



MASTERARBEIT / MASTER'S THESIS

Titel der Masterarbeit / Title of the Master's Thesis

„Activistic influence on socio-ecological transformation in Hungary“

verfasst von / submitted by

Josefine Hüttisch

angestrebter akademischer Grad / in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of

Master of Arts (MA)

Wien, 2021 / Vienna, 2021

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt /
degree programme code as it appears on
the student record sheet:

UA 066 589

Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt / de-
gree programme as it appears on
the student record sheet:

Masterstudium Internationale Entwicklung

Betreut von / Supervisor:

Dipl.-Kulturw. Dr. Christina Plank

Content

1	Introduction	4
1.1	Problem description.....	4
1.2	Research question and hypotheses	6
1.3	Approach and structure	7
1.4	Positionality statement and ethical issues	10
2	Critical review and theoretical background	11
2.1	Literature review	11
2.1.1	The term transformation.....	11
2.1.2	Transformational processes around 1989 in CEE	14
2.1.3	Current perspectives on socio-ecological transformation	15
2.1.4	Activism theory and movement research	16
2.2	Theoretical concept	18
2.2.1	Transformational processes.....	18
2.2.2	Social movements and activism	28
3	Analytical tool	30
3.1	Framing approach.....	30
3.1.1	Core Framing Tasks	31
3.1.2	Master Frames	32
3.1.3	Further variables.....	33
3.2	Strategy approach.....	33
4	Methods.....	42
4.1	Strategy and design	42
4.2	Sample and sampling	43
4.3	Data collection – instrument and procedures	45
5	Data analysis and interpretation	46

5.1	Frame analysis	47
5.1.1	Diagnostic frame	48
5.1.2	Prognostic frame	49
5.1.3	Motivational frame	50
5.1.4	Master frame	51
5.2	Interpretation through the analytical tool	51
5.2.1	Connecting climate and social issues	52
5.2.2	Cooperation with diverse activist groups	57
5.2.3	International recognition	63
5.2.4	Political recognition	67
5.2.5	Restrictions within the country	72
5.2.6	Overlap of demands/opinion and socio-ecological transformation.....	74
5.2.7	Potential of activism within transformational processes.....	78
5.3	Findings and limitations	80
5.3.1	Summary of findings	80
5.3.2	Limitations	81
6	Conclusion and outlook.....	82
6.1.1	Outlook for further research proposals.....	83
7	References	85
8	List of figures	90
9	Appendices	91
9.1	Abstract	91
9.2	Interview Guideline.....	92
9.3	Interview transcripts	93

1 Introduction

1.1 Problem description

During the 1970s and 80s, environmental activism and political focus on ecological issues increased. Since then, the climate movement has experienced periods of increased and decreased support. During the last years, regulations for carbon emissions and the use of resources were implemented on a transnational level. Today, climate activists stand for restrictions and rules for the economic sector and propagate reduction and awareness of individual consumption. Social engagement to change policies and pressure politicians is seen as an essential strategy.

Given the global challenges we face today, social engagement seems more crucial than ever. Due to the complexity and multifaceted nature of the crises and challenges, the question of where one could start as an individual, of what one can do to contribute to positive developments is difficult to answer. The search for clarification of unique possibilities to make a difference is often in conflict or competition with earning a living, finding one's place in society, and having an active social life. Our contribution to a positive transformation of society is often perceived as a duty or a sacrifice. Trying to juggle everything often leads to excessive demands or even resignation. An increasing number of people believe that it is not just the consumer culture that needs renewal to solve the climate crisis. Public confidence in the ability of businesses and governments to adequately address global environmental problems is declining. The criticism focuses on a world economy that furthers the ruthless exploitation of remaining global resources and a policy that promotes national self-interest and short-term gains over common steps towards limiting global warming (cf. Adler and Schachtschneider 2010:89ff).

While some organizations and regulations during the 70s and 80s got recognition globally, most environmental organizations remained national or transnational. In Hungary and neighboring countries, the activism around the construction of a dam for the Danube river at Nagymaros, Hungary and the involved flooding of the surrounding area created an international movement that significantly impacted the political situation (cf. Harper 2005; Harper 2006). The “Danube movement” united people from different backgrounds and organizations and created media “buzz”, which led to a political change and prevented the dam's construction. This movement is seen as a significant influence on environmental policies in Hungary at that time and one step towards a transformation away from state socialism. The transformation process that began shortly before 1989 in Hungary and other Central and Eastern European countries

(further on CEE) was introduced by political changes and a movement that activated people from different societal backgrounds. The active bottom-up movement fostered this transformation and changed the political and economic orientation (Antal 2018; Antal 2019; Harper 1999).

The socio-ecological crisis takes a central role in this constellation. It is the crisis of interaction patterns between society and nature with far-reaching social and ecological consequences. These patterns of interaction are based on the necessity to transform nature through labor to harness it and satisfy social needs and are discussed in political ecology under the concept of the social relation to nature. Here, the relationship between society and nature is understood as constitutive, as influencing each other. The effects of the crisis of social relations with nature and their codependence can be observed (e.g., food crisis, the crisis of peasant agriculture, climate crisis, species extinction) (cf. Bader et al. 2011:16). To counter the multiple crises and especially the socio-ecological crisis, concepts of social change have developed around the idea of a socio-ecological transformation, which calls for a profound social transformation of a similar scale to the Neolithic and Industrial Revolutions. It is about a fundamental critique of the current fossil fuel-based, the capitalist mode of production and finding ways to build a socio-ecologically sustainable form of society. This requires transforming social relations with nature and the underlying conditions of production, institutions and cultural ideas of colonial ways of life (cf. Feola 2015).

If this historical background is adapted to the current situation, one could argue that climate activists worldwide could influence the socio-ecological transformation. If activist movements can introduce change and transformation, which role and influence do activist groups have on a socio-ecological shift.

This master thesis aims at analyzing if the currently needed transformation could be brought about through a bottom-up movement introduced by climate activists. This will be argued through an exemplary analysis of different activist groups in Hungary and their position and action towards a socio-ecological transformation. Dieter Segert and other researchers give main pillars of transformations and their push- and pull factors. Especially in the Eastern European region, where two transformations took place within the last 120 years, the similarities between these transformations give a basis to find similarities with the current research on socio-ecological transformation (cf. Segert 2013; Segert 2015). With the help of these pillars, the current process and possibility for transformation are analyzed. The role and influence of climate activist groups in Hungary are classified within the analysis. By doing so, the current

socio-ecological movement in Hungary is examined through the example of two movements. These movements are active in more than one city of Hungary and gain recognition on an international basis. Furthermore, the demands of these movements and the opinion of members are taken into account and compared to the fundamental pillars necessary for a transformation. These pillars are defined earlier within the analytical tool. This analytical tool will be defined through different perspectives on researchers on socio-ecological transformation and activism theory. The importance of a socio-ecological transformation and implementation is explained to foster the understanding of climate activist groups in Hungary and how awareness through their action could benefit a transformational process.

Because of the relatively new established institutions, policies and the significant societal change within the transition time, some researchers argue that CEEs could be more open for another system change. The positive effects of capitalism and democracy are often overshadowed by increasing poverty, loss of confidence in the political system and lack of social benefits (cf. Blokker 2005). The potential for a grassroots movement to use discontent, inequality and transition knowledge to foster the idea of a new system change is visible. It could benefit a socio-ecological transformation in Hungary. These theoretical pillars lead to the following research question and different sub-questions.

1.2 Research question and hypotheses

1.2.1.1 Research questions

How does climate activism influence socio-ecological transformation in Hungary?

Sub questions:

Which strategies do climate activist groups in Hungary use to initiate change?

What actions do climate activist groups in Hungary use to attract people/media?

Which strategies have been connected to initiate transformation?

1.2.1.2 Hypotheses

While researching these questions some hypotheses are made:

- Because of the current political situation in Hungary, where prime minister Victor Orban and his party work actively against activism in Hungary, media awareness for climate activism is reduced. Therefore, international media attention is needed to enhance the range of people activist groups reach.
- Because of the conservative and economic driven focus of the government, climate activist groups tend to be seen in opposition to the government or current politics.

- Because of the different crises triggered or supported through capitalist structures, broad anger towards the current situation could foster the awareness for climate activism and the need for a socio-ecological transformation.
- Climate activism in Hungary is hindered through political action.
- Through political pressure in Hungary and the economic situation, most people are not aware of transformation.
- The demands of climate activism in Hungary overlap with current necessities for a socio-ecological transformation, but the activist groups do not necessarily call for this transformation.
- Cooperations between different groups foster the strength and openness of the movement and provide broader target group, but cooperations always go along with differences.
- Climate activism could foster a socio-ecological transformation, but the reach is too small to initiate it.

