

Hungarian success at UN ECE Committee on Environmental Policy

UN ECE Committee on Environmental Policy has coordinated preparatory works for the Pan-European Ministerial Conference (<http://www.unece.org/environmental-policy/environment-for-europe/efe-conferences/batumi-conference/welcome.html>) of the Environment for Europe initiative (Batumi, Georgia, 8-10 June 2016). One of the main issues of the event was Green Economy, for which Hungary also have made notable commitments (<https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/efe/Batumi/Hungary.BIG-E.e.pdf>).

One of the commitments was about short supply chains and Farmers' Markets. This commitment gained international attention already in June 2016, as it could attract attention to questions of sustainable agriculture – besides the popular energetic and waste management issues.

Since 2016 Green Economy gains more and more attention

The issue of Green Economy, or Sustainable Economy if you like is rather general, and thus seems to be hardly tangible for many decision makers. In the same time it is obvious that states that are able to make steps for transforming their economy into sustainability, can gain notable advantages. These advantages can embrace economic benefits (rising tax incomes), social benefits (new jobs and special skills), and environmental benefits (more effective utilization of resources).

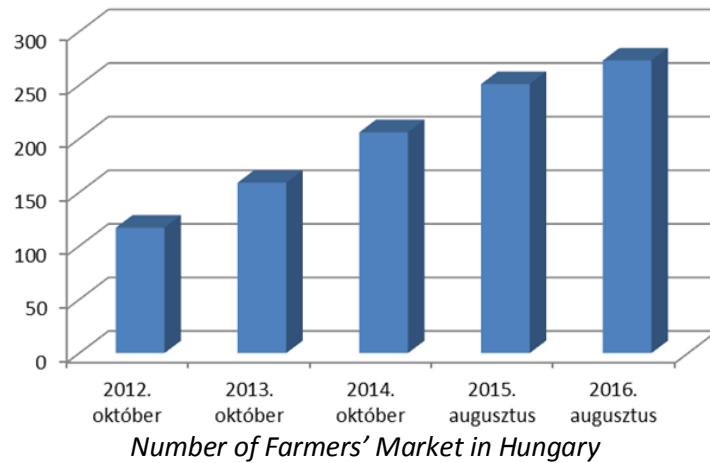
Media also seems to be more and more receptive to the issue; e.g. *Budapest Business Journal* in September 2016 introduced comprehensive report (<http://eionet.kormany.hu/zoldebb-mezok-a-zoldgazdasagban>) on development of Green Economy. Within the frame of that report Hungarian commitments made at the Batumi conference have been introduced carefully.

Concept of Green Economy recently gains attention in the general environmental policy making. Environmental Performance Review of Hungary, recently made by OECD, also pays special attention to the transition of economy into sustainability (<http://eionet.kormany.hu/magyarorszag-a-zoldgazdasag-kialakitasaban-szerepet-kivan-vallalni>). It is obvious that Batumi Ministerial Conference had outraging role in that, which we thank for the Georgian and UN ECE colleagues.

Agriculture and Green Economy

Short supply chains raise many questions and comprehensive co-operation is needed among many stakeholders. Thus complex measure-packages are needed, which require careful preparation.

Farmers' markets have notable history in Hungary. Their success is obvious, their number is rising. During the January 2017 session of UN ECE Committee on Environmental Policy a special session assessed the commitments made at Batumi Ministerial Conference. The Hungarian examples of Short supply chains and Farmers' Markets were received with pure attention and appreciation, as Hungary successfully brought the concept of sustainable agriculture into the notion of Green Economy.



The short supply chains and the Farmer's Markets not only create jobs and thus tax income, but keeps traditional skills and knowledge on the spot. Besides, as this sector makes advantage of fresh and ecologically produced vegetables and fruits, ecological or "biological" forms of farming are spurred, thus enhances biodiversity as well. While in 2012 Hungary had 117 Farmer's Market, in 2016 we could buy fresh and locally produced vegetables and fruits at 273 markets.



Farmer's Market. Photo: Gergely Botár