

## Growing environmental sensibility

Sociologists say that public opinion in developed countries is determined by a short upper class group, a kind of elite. And this elite recently prefers textile bags to throw away plastic bags, prefers biking to work, respects indoor plants in offices and homes, and is ready to pay much more for a flat that looks to trees.

Even the pope is dealing with environmental issues. His “green” encyclical (Encyclical Letter LAUDATO SI’ – of the Holy Father Francis on Care for our Common Home) has been published in June 2015. The book generated widespread debates and conversations. Only in Hungary seven conferences reflected to the issue.



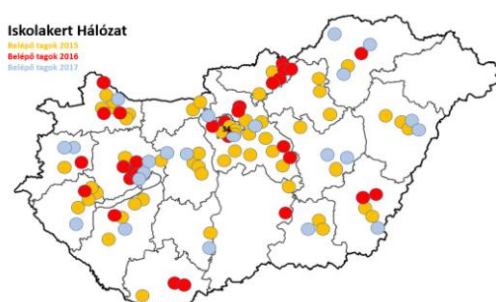
Environmental interest of churches has tangibly intensified. Only in Hungary one ecclesiastical movement organized the plantation of 2000 trees in church gardens in the autumn of 2015.

Orientation of international institutions is changing. For example today it is impossible to give an overview on transport issues without mentioning environmental issues. General context is changing: London Transport Museum offers a separate part of its exhibition to future concerns (emphasizing climate change implications). Separate museum has been inaugurated in Rio de Janeiro named Museum of Tomorrow.

Green areas are more and more appreciated. Urban greens have new forms: urban gardening, roof gardens, balcony gardens, vertical gardens, open air gyms, guerilla gardening and others. Some architectural values also have been created, like the Green Highline in New York or the Vertical Forest in Milan, Italy.

Gardening movement is more popular than ever. A famous gardener expert (Bálint Gazda) has 417 673 followers in Facebook in Hungary (a country with 10 millions).

A new organization has been founded for the enhancement of School Gardens; it has been established in March 2015 and by the end of the same year it had 77 member schools. By autumn of 2017 they had 134 member schools.



*Schoolgarden network (Hungary) Joining members 2015 - 2016 - 2017*

IKEA in its yearly catalogue 2015 had 102 photo with indoor and balcony plants, and what is more, it has double pages about gardening. In the same year the managing director of IKEA stated that “Less and less customer drives car. They prefer community transport. We have to move closer to the stops.”

EUROSTAT in 2016 stated that 96% of Hungarians finds environmental issues important.

For supporting negotiations on climate issues, in autumn 2015 more than 785 000 participants demonstrated at 23000 events in 175 countries within the frame of Climate March.



*Climate March in New York*



*Climate March in Paris*

Founder and manager of one of the most notable strategic planning firms, the Bloomberg L.P., Mr Michael R. Bloomberg organized the Climate Summit for Local Leaders parallel with the Paris Climate Summit (November 2015). As mayor of Paris worded: we want to offer good tools for abatement of carbon emission, and also an advantageous healthy and sustainable and thriving lifestyle.” That was the core of the C40 initiative.

At the Paris Climate summit NGOs had 120 exhibition stands, 20 interactive exhibitions, many film screenings, and almost 400 (!) conferences. The name of the area where all NGOs had their activities was “Climate Generation Areas”

**Driving force** is probably a special slice of mass media: the so called alternative culture. This is the trend which does not want to follow fashion, which tries to prefer longer life time devices, that prefers green tourism, active transport modes and green products. Representatives of this trend do not do this because of financial restrictions, but because of strongly based considerations.





**Impacts** of growing environmental sensibility can be:

- Shifting of consumer demand towards green products, sustainable production, local trade networks
- More and more dominant environmental organizations
- Massive environmental events (tree planting, waste collection, car free days etc.)
- Organizations, that are not directly environmental, are closer and closer to environmental issues and ecologic approach (e.g. churches, international firms like IKEA)
- Environmental issues become part of political campaigns

**Suggested measures** can be:

- Co-operation with different organizations that is active in the field of environment (NGOs, churches, international firms, educational institutes etc.)
- Enhancing the environmental activities of different organizations by offering info kits on different issues
- Involving different groups and organisation into the information collection (part of common knowledge creation)

**Reference list:**

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- Farmer Valentine (Bálint Gazda) homepage on garden, on plants <http://balintgazda.hu/>
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