1.3 Approach and structure

To answer these questions, a theoretical approach to the concept of socio-ecological transformation is first undertaken in the literature section by describing and discussing current research and publications on this topic. The perspectives of political ecology and critical political economy on socio-ecological transformation play an essential role. They expand existing transformation concepts by taking into account power and domination relations. This is of particular importance as current power and domination relations largely contribute to the (re)production of the current fossil fuel-based fossilist-capitalist mode of production. Accordingly, a change in these power and domination relations is an intrinsic part of a socio-ecological transformation and the demand for a significant transformation of society.

Within the literature review a background of transformation theory and current research is given. Transformation is a highly used concept, which needs to be conceptualized for further detail in socio-ecological transformation. General definitions and concepts of transformation will be set out to provide a perspective for the research. The term "transformation" has established itself in the literature as an "umbrella term for all aspects of change in a system and its subsystems" (Sandschneider 1995:3). It is thus semantically broad. The transformation of a system can include regime change, system change or transition and therefore comprise the economic, political and social transformation of a system (cf. *ibid*).

“The term transformation” chapter provides an introduction to different concepts of transformation. The term transformation and historical paradigms of transformations will be explained. First, an insight into concepts of transformations and their specifications will be stated through the research of Merkel (2010). Secondly, the basic idea of Reißig (2009) is explained and connected to Nohlen (1988), who defines transition as the consideration of the overall complex of "conditions, factors and patterns of democratization of political systems" (Nohlen, 1988: 4). Different terms with transformational research will be explained to differentiate perspectives and focus on core details of the transformation.

The following chapter focusses on “Transformational processes around 1989”. A historical analysis of the transformation process around 1989 will be set out. While the transformation process is “not a continuum, but a sequence of different phases” (Süssmuth 1998:13) and an exact year for the beginning of the transformational processes in Eastern Europe cannot be given, this chapter mentions the year 1989 because the laid out research by Segert (2014) is also mentioning this year in regards to the transitional processes.

Because of the geographic focus on Hungary, this part and the analysis of the historic transformation in post-socialist countries will focus on experiences in Hungary and the development of the Hungarian transformation. While the insights to transition to democracy are very general, the last part of this chapter will connect the perspective to research on the Hungarian situation (Antal 2000, Harper 2001, Negulescu 2002)

“Current perspectives on socio-ecological transformation” will be mentioned in the so called chapter. This chapter will lay out an superficial view on different perspectives of socio-ecological transformation, while the relevant theories for this thesis will be mentioned within the theoretical concept.

In the following part different “activism theory and movement research” will give a broad overview on current perspectives. This chapter will establish an understanding of activism theory (Börzel and Buzogány 2010). and connect this theory to the chances for activism within the socio-ecological transformation (cf. Kythreotis et al. 2019; Robbins 2012; Sweetman and Whitmarsh 2016). To underline the importance of this connection, a historical analysis will be cited and focused on the influence of activism during a transitional phase. The impact of activist movements and the chance for future effects will be laid out.

The chapter “theoretical concept” will outline the connection between transformation and social change (cf. Brad and Brand 2016; Brand 2014) in the first subchapter. The transformation

concepts described in the literature review will be expanded through the research of Brand (2014). The current research on transformation will be looked at in regard to this thesis. The different perspectives of researchers on the definition of transformation will give insight into which levels of change are needed within a socio-ecological transformation. These perspectives are connected to the concept of socio-ecological transformation by Feola (2015).

The described phases and scales of a socio-ecological transformation will be applied to the historical background to gain further insights into possibilities and developments in the Hungarian system. The connection between the ecological crisis and the transformation of Feola (2015) will give a structure to comprehend the rest of the thesis.

To analyze the process of transformation in Hungary, the concept of *transition to democracy* is explained and connected to the historic transformation in Hungary. The problematic starting point, transition phases and the current situation are explained through research by Segert (1995,2003,2009,2015) and Negulescu (2002). Through the analysis of this historic transformation, a connection to socio-ecological transformation is established, also providing first insights into the role of grassroots movements can be seen.

In the second part of the “Theoretical concept” the focus lies on social movements and their potential influences as well as the development of activism. The activism in Hungary will be analyzed historically and applied to the current situation(cf. Antal 2018; Harper 1999; Harper 2005; Harper 2006).

The “Analytical tool” combines the different insights from the first chapters. Through the details and findings from other researchers (cf. Antal 2018; Harper 1999; Harper 2005; Harper 2006), an analytical tool will be set out, which will define the process of discussing the result of interviews and case studies. Detailed focus themes will be the basis and are derived by connecting different researches in this part of the literature analysis.

The subsequent chapter “Methods” contains the description and theory of the qualitative research carried out for this research. This paper analyzes the research question through qualitative research. Therefore, guided expert interviews were conducted and analyzed through qualitative content analysis. The "experts" are members of the two movements and activist groups, which were the focus of this research. A qualitative content analysis of the interviews will provide findings regarding the research question: *How does climate action influence socio-ecological transformation in Hungary?*. These results will be presented later on in the thesis.

The research focuses on two major groups or movements in Hungary, who have been active over a year ago and getting international recognition.

The analysis tool developed through the theoretical part of the thesis will provide the main strategies known to foster a transformation. These are compared to the socio-ecological change theory and the current development of activist groups in Hungary through literature and the content analysis findings, and an analysis of the information on the group's website and their expressed demands.

1.4 Positionality statement and ethical issues

It was vital to reflect on my role and the subjectiveness I would unconsciously work into the thesis as a researcher. In this chapter, I will reflect on my part and the position I took in this thesis. Furthermore, the role of the activists and groups and the relation between the participants and the researcher will be described.

Apart from my academic life, I am politically active in Austria and Germany. I would describe myself as a climate-/human rights activist. Since I started in 2012 to participate in different activists actions or other non-violent protests, I always wondered about the impact a group could have on a political or economic decision. After my Bachelor's, I worked for an environmental-politics NGO and learned the decision-making process and the possibilities one NGO has. For me, my interest in the theme grew when I started to study international development. I recognized that an active, opposite state could sometimes foster activist actions. Or it destroys the influence of a comparatively small organization or group.

As a white woman from Germany, I start from a privileged position. As a German citizen, I grew up and lived most of my life in a country that looks upon itself as a social state, economically practical and politically stable. According to my knowledge, when I lived in Germany, the democratic system was seen as untouchable, and human rights were mainly worshiped. Even if my views on Germany and the political system changed over the past years, this was my education.

The German and Austrian media coverage of Hungary and the political situation mostly has a negative touch. President Victor Orban and his politics are primarily in the focus of reports as soon as they disagree with other EU states (cf. red 2021) or when there is a connection to Russia (cf. Handelsblatt 2017). There is no objective coverage of the Hungarian political or economic situation. While analyzing Hungary, I always tried to question if the current political status and the “right” orientation of the government are just seen by me and other “western”

embossed people as critical and since the pandemic as an illegal democracy. When talking about the political situation in Hungary, I tried to use mainly articles and research from people with an Eastern European background to make sure to use local voices. I can't assess how the self-perception of the researchers was influenced by the top-down behavior of “western” societies. Because in the end, I know that I could never guarantee to take my embossing and the one from the participants fully into account, every reader should please keep this in mind while interpreting this thesis.

2 Critical review and theoretical background

2.1 Literature review

In this chapter, a broad overview of the three main theories of this thesis will be given. At first, transformation and transformation theories will be explained. The term transformation will be defined and delimited from other terms that describe the change. The transformation around 1989 will also be introduced because this timeframe plays an essential role in understanding the historical background in Hungary and other Eastern European countries. While the detailed analysis of the transition to democracy will be given in 2.2.1.3, an introduction to this time will be shown here. The second part will provide insight on socio-ecological transformation and the different perspectives to look at this transformation. While this work will focus on social change and transformation, other views focus on the economic transformation or financial impulses to foster transformation. A broad perspective on these approaches will be given, while the theory used in this thesis will be explained in 2.2.1.2. Last, activism theories will be presented, and current perspectives on activist groups will be given. Activists and groups are organized differently, but researchers apply different approaches to understand the potential of activistic work. An insight into actual research on activism will be given here.

2.1.1 The term transformation

The terms *transition* and *transformation* have to be differentiated. While transformation is often connected to a form of change that reconstructs types and models of society, a transition is connected to the changing from one state system or condition to another.

