk/182155/1/Historic_Environment%252C_Sense_of_Place_and_Social_Capital_Lit_Review.pdf (accessed on 10 June 2022).
18. Campelo, A.; Aitken, R.; Thyne, M.; Gnoth, J. Sense of Place: The Importance for Destination Branding. *J. Travel Res.* **2014**, *53*, 154–166. [CrossRef]
19. Puren, K.; Roos, V.; Coetzee, H. Sense of Place: Using People's Experiences in Relation to a Rural Landscape to Inform Spatial Planning Guidelines. *Int. Plan. Stud.* **2018**, *23*, 16–36. [CrossRef]

20. Lau, C.; Li, Y. Analyzing the Effects of an Urban Food Festival: A Place Theory Approach. *Ann. Tour. Res.* **2019**, *74*, 43–55. [CrossRef]
21. Lew, A.A. Tourism Planning and Place Making: Place-Making or Placemaking? *Tour. Geogr.* **2017**, *19*, 448–466. [CrossRef]
22. Blicharska, M.; Smithers, R.J.; Hedblom, M.; Hedenås, H.; Mikusiński, G.; Pedersen, E.; Sandström, P.; Svensson, J. Shades of Grey Challenge Practical Application of the Cultural Ecosystem Services Concept. *Ecosyst. Serv.* **2017**, *23*, 55–70. [CrossRef]
23. Fish, R.; Church, A.; Willis, C.; Winter, M.; Tratalos, J.A.; Haines-Young, R.; Potschin, M. Making Space for Cultural Ecosystem Services: Insights from a Study of the UK Nature Improvement Initiative. *Ecosyst. Serv.* **2016**, *21*, 329–343. [CrossRef]
24. Tratalos, J.A.; Haines-Young, R.; Potschin, M.; Fish, R.; Church, A. Cultural Ecosystem Services in the UK: Lessons on Designing Indicators to Inform Management and Policy. *Ecol. Indic.* **2016**, *61*, 63–73. [CrossRef]
25. Wartmann, F.M.; Purves, R.S. Investigating Sense of Place as a Cultural Ecosystem Service in Different Landscapes through the Lens of Language. *Landsc. Urban Plan.* **2018**, *175*, 169–183. [CrossRef]
26. Ryfield, F.; Cabana, D.; Brannigan, J.; Crowe, T. Conceptualizing "sense of Place" in Cultural Ecosystem Services: A Framework for Interdisciplinary Research. *Ecosyst. Serv.* **2019**, *36*, 100907. [CrossRef]
27. Andersson, E.; Tengö, M.; McPhearson, T.; Kremer, P. Cultural Ecosystem Services as a Gateway for Improving Urban Sustainability. *Ecosyst. Serv.* **2015**, *12*, 165–168. [CrossRef]
28. Plieninger, T.; Bieling, C.; Fagerholm, N.; Byg, A.; Hartel, T.; Hurley, P.; López-Santiago, C.A.; Nagabhatla, N.; Oteros-Rozas, E.; Raymond, C.M.; et al. The Role of Cultural Ecosystem Services in Landscape Management and Planning. *Curr. Opin. Environ. Sustain.* **2015**, *14*, 28–33. [CrossRef]
29. Bryce, R.; Irvine, K.N.; Church, A.; Fish, R.; Ranger, S.; Kenter, J.O. Subjective Well-Being Indicators for Large-Scale Assessment of Cultural Ecosystem Services. *Ecosyst. Serv.* **2016**, *21*, 258–269. [CrossRef]
30. Ray, C. Culture, Intellectual Property and Territorial Rural Development. *Sociol. Rural.* **1998**, *38*, 3–20. [CrossRef]
31. Kneafsey, M.; Ilbery, B.; Jenkins, T. Exploring the Dimensions of Culture Economies in Rural West Wales. *Sociol. Rural.* **2001**, *41*, 296–310. [CrossRef]
32. Mettepenningen, E.; Vandermeulen, V.; Huylenbroeck, G.V.; Schuermans, N.; Hecke, E.V.; Messely, L.; Dessein, J.; Bourgeois, M. Exploring Synergies between Place Branding and Agricultural Landscape Management as a Rural Development Practice. *Sociol. Rural.* **2012**, *52*, 432–452. [CrossRef]
33. Moragues-Faus, A.M.; Sonnino, R. Embedding Quality in the Agro-Food System: The Dynamics and Implications of Place-Making Strategies in the Olive Oil Sector of Alto Palancia, Spain. *Sociol. Rural.* **2012**, *52*, 215–234. [CrossRef]
34. Marsden, T. Rural Futures: The Consumption Countryside and Its Regulation. *Sociol. Rural.* **1999**, *39*, 501–526. [CrossRef]
35. Bessière, J. Local Development and Heritage: Traditional Food and Cuisine as Tourist Attractions in Rural Areas. *Sociol. Rural.* **1998**, *38*, 21–34. [CrossRef]
36. Mitchell, C.J.A. Entrepreneurialism, Commodification and Creative Destruction: A Model of Post-Modern Community Development. *J. Rural Stud.* **1998**, *14*, 273–286. [CrossRef]
37. Panelli, R.; Stolte, O.; Bedford, R. The Reinvention of Tirau: Landscape as a Record of Changing Economy and Culture. *Sociol. Rural.* **2003**, *43*, 379–400. [CrossRef]
38. Bell, D. Variations on the Rural Idyll. In *The Handbook of Rural Studies*; Marsden, T., Mooney, P., Cloke, P., Eds.; SAGE Publications Ltd.: London, UK, 2006; pp. 149–160.
39. Short, B. Idyllic Ruralities. In *Handbook of Rural Studies*; Cloke, P., Marsden, T., Mooney, P., Eds.; SAGE: London, UK, 2006; pp. 133–148, ISBN 978-0-7619-7332-4.
40. Walker, G. Contemporary Clerical Constructions of a Spiritual Rural Idyll. *Sociol. Rural.* **2002**, *42*, 131–142. [CrossRef]
41. Halfacree, K. Rural Space: Constructing a Three-Fold Architecture. In *Handbook of Rural Studies*; Cloke, P., Marsden, T., Mooney, P., Eds.; SAGE: London, UK, 2006; pp. 44–62, ISBN 978-1-4462-0694-2.
42. Auer, A.; Maceira, N.; Nahuelhual, L. Agriculturisation and Trade-Offs between Commodity Production and Cultural Ecosystem Services: A Case Study in Balcarce County. *J. Rural Stud.* **2017**, *53*, 88–101. [CrossRef]
43. Palinkas, L.A.; Horwitz, S.M.; Green, C.A.; Wisdom, J.P.; Duan, N.; Hoagwood, K. Purposeful Sampling for Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis in Mixed Method Implementation Research. *Adm. Policy Ment. Health* **2015**, *42*, 533–544. [CrossRef]
44. TEIR Helyzetképtár. Available online: https://www.teir.hu/helyzet-ter-kep/ (accessed on 10 June 2022).
45. Forrest, R.; Kearns, A. Social Cohesion, Social Capital and the Neighbourhood. *Urban Stud.* **2001**, *38*, 2125–2143. [CrossRef]
46. Uzzell, D.; Pol, E.; Badenas, D. Place Identification, Social Cohesion, and Environmental Sustainability. *Environ. Behav.* **2002**, *34*, 26–53. [CrossRef]