Nohlen defines *transition* as considering the overall complex of "conditions, factors and patterns of democratization of political systems" (Nohlen, 1988: 4). Those arose primarily through research into the democratization processes in Latin America and Southern Europe. His research is mainly devoted to the role of the actors in the transitions to democracy and a

systematic periodization of the transition process (cf. *ibid*). This transition will be explained during the chapter on *transformation around 1989* because there are similarities to the transition from state socialism.

The term *transformation* itself is used in many social sciences, but it currently has no generally accepted definition. There is only broad agreement that transformation describes a fundamental and far-reaching societal change that is not limited to more minor or gradual change processes. However, how societal transformation takes place and the goals it pursues are part of a controversial debate. The lack of consensus on a well-founded social science theory of transformation and the conceptual flexibility bear the risk of transformation research appropriating actors who do not pursue far-reaching social transformation. This could turn the concept of transformation into a fashionable term, limiting its transformative power (cf. Feola 2015:377). The terms transition or transformation has often been used to describe the upheavals in the former actual socialist countries and the democratization processes in a wide variety of countries (cf. Reißig 2009:31).

Merkel (2010) deals in-depth with theories of transformation research in his introductory work “*System Transformation*” (2010). This work is entirely devoted to analyzing the manifold transitions from authoritarian to liberal-democratic political systems of the 20th century. He embeds the genesis of transformation research in the 1950s and 1960s when mainly macro-sociological-functionalist (system theories) or macro-sociological-structuralist (structural theories) approaches influenced the formation of transformation theories. In contrast, micropolitical-actor-theoretical concepts focus on the meso and micro levels and gained more and more influence in the 1980s. Here, the focus of the analysis was no longer on the structure and the respective power constellation but the subjective attitudes, strategies and possibilities for the action of the relevant actors. Subsequently, the different approaches were increasingly inter-linked, and a kind of theory synthesis was developed for a comprehensive transformation analysis (cf. Merkel 2010:67-89).

The last renaissance of transformation theories and their reinterpretation was in analyzing the social upheavals in 1989/1990 due to the collapse of “real socialism” (cf. Kollmorgen, Merkel and Wagener 2015; Merkel 2010). The transition from socialist-authoritarian to a capitalist-democratic social system in Eastern European countries was analyzed above all under the catchword of “catch-up modernization” and the failure of socialism. Accordingly, these transformation concepts are strongly influenced by modernization theories of the 1960s and instead describe a transition analysis from authoritarian regimes to democratically organized political

systems. These transformation concepts are unsuitable for analyzing current challenges and scenarios of upheaval within industrialized countries in the wake of the multiple crises, so a reorientation of social change theories is necessary (cf. Reißig 2009:17ff,). Still, the theory of this *'Transition to democracy'* will be explained in the following chapters to establish a basic knowledge about Eastern European countries' last transition.

In the actual context of redefining transformation, Reißig (2009 & 2014) is increasingly concerned with the theoretical and conceptual foundation of the term transformation and related concepts and calls for a reorientation of theories of social change. Climate change and disruption of nature and resources influence our daily life, and the call for a new economic and political system is getting stronger. For this required reorientation, however, the idea of transformation needs to be defined more precisely in terms of content, which Reißig undertakes by distinguishing it from the concepts of social change, revolution and evolution of social systems (cf. Reißig 2009; Reißig 2014).

A specification of content is neither limited to changes within the structure of social order (social change) nor does it aim at an abrupt break (revolution) with it, nor does it see social change as a predetermined and linear process (evolution). Reißig defines transformation as

"[...] a separate and specific type of social change, precisely a change that is characterized above all by process of profound social change, by changes and transformations of essential process structures, institutions, patterns of culture and order, social ways of life and the reconstitution and reconstruction of types and models of society." (Reißig 2014:53).

Transformation describes a social change that takes place irregularly and fragiley on several levels. It is a finite but open-ended process. In the end, a new socio-economic development model with corresponding cultural patterns of interpretation can be established. Despite their inherent dynamics, transformation processes can be defined, fixed and determined to a certain extent (cf. Reißig 2009:34f).

Current academic and political debates on transformation concepts address this need and focus on the ecological crisis and the social changes necessary to mitigate it. Transformation is seen here as a means to establish a socially balanced and ecologically sustainable form of society. Inter- and transdisciplinary research approaches play a central role here. The social sciences and humanities are increasingly important in this branch of research by investigating interrelationships between humans and the environment and global environmental change (cf. Feola

2015:376f). This will be explained in detail in chapter 2.2.1.2 on socio-ecological transformation.

2.1.2 Transformational processes around 1989 in CEE

Concerning the political upheaval in Central Eastern Europe from 1989 onwards, on the other hand, the term transformation has become widely established in the economic literature. This describes the "system change associated with the replacement of a centralized administrative economy by a market economy, the change from the dictatorship of a party to a liberal democracy and the transition from an authoritarian to a pluralistic society" (Sandschneider 1995:33).

In the following explanations, transformation is used as a synonym for a transition from an autocratic system to a democratic one. In addition to political system changes, this also includes the subsystems of economy and society. The term transition gained greater significance in political science through the research project named Transition to Democracy in 1986 (cf. Segert 2014:151 ff.). Above all, the uncertainties of the end of a system change played a significant role here. Transition means transition, although more precisely, the interpretation transition to democracy can also be semantically equated with this. Since in retrospect, the collapse of the Eastern Bloc and its transition to a free democratic system after two decades can be considered primarily completed (cf. Segert 2013). In Eastern Europe in particular, the interplay of internal and external factors led to the collapse of the communist regime. In addition to the external factors, such as the suspension of the Brezhnev Doctrine or the internal, negotiation-based start of the upheaval in Poland, the collapse of the entire socialist state doctrine was undoubtedly the initial spark for the path to a more democratic system. However, this was undoubtedly only possible because of the rebellion at the grassroots level (cf. Segert 2013:144ff). Nevertheless, the speed with which this entire system abruptly collapsed and the triggered domino effect that resulted in the implosion of the whole state structure was very abrupt.

Due to the transitional phase, in which the old norms and rules were not completely abolished, but the new desired democratic guidelines were not fully implemented, the political actors had much greater room for maneuver than in already consolidated democratic systems. Binding norms, socially anchored interests, and established institutions did not yet constrain the political decision-makers to the same extent. The political convictions and self-interests of the political actors played a significant role (cf. Segert 2009; Segert 2013). The problem now is that the responsible actors draft rules within the framework of the democratization process that is to be valid for themselves and to endure as commonly accepted procedures for the

following political forces, conflicts and generations. The aim should thus be to balance the partial interests of those in political power and the common good. The self-interest of those politically responsible, who often consisted of the main actors of the regime opposition, especially in the newly established democratic governments, led to the critical separation of power relations between institutions.

2.1.3 Current perspectives on socio-ecological transformation

For the following research, socio-ecological transformation is a critical indicator of an equal relationship between nature and society. "There can be no ecological renewal without limiting the dynamics of capitalist accumulation and without limiting and self-restraining consumption." (Gorz 1989:736 own translation). The starting point for the debate on a socio-ecological transformation of our society is the historical and current crisis phenomena of capitalist (re-)production modes and their social and ecological consequences. Different approaches which try to initiate systemic change within political, economic systems and society (e.g., eco-socialism, degrowth, circular economy and more) are considered and seen as solutions for the climate crisis (cf. Brand 2017).

Key factors of a socio-ecological transformation involve incremental and abrupt changes at different scales. To move through the different phases of a socio-ecological transformation, institutions and leadership must use the link between crisis and opportunity to create radical shifts. Resilience thinking includes the socio-ecological system to the possible transition towards a sustainable approach on a local and global scale (cf. Brand 2014; Braun 2015).

Capitalist societies are characterized by cyclical crises that occur regularly and significant problems resulting from cumulative crisis phenomena. In this context, concerns must be immanent to society since they do not fall upon society from the outside but express tensions and contradictions internal to the community (Bader et al. 2011:11). These, in turn, are part of the comprehensive (re-)production cycle of capitalist societies (ibid:11ff). The debate on a socio-ecological transformation takes up these crises of capitalist production and social change and tries to find alternatives. It comprehensively deals with the inner contradictions of political bureaucracy, the economic system and society and its political influence.

Even if many different approaches have to be considered simultaneously, financial redirection is a core factor in starting the transition on an economic basis. The green transformation of the global economy needs gigantic sums of investment to finance this process, and in the enormous changes it will bring about for economic structures and value chains. This policy

change bases on a decisive factor: The conscious political shaping of this process, in the rationale of preferring to invest in such a change now rather than shouldering the costs of the destruction of our ecosystems (cf. Antal 2018; Bader et al. 2011). But the realization of this factor is not addressed adequately in current political decisions.

While active participation of the state is necessary for shaping policy changes that demand a shift in investment, the required investments and innovations cannot or should not be provided in detail by the state. After all, it is precisely a matter of protecting public goods such as the climate and biodiversity. Markets fail in this task. It is, therefore, necessary for politicians to set the right framework conditions to force a reorientation of the economy towards sustainable value creation structures. Suppose it is made clear politically that social and ecological costs are treated as costs. In that case, there is also a clear objective about the need for new value creation structures, which will result in a redirection of capital (cf. Bader et al. 2011; Li 2011).

In summary, looking at the transformation theories, it can be stated that they differ above all regarding the role of the subsystem of politics. Additionally, the evaluation of the state as a legislator and a possible part of the market vary. The decisive question here was whether the invisible hand of the market or a supporting indicator of the state is more productive for the system change to be carried out (cf. Gawel 1994:70). Additionally, the importance of push and pull factors from top to bottom is visible, promoting grassroots actions within a transformational process. The personal benefit, self-interest and intrinsic motivation that also motivates a transformation must be analyzed further within a socio-ecological change because a countermovement to capitalism will most likely not be profitable in a monetary way.

2.1.4 Activism theory and movement research

There are many theories dedicated to the study of social movements. Some trend-setting theoretical approaches will be mentioned here as examples. The selected ones were chosen because of direct implementations for this theses or their influence necessary for developing the theory. Movement research has its origins mainly in two significant sources: the first research strand is social evolution theory, which Marx and Engels developed between 1943-1947. According to both, social evolution is driven by class struggles. Marx and Engels state, the causes of protests are to be found in the structures of society (cf. Kern 2007). The theory, which is now outdated, was considered groundbreaking because it demonstrated the connection between protest movements and the social system (ibid:10). (Kern 2007:10)

The second strand of movement research goes back to mass psychology, a theory founded by Le Bon (1950). Le Bon's research focused on the changes that the individual experiences in the mass (cf. Kern 2007). The theoretical implications of mass psychology mainly shaped movement research until the 1960s, when a paradigm shift finally took place in the following decade: the so-called resource mobilization theory took hold. This theory evaluates the irrationality of social movements. It focuses on analyzing movement organizations, their function, structure and interconnectedness, and researching mobilization-relevant resources (Hellmann and Koopmans 2013:11). This approach has repeatedly been criticized for neglecting the boundary conditions, i.e., above all, the political environment, and therefore have only limited explanatory power. The resources considered are also limited since aspects such as discourse, symbolic performance, emotions or situations of bounded rationality, and networks are not considered in the analysis (Hellmann 1998: 13).

Motion research established four main conflict lines which lead to existing movements: anonymity, ignorance, poverty and violence (Kern 2007:17). The relationship between social movements and social change is examined by Kern (2007). Here, he highlights the influence on modernization processes. Conflicts within society give rise to a longing for innovations and thus to a shift in thinking from passive participation to active action against current developments.

Within activism and movement research, the influence of activists on the iron curtain was significant (Kocyba and Mikecz 2020:691). No wonder, then, that developments in CEEs triggered a worldwide boom in civil society research (cf. Klein 2001:32). But this boom didn't focus on developments in CEE. The majority of the societies in CEE achieved the first goal: to change the current system. After this, the focus shifted. The activist structure and motivation abated after the system transformation, and the engagement of other citizens also declined because of new rules, possibilities and risks within the new system. Therefore, very little research on this region stayed the same and didn't expand. Still, the political situation and the illiberal situation, especially in Hungary, hinder further investigations and fieldwork (cf. Kocyba and Mikecz 2020:691ff.) These blind spots within the research complex provide enough potential for further study.

Activists and researchers established "*shrinking spaces*" to describe the current development towards an illiberal political situation where civil activism is hindered (cf. *ibid.*:562f). Because of that, Anheier and Toepler (2003) speak of political neglect, as a consequence of which civil society actors are unable to realize their full potential. And it is precisely this neglect

that - intentionally or unintentionally - could pose a significant threat to civil society in the long term. The Civicus Monitor shows that even within the EU, only half of the member states can be described as *open* - twelve states are classified as *narrowed* and Hungary as *obstructed*¹ (cf. Kocyba and Mikecz 2020:562f). Even if these shrinking spaces show the development towards repression of civil engagement, the potential for activism and movement strengthens because of the suppression (cf. *ibid*:691ff.).

Kythreotis & Mercer (2019) argue that interaction and cooperation between climate researchers and citizens have to grow to engage in policy change successfully and “implementation for both mitigation (e.g., energy use) and adaptation (coping with climate impacts)” (cf. Kythreotis et al. 2019; Robbins 2012). Activist groups could represent the interface between scientists and citizens and foster the understanding of one another

2.2 Theoretical concept

In this chapter, the theoretical background of this thesis is explained in detail and connected to the current situation in Hungary. In the beginning, Brand's theories on socio-ecological transformation are used to emphasize the connection of social change and transformation. After three main approaches are taken into account for the analysis of this research: the basic concept of socio-ecological transformation according to Feola, the theory of transition to democracy by Segert and the movement research of Kern, where he analyzes the position of movements in a modernized society. These perspectives are examined here and connected to the focus points of the investigation. Furthermore, the historic transition to democracy in Hungary is explained.

2.2.1 Transformational processes

2.2.1.1 Social change and transformation

In sociology, social change is the central term for processes that involve a change of behavior, opinions or basic knowledge of a society. It predominantly describes changes within the social structure that affect typical elements of a social system. Changes strongly influence the balance and stability of a social system, social networks, or behaviors (cf. Anheier et al. 2003; Wissen and Brand 2019). This form of change in social systems is aimed less at changing the

¹ Civicus monitor establishes five categories to rate the data on *civic space*: Open, narrowed, obstructed, repressed, closed. *Civic spaces* hereby includes: freedom to demonstrate, established rights for freedom, expression and assembly for civil society organisations and dealing with criticism from activists and organisations (Civicus Monitor 2021).

social systems aims less at changing the social structure of order, but rather takes place within it (cf. Reißig 2009, 32). This form of reshaping social relations relates to the level of society as a whole. It changes the political, economic, social and cultural structures of coexistence to a far-reaching extent (cf. Reißig 2009, 54). The term revolution is used for changes that go hand in hand with a fundamental transformation of social structures. This is traditionally normative and stands for a clear break with the previous order systems and a normatively motivated transformation (cf. Reißig 2009:32).

Brand (2014) breaks down Reißig's remarks and conceptualizes a critically analytical concept of transformation to analyze current social problem situations and scenarios of upheaval. To this end, he first sharpens the two terms transition and transformation. Analogous to this distinction, Brand (2016) differentiates between a strategic and analytical use of the concept of transformation. A strategic transformation concept adopts the transition perspective cited beneath, and the analytical one, the transformation perspective.

"Transition [is understood by Brand] in the sense of political-intentional control, i.e., as a structured intervention in development paths and logics as well as in structures and power relations development paths and logics, as well as structures and power relations, to give dominant developments a different orientation. [...] The focus is on setting the right political framework." (Brand 2014, 249)

"Transformation, in contrast, is understood as a comprehensive socio-economic, political and socio-cultural process of change, which also includes political control and political and social strategies, but which cannot be reduced to these". (Brand 2014, 249f.)

Analogous to this distinction, Brand (2016) differentiates between a strategic and analytical use of the transformation concept. A strategic transformation concept adopts the transition perspective cited above and an analytical strategy, the transformation perspective. In many current studies and debates on "green economy" and "socio-ecological transformation", too little emphasis is placed on this conceptual distinction. While many political concepts and strategies communicate the claim of a societal transformation, they are created against the background of the idea mentioned above of transition (cf. Brand 2014:249). This can be seen in the fact that only small and gradual processes of social change are set in motion after a radical analysis of the problem and far-reaching promises of change. This results in the strategic use of the concept

of transformation by looking for the most effective and socially desirable solutions to comprehensive problem situations (cf. Brand 2016:24).

Probably the best-known strategy since the 2008 financial crisis is the "green economy," which very much aims at changing framework conditions to enable green capitalism. This strategic use focuses on state-directed and politically controlled change processes in which as many experts as possible are involved. This form of transformation should be as inclusive and cooperative as possible to gain widespread acceptance (cf. *ibid.*: 24). This steering capacity is expressed with the term "governance" and testifies to a firm order and management perspective on processes of social change.

However, the intense focus on state structures and governance mechanisms in dealing with the various crisis phenomena also imply disadvantages. For example, the actual capabilities of political institutions to transform current social conditions and their relationship to the environment are insufficiently reflected. There is no conceptualization of society that takes into account its structures and power relations. Instead, it is assumed without reflection that state institutions or institutions close to the state already know where the causes for crisis phenomena (especially for the climate crisis) lie. Therefore, they could produce suitable framework conditions for their elimination rationally with the help of control mechanisms (Brand 2014:253ff.).

To fill this reflexive vacuum, Brand uses the notion of social forms along which capitalist structures and individual actions reproduce themselves. Social forms provide orientation to social coexistence and are its essential determinants. On the structural level, an abstract connection between social forms, such as the state, money, or the commodity, serves as a necessary condition. This basis is deepened on the action-theoretical level by stabilizing social relations through everyday acts of wage labor and forms of (re)production and consumption (*ibid.*:259).

On the state level, the political form provides political actors with certain framework conditions and influences their acting by prescribing relations of domination. Due to the political structure, political attempts to manage the ecological crisis do not go beyond conceptions of a green economy or ecological modernization and thus tend to exacerbate rather than mitigate the problem. The conflicts of interest and asymmetrical power relations within the state sphere related to the political form are not dealt with, so the existing political structure remains formative for action (*ibid.*: 260). Accordingly, strategic use of the concept of transformation is insufficient to deal with the ecological crisis in a sustainable way and get the necessary social

transformation processes underway. Therefore, Brand argues for complementing the strategic concept with a critical-analytical one (ibid: 25).

2.2.1.2 Socio-ecological transformation

Theoretical concept by Feola

Feola (2015) analyzed different transformation concepts concerning global environmental change with the help of systematic literature research of relevant publications. However, regarding the scientific foundation of the idea of transformation, the shortcomings already mentioned became very clear. In about 50% of all publications examined, the topic of "transformation" took a central role. However, there was no conceptual anchoring of how this term is now applied, and in many publications, the transformation term was not even defined. Without a theoretical basis, it instead serves as a metaphor for far-reaching changes in different areas of society. Such an unclear and broadly defined use is associated with the great danger of the term degenerating into a buzzword so that any social change can be described as transformative (cf. Feola 2015: 378f., 387).

Transformation describes a holistic model of social change with far-reaching consequences for the current (re)mode of production of a society and, by extension, for natural societal relations. Transformation processes are open to development and dynamic and are influenced by different social forces. This chapter deals with possible theoretical modeling of societal transformation processes for an in-depth academic version of societal transformation. The development of such models should answer the questions about the operations of societal transformation and how they (can) be shaped. The current debate on the socio-scientific use of the term transformation and the development of different concepts primarily addresses possible processes of social change that are necessary due to the ecological crisis.

On the one hand, the debates are about theorizing these change processes and searching for action-guiding concepts that drive and steer a conscious social transformation (cf. Feola 2015). To better understand how social transformation processes are conceptualized, four central transformation concepts with their different research approaches are explained in their main features in the following. These are then summarised comparatively to work out differences and commonalities and make theoretical gaps visible. Building on this, the concepts are expanded to include political ecology and critical political economy perspectives.

An analytical-descriptive and a solution-oriented approach can be distinguished here (Feola 2015, 378f.: 384). An analytical-descriptive research approach aims at understanding the complex relationships between society and the environment. In this context, social-ecological change represents a field of interdisciplinary research based on both fundamental scientific understanding and consideration of practical benefits. Accordingly, such transformation concepts aim to elaborate basic knowledge about transformation processes to make this knowledge available to decision-makers for political actions. Analytical-descriptive research approaches remain more firmly rooted in the description of social transformation processes and focus only to a limited extent on the conscious shaping of social transformation processes. Transformation is thereby understood as an undirected emergent process (Feola 2015:384f.).

Solution-oriented research approaches, on the other hand, focus on strategic and functional systems to change processes. Research also centers on a transdisciplinary approach but with a strong focus on an action-oriented methodology. It is about the conscious design of social change through authoritarian practices and establishing systematic change management in which scientific research takes an active role. Transformation is understood here as controllable and initiative (Feola 2015, 384f.). Accordingly, the two approaches to study can be defined in terms of the two pairs of opposites, "prescriptive-descriptive" and "emergent-controlling." As described by Feola, the transformational concepts can be classified into the respective research approaches (see Figure 3). This allows conclusions about the scope, the relationship between structure and action and the expected outcomes of transformation processes of the different transformation concepts.

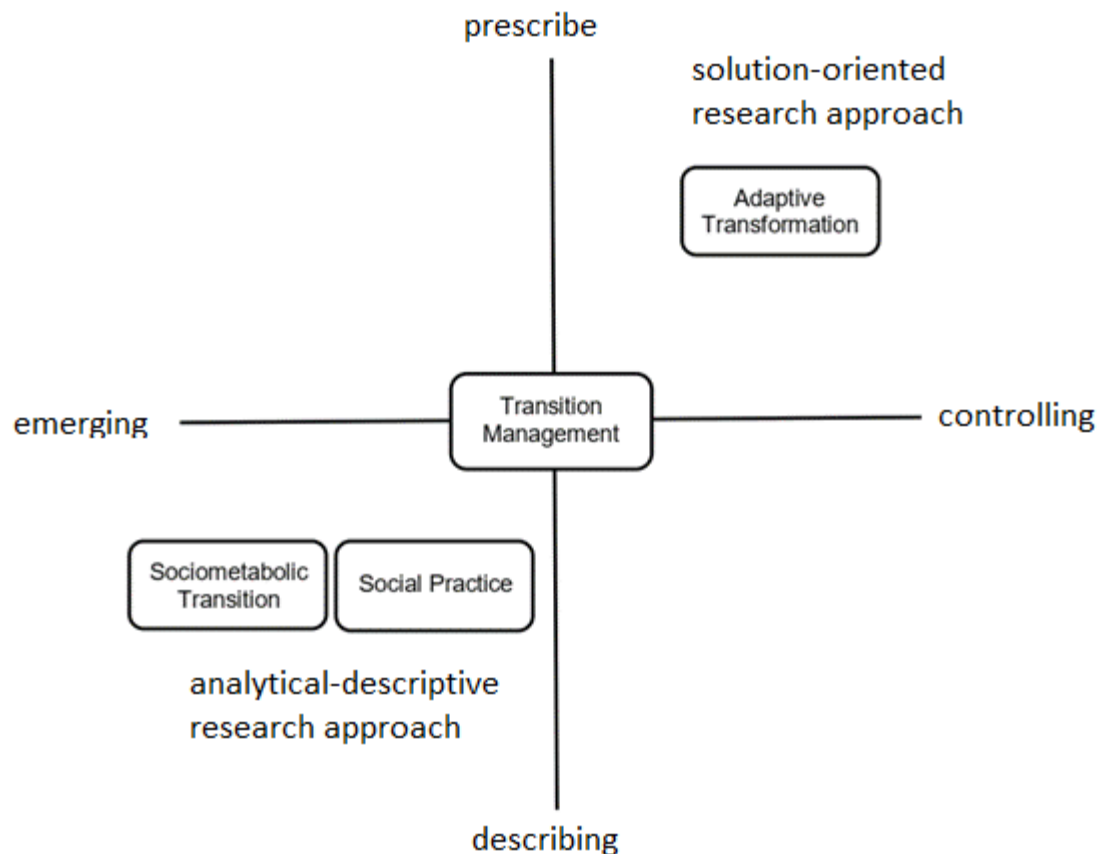


Figure 1: Transformational concepts by Feola (2015)

It is evident here that "adaptive transformation" concepts are oriented towards a solution-oriented research approach. These concepts understand transformation processes as the result of forces internal to society (e.g., adaptive institutions) and external to the community (e.g., weather extremes), which can be primarily controlled (cf. Feola 2015). The focus is mainly on selective adaptations of social organization to the respective problem situations and mitigation of impending risks. The concepts are highly action-oriented and attempt to initiate specific processes of change with the help of theoretical aids (e.g., "Adaptive Action Cycle") (cf. Feola 2015)(cf. Feola 2015). Step-by-step changes can also result in transformative changes, leading to a change at the structural level. However, these are not the primary focus.

The concept of "transition management" can be located at the threshold between solution-oriented and analytical-descriptive research approaches and does not show any clear tendencies in either direction. The central unit of analysis in the concept of "transition management" is represented by social systems and the manifold connections between social systems. The study focuses on the functionality of individual and interconnected social systems, i.e., their ability to satisfy social needs. Functionality analysis takes place at three levels - structural, cultural,

and practical. Thus, both the structures in which social systems are embedded and the action-specific elements of individual actors are addressed. In this concept, processes of change take place when social plans change.

On the one hand, differences occur when social systems adapt to different social needs and, on the other hand, when changes in social structures modify the nature of social systems. These changes are driven by global megatrends such as the climate crisis and certain constellations of actors - so-called "pioneers of change". The concept of "transition management" thus has both descriptive (analysis of social systems and their mutual interconnectedness) and prescriptive elements (desirable adaptation of social systems to social needs) at the level of study. Concerning the conceptualization of processes of change, a certain momentum is assumed, which in turn, however, can be structured and channeled by certain constellations of actors. Both elements, those of controllability and the inherent dynamic emergence of transformation processes, are evident here.

This comparative summary shows that the concepts presented differ in many respects and that their design depends mainly on the choice of the research approach. Depending on this approach, the analysis focuses more on specific problems ("Adaptive Transformation") or certain actors ("Transition Management") or structural conditions ("Sociometabolic Transition"). There are also differences concerning the scope of transformation processes. For example, concepts of "Adaptive Transformation" focus more on gradual and selective changes. In contrast, the idea of "Transition Management" refers more to changes at the meso level, i.e., of social systems. The concept of "Sociometabolic Transition", on the other hand, is mainly concerned with comprehensive transformation processes that are accompanied by a fundamental structural change of social-metabolic systems.

The different focal points of the various concepts span a wide range of content across the theoretical debate of a socio-ecological transformation. Nevertheless, academic gaps remain in the conceptualization of transformation processes. On the structural level, these include the lack of consideration of power and domination relations and, on the action-oriented level, the role of social conflicts for a socio-ecological transformation. On the structural level, current power and domination relations are essential, as they strongly influence the way societies are organized and how they (re)produce themselves. They are an inherent part of social coexistence, as they structure different conflictual social relations along the lines of class, gender, origin, age, and more. The respective social concerns are thus reflected in the current power and domination relations. They manifest themselves in all areas of society, such as access to social security or

education, wealth distribution, political participation opportunities, or cultural participation in society. Since a socio-ecological transformation is accompanied by fundamental changes in social structures and organizations, this would also change the existing power and dominance relations. Therefore, these are also central to understanding why there is such strong resistance to transformation processes. Social conflicts play an essential role in understanding this change in power and dominance relations, as they show where current power and dominance relations are challenged and put under pressure. Social conflicts express the tensions and contradictions inherent in society between different actors and their interests. Therefore, the analysis of social conflicts can make an essential contribution to socio-ecological transformation research, as it shows which actors are working for which social goals and how these are compatible with a socio-ecological transformation. This clarifies which actors are committed to changing the existing power and dominance relations and want to maintain them. From an action-oriented perspective, central challenges and possible approaches to action for a socio-ecological transformation can be derived.

2.2.1.3 *Transition to democracy*

This concept was introduced during the 1970s by US researchers based on the analysis of Latin America and Southern European countries. This concept challenged the general idea that political change arises due to development, seen as modernization. Within modernization theory, a positive effect of social change on political and economic factors is expected. Rustow (1970) emphasizes that political change is only to be analyzed by political factors. He, therefore, differentiated between *transition* and *transformation*. Four main factors defined for the emergence of democracy include:

- National unity is the only condition for democracy, where most citizens feel a sense of belonging for the nation
- Democracy emerges due to a stalemate between different, equally strong powers (preparation phase)
- Due to this statement, the different actors accept the existence of an opposite opinion and decide on a compromise for future democratic procedures (decision phase)
- After acceptance by the elite community, the newly developed system has to be stabilized (learning phase) (cf. Rustow 1970)

Still, it took into account that the combination of Rustows research and the factors of modernization theory could supplement each other. Based on these pillars, the paradigm of transition to democracy was developed. The paradigm is based on actors-based study and emphasizes

the uncertainty and randomness of a transformational process. Furthermore, the research compares developments towards democracy on a global level. At the same time, nonpolitical influences and actors are not seen as relevant. Researchers developed four phases in chronological order within every *transition to democracy*: the “crisis of the old regime” is followed by “liberalization” and “democratization”, which is seen as the institutionalization of democracy. As the last step, “consolidation” is the end of the transition process (cf. Segert 2014:153ff.).

Another assumption within this concept deals with the support of democratization through external political actors. Here the influence of international NGOs or international alliances on different institutions and stabilization of democracy is taken into account. Additionally, global monitoring of free, democratic elections can foster stabilization and trust in the democratic system (cf. *ibid*:159f).

While the paradigm correctly describes the situation in many Eastern European countries, many critics demand more profound research. Critics of the *transition to democracy* see the lack of research on nonpolitical factors as highly problematic when analyzing political changes. Additionally, the theory functions with the basic assumption that modernization happens everywhere and through the exact development phases. Furthermore, the sequential order of the stages of development is criticized. A straight demand is assumed and not adaptable to changes due to different outcomes hinders the paradigm from accurately reflecting various countries' situations (cf. *ibid*:161ff.). Therefore researchers demand a closer analysis of states during the transition phases. The possibility of a nonfunctional democracy after the transition must be considered while analyzing the change (cf. Bönker, Wiesenthal and Wollmann 1995:161ff; Segert 2013).

For this research, the transition paradigm *to democracy* serves as an analytical basis for the transition from state socialism towards a democratic system. On this basis, the paradigm will be used to find similarities with the actual situation and possible developments. In the following part, the Hungarian case before, during and after the transition will be described.

2.2.1.4 Transformation in Hungary

The initial situation of the Hungarian society is essential for assessing the transition and the development. Specific opportunities should be seized in the transformation process and problems that need to be addressed in a separate social order. In this case, we talk about a transformation because the system change includes the political shift towards democracy but

happened gradually over time, consists of an economic and social change, and led towards a new system.

Negulescu (2002) assigns a hybrid state to the state socialism of Hungary. Mixed state socialism describes a form of state in communist rule in which legal and bureaucratic institutions coexist. In addition, informal arrangements of a wider society exist. These informal and illegal networks must be eliminated. In the transformation process, it was necessary to overcome the problems caused by socialism. These are pronounced to different degrees in all former Eastern bloc countries. Amplified through external influences and internal inequalities, the transformational process was induced. In connection to the Danube movement, the collective protests of various grassroots movements and activist groups in Hungary, especially climate activist groups, enabled a broad civil action. Furthermore, the country's precarious economic situation influenced the civil movement and the opinion of elite groups, which saw great opportunities in a new system (cf. Segert 2014:180ff). Additionally, external influences through western political systems and NGOs funded through western countries or influencers.

These different factors led to a transition process towards democracy that was connected with a change of the economic system and a transformation towards capitalism (cf. *ibid.*). The strategy in Hungary is called a gradualistic strategy. It can be characterized through step-by-step deregulation by the retreat of the state, more prolonged stabilization phase and a transformation without discreditation of the old system (cf. *ibid*:190). During the two stages, economic reforms (I) start, and first social effects can be recognized, while privatization and restructuring (II) of the state regulation and economic sector are introduced. In Hungary, the influenced elite group introduced the first restructuring points before the actual system change (cf. *ibid*:197f.).

While the transformation process in Hungary was unique and combined with social support, the current situation in Hungary shows a more reflected position on the process. In a PEW research in 2009, 89 percent of Hungarians said that “politicians” benefited the most from the transformation in 1989/91. Another 63 percent think “entrepreneurs” profited largely through the transformation process. An ordinary person only helped 17 percent of the participants (PEW Research Centre 2009:31). While the transformation was seen as chance and risk initially, the current situation shows that not all developments through the transformation were positive or are not seen as positive (cf. Segert 2014:220ff.). The current system in Hungary is not profitable for everyone, which always means that someone is left behind.

This historical background is essential while answering the question “*How does climate action influence socio-ecological transformation in Hungary?*”. Former movements were able to influence the political situation and included new topics in the political agenda. This strongly influenced the transformational process in Hungary. In the next chapter, theory on social movement and activism will be displayed to acknowledge which strategies the Hungarian actions used.

2.2.2 Social movements and activism

Movement research can be divided into structure-oriented¹² and action-oriented approaches. For the research question of this thesis, an action-oriented approach seems to be essential and helpful in the analysis, as it focuses on interpretive processes that motivate and sustain participation (Rohlinger and Snow 2003:515). Therefore, I will use the framing approach in the rest of the paper, which will be explained in more detail later. The collective identity approach, which also belongs to the action-oriented approaches, is often seen as a prerequisite for the framing approach. This approach seeks to discover how a sense of belonging within a movement is created and "what significance it has for the motivation to participate and the success of social movements" (Nover 2009: 43). Thus, collective identity is significant for the mobilization and agency of a movement. The framing approach and its typical procedure are presented in more detail in 3.1.

2.2.2.1 The potential influence of activism

As mentioned before, the influence of activism is on political and economic development, and the system change in EE is visible for many researchers (cf. Harper 2005, Kocyba & Mikecz 2020). Civil movement gives individuals the opportunity to develop a voice and get involved in decision-making (cf. Kern 2007:10f). Kern (2007) says that the resonance of interpretive patterns is remarkable, the more they correspond to people's everyday perceptions. This is precisely where the strength of social movements lies: The interpretation of problems close to everyday life gives them a unique legitimacy and assertiveness vis-à-vis politics.

Furthermore, Kern (2007) mentions the importance of continuity for a movement to gain members, reliability and therefore influence. As Kern focuses on the consequences of modernization and the possibility of protesting, he finds that protest movements are a good instrument

² Alongside resource mobilisation theory, the structural strains and political opportunity structure approaches are among the structure-oriented approaches in movement research. approach are among the structure-oriented approaches in movement research. These theories do not stand in the focus of this thesis, why they are not explained in more detail.

for influencing social developments (Kern 2007:17f). Still, through hindering their potential, there is no clear evidence of the actual influence. On the one hand, he notes that social movements continued to play a central role in the negotiation of future social orders; on the other hand, he concedes that expectations in this regard had to be set lower (Kern 2007:200).

Within this thesis, the analytical tool is used to develop a mechanism to describe and analyze the work of activist groups in Hungary. Therefore different theories will be used to establish an analysis tool. Resource mobilization theories, which focus on the pooling of resources; framing theories, which deal with the construction of collective commonalities and the creation of public resonance; theories of social opportunity structures, which are concerned with the question of which environmental conditions have a beneficial or detrimental effect on the emergence of protests (cf. Kern 2007).

2.2.2.2 *Development of activism*

Over the last years, activism changed and developed differently. Through social media and other online media resources, the possible reach of a group grew, and new strategies for communication evolved. In this chapter, the development in Hungary and the research on the development of activism will be played out. This development plays an essential role within the research context of the question “*How does climate action influence socio-ecological transformation in Hungary?*”. The influence and changes within activism play a critical role in fostering transformational strategies,

The expectation that the climate crisis and needed policy changes originate from governments should give way to active participation and initiating or influencing the required policy changes that foster economic change solutions for climate change (cf. Kythreotis et al. 2019; Robbins 2012; Sweetman and Whitmarsh 2016). The importance of activism to gain political change and address non-economically friendly topics is discussed by different researchers (cf. Antal 2000, Harper 2001, Harper 2004, Kythreotis & Mercer 2019, Sweetman & Whitmarsh 2016, Whitmarsh et al., 2010). Prevailing social norms and a distrust in other citizens and politicians to act could also erode the own motivation to act (cf. Whitmarsh et al., 2010). Climate activist groups could benefit from this and attract more people.

Climate activism in Hungary has a long history, and some activist groups of the 1980s see their work as a milestone to achieve the fall of the “iron curtain” in 1989. People from different backgrounds approached the “*Danube River*” together and earned national and international recognition through media. Until 2010 discussed these issues in their political programs and

included policies to foster the protection of the environment. An influence on politics and the decision-making process through activism was given.

Currently, nationalist and right-wing parties in Eastern European countries seize power, and climate activist groups are pushed in the background. Especially in Hungary, activist groups have a rugged stand with the current government. Still, activist groups demand change and develop strategies for a transformation within Hungary. To analyze the potential effect that activist groups could have on socio-ecological transformation, this paper will question the demands of two Hungarian groups, which try to address climate change issues in Hungary. Their needs on socio-ecological transformation through a political ecology position are analyzed and combined with interviews with activists. Furthermore, literature on grassroots movements and the possible influence through their active participation is examined, especially the impact of activities before the transition around 1989 in Hungary (cf. Antal 2000, Harper 2001, Harper, 2005).

In chapter 3.2, the research by Antal (2018), Harper (2005, 2006) and Kythreotis & Mercer (2019) is used to develop a strategic approach to analyze the collected data. Therefore their findings and research focus are just mentioned here and will be explained in detail later on.

3 Analytical tool

3.1 Framing approach

In the following, the theoretical framework on which this work is based is elaborated. The framing approach offers action-oriented interpretation schemes through which characteristics of the protest movement can be categorized and interpreted. The resulting conclusions about so-called frames are crucial for answering the research question. The structures, which will be explained in more detail in the following, are composed of problem identification, blame, motives for action and proposed solutions, among other things, which offer collective interpretative frameworks for mobilizing their supporters. Goffman's "Frame analysis an Essay on the Organisation of Experience" (1974) laid the foundation for the development of framing analysis. His theories were further developed in the mid-1980s by the two sociologists Snow and Benford, who advanced the development of views in social movements in 2000 with their article Framing processes and social activities (cf. Benford and Snow 2000). Today, the framing approach is regarded as a lighthouse concept applied in almost all academic research on social

movements and functions as a flexible tool for understanding social movements' emergence, character, and course.

The framing approach focuses on constructing collective interpretive frames, defined as an "action-oriented set of beliefs and meanings that inspire and legitimate the activities and campaigns of a social movement organization" (ibid.: 614). These collective interpretive frames control the perception and naming of events and mobilize social movements by simplifying facts. Cooperative structures of interpretation are composed of three action-oriented core framing tasks, through which existing problems are named, responsible parties highlighted, and solutions proposed. The collaborative interpretive framework thus ultimately has a control function for the "localization, perception, identification and naming of events, and is thus responsible for the cognitive organization of experiences and actions" (Kern 2007: 142).

3.1.1 Core Framing Tasks

The core tasks of framing are divided into (a) diagnostic framing, (b) prognostic framing and (c) motivational framing:

(a) Diagnostic framing refers to identifying problems and their causes (Kern 2007: 143). The main focus is on the attribution of responsibility and guilt. It is challenging to create an expected problem diagnosis due to the heterogeneity of the actors in a social movement. Consequently, a single, common problem does not necessarily have to be diagnosed: "consensus regarding the source of the problem does not automatically follow from the agreement regarding the source of the problem" (Benford/Snow 2000: 616). In assigning blame and responsibility, one can often distinguish "good and evil", differentiating between protagonists and antagonists. Boundary framing or adversarial framing (cf. Benford and Snow 2000:616)(cf. Benford and Snow 2000) helps develop a common identity for a movement.

(b) The second core framing task is prognostic framing, which its problem-solving orientation can characterize. The prognostic structure involves articulating proposed solutions to problems and strategies for implementing the proposed solutions to eliminate the identified grievance. Predictive frames relate directly to diagnostic frames and can therefore be equally heterogeneous.

(c) The third core framing task, motivational framing, refers to developing incentives for joint protest action when consensus on the causes of the problem and possible solutions is insufficient. The main starting points for mobilization campaigns are the following values and emotions and appeals to solidarity and morality (Kern 2007: 145). Possible solutions are not

sufficient to initiate collective action. The addressees of mobilisation must instead be mobilized through incentives. Benford and Snow call it a "call to arms" (Benford and Snow 2000: 617).

3.1.2 Master Frames

Master frames are used when an interpretive framework is relevant to the actions of other groups and a specific group. Although master frames have the same function as conventional interpretive frames, they are formulated on a more general level and can therefore cover a broader spectrum of phenomena. Snow and Benford (2000) describe master frames as follow: "Master frames are to movement-specific collective action frames as paradigms to finely tuned theories. Master frames are generic, specific collective action frames are derivative" (Snow/Benford 1992: 138). A master frame thus offers a common denominator for heterogeneous groups and can therefore be described as a starting point for collective protest action (Kern 2008: 150).

Figure 2 shows an oversight on the four different frames, key factors and possible consequences. In the following part of this chapter, this structure can be compared with the design of the analytical tool developed through literature analysis.

Framing	Diagnostic	Prognostic	Motivational	Master Frame
Key factors	• Problem-focused • Focus on reasons/causes • Can include a connection between causes	• Problem-solving approach • Concrete demands • Strategies against causes of problems	• Causes for activism • Cause for Attraction of group /movement • Collective action points	• Collective action frame • Openness towards different perspectives • Heterogenic group
Possible consequences	• Problem-solving thru different strategies • Cause-based connection of movement	• Demands can differ between groups • Demanding change on various levels	• Connects different groups • Action-based, less awareness-based •	• Different groups feel seen within the frame • Movement specific • Necessary for solid cooperation's

Figure 2 Overview Framing concept by Benford and Snow (2000)

3.1.3 Further variables

Action-oriented frames have four additional variable features. The first feature is problem identification, and the second feature includes flexibility, rigidity, inclusivity, exclusivity. The third variation in scope and influence, and the fourth is the resonance of a frame.

Now, when it comes to the central research question, transnational solidarity must be thought of in the context of mobilizing people. Therefore, due to the limited scope of this paper, I will limit myself to the variable feature of resonance. Resonance is generally concerned with why some frames are effective and have excellent mobilization potential, and others are not. Johnston and Noakes (2005) refer to three criteria in their analysis. Firstly, the resonance of a frame refers to its ability to connect with the cultural traditions of a population or society. The greater this cultural resonance, the higher the mobilization potential. Second, the actions of a social movement must correspond to the ideology, convictions and demands of a movement. As a third aspect of a frame's resonance, Johnston and Noakes (2005) argue that the structure must be relevant to the target audience's daily lives and relate to the current mood of the population concerning the problems the framing addresses (Johnston and Noakes 2005:15).

3.2 Strategy approach

To apply the theory of socio-ecological transformation to activism theory and the situation in post-socialist Hungary, this section will focus on four papers and one book. These works research the role of activism from different perspectives and provide a basis to analyze further

the question “*How does climate action influence socio-ecological transformation in Hungary?*”. To gain a broader picture of the possible strategies activists use, the different perspectives were applied on socio-ecological transformation and the current political situation in Hungary.

Antal (2018) focuses on the political situation in Eastern and South European Countries. His focus lies on Hungary, connected with the political emphasis on environmental politics, authoritarian neoliberal populism and socialism or the consequences and implications of socialism (cf. Antal 2021). The paper “Ecosocialism in the 21st Century from the Perspective of Eastern Europe” connects ecological thought with Marxism and the need for solidarity within a society. Furthermore, he argues that the environmental issue presents a chance for left-wing parties and their political agenda. He sees this chance by connecting the highly recognizable social injustices to the climate issue (cf. Antal 2018). The conference speech “Neoliberal and Populist Autocracy in the era of Climate Emergency” describes the connection between the autocracy of state, capitalism, and Hungary's climate emergency. Attila describes “authoritarian neoliberal populism” in Hungary, demonstrating the state's power within the neoliberal system (cf. Antal 2019). Especially with the latest political development in Hungary, the authoritarian influence has to be taken into account. The chances of climate politics to change political agendas present an essential perspective.

These two papers were chosen to gain perspective on how the current political system in Hungary and ecological policies fit and how politicians use the climate emergency for their benefit. The political situation has a significant influence on the role of activists, freedom of speech and corporations that are accepted.

Harper (2005, 2006) focused on the activist culture in Hungary over a long period and was able to conduct field research about the Danube movement in the 1980s and 90s. Her book “Wild Capitalism” (2006) focuses on the activist role after the transformation from state socialism in Hungary. Furthermore, she analyses the grassroots process of how activists translate environmental issues into cultural stigma and political processes. Although the research took place in the late 1990s, many ecological activists' approaches are still the same. The historical perspective of activism in a country where a transformation took place gives a more accurate picture. Additionally, her paper “‘Wild Capitalism’ and ‘Ecocolonialism’: A Tale of Two Rivers” (2005) shows the perspective of a concrete action process of a climate activist movement in Hungary. A historical perspective is essential for analyzing the strategies used by today's

activists, especially when an influence of this movement on the transformation from state socialism is accepted.

To connect the research with today's activism theory, the papers from (Kythreotis et al. 2019) and Börzel & Buzogány (2010) are included. Kythreotis et al. (2019) focus on the necessity of a bottom-up movement to create acceptance for environmental politics within the society. Börzel & Buzogány (2010) focus on the ability of activist groups to use international laws and rules of state associations to put pressure on national politicians and the government to fulfill environmental policies. The different perspectives on activist groups and their possibilities show the broadness of action models and give the possibility to focus on strategies connected to environmental politics and the climate issue. The connection between social-ecological transformation in today's politics and society can be established through these papers.

In advance of the transformation from state socialism to capitalism in Hungary, many citizens were not satisfied with politics and the economic situation in the country (cf. Segert 2013). Social inequalities grew through different causes and connected people from other areas and backgrounds to fight for one reason.

While many different theories apply within socio-ecological transformation, “change” on a political and social level is a practical step towards possible conversion. Because this paper focuses on activism theory, the economic situation, capitalism and economic change towards “resource-sustainability” and systems like “circular economy” will not stand in focus. It will be assumed that through social change & political influence, the economic system requires adaption within the transformational process.

This thesis assumes that social change can be one of the main trigger points for a transformational process (2.2.1). Therefore, the defined strategy tools activist groups use to foster transformation focus on social change and the necessity of awareness building within society. The International Center on nonviolent conflict argues that nonviolent civil resistance can create change with only 3,5 percent of the population as active participants (cf. Chenoweth 2020). Based on this statement, activist groups are reaching out to create a range where 3,5 percent of the population is active against climate and social issues. Therefore, every strategy that creates a broader target group or field is seen as a possible strategy to make a social change (cf. Chenoweth 2020)(cf. Chenoweth 2020).

These different perspectives and research will provide the basis for the further analysis of the strategies and actions of the interviewed activist groups. To analyze interviews, activities

and demands of the different activist groups, fundamental pillars that foster or introduce transformation must be established. As mentioned in the sections before, transformation can be presented by a bottom-up or top-down situation. Sometimes, the papers discussed here do not connect the strategies directly to socio-ecological transformation but social change. As established in the earlier sections, social change can lead to SET and is a fundamental step. Only by social acceptance, the following transformation can thrive (cf. Bönker et al. 1995; Wissen and Brand 2019).

The strategies presented in this chapter are closely connected and often rely on similar vital factors. The first strategy combines social and climate issues to show that social inequalities play a role in the climate crisis. The importance of the *connection and corporation between different activist groups* and the chances through *international recognition* presented itself through the analysis of the papers mentioned above. International recognition can be achieved by joining international conferences and actions or by gaining international media attention. Lastly, the *thrive for political glory* is a strategy that often shows the ambitions of the activist group. Either a group thrives for political influence or joins in a political corporation with parties or party-affiliated organizations.

1. *Connecting social and climate issues*

To enhance awareness of climate action and the possibility of creating social change, some researchers argue that the connection between climate issues and social issues is a core point. A social acceptance of climate issues, social problems connected with climate change, or social change could foster the development of a transformation. Especially in Eastern European Countries where social inequalities grew through the implementation of state capitalism, future climate issues will affect social classes differently. Antal (2018) argues that the connection of social and climate issues will enhance the awareness of activist groups and help gain interest. Antal connects this connection to left-wing politics and suggests an opportunity for left politicians to gain influence in Eastern European countries. This will not be the focus of this thesis, but the connection between social issues and politics is crucial. If current inequalities and social problems were addressed climate-neutral, future climate issues could be prevented. Because of capitalism and monetary matters, this is mostly not the case. The communication of these factors and the connection is developed on a *content-based strategy*. How these factors and relationships are communicated is crucial to gain broader acceptance. If a connection could be established, more citizens would be aware of the current political and act against strategies that consolidate the existing inequalities.

The connection was established via an action-based strategy and used the Danube dam's direct social influences as examples to connect environmental/climate topics to social issues. Similar to Antal (2018) mentioning this connection as a core tool to foster social change, Harper (2006) also describes in her research of the Danube movement that the different focal points of the groups on social and climate issues helped them to attract a broader target group and gain more people for their cause. Because the activist groups could attack one theme from different perspectives, their popularity grew, and more people could find their voice within the climate activists' demands. As more people are attracted to one theme, the possibility for social change grows.

2. *Connecting different activist groups*

While researching the Danube movement, Harper mentions that long-term members noted that there were only up to 15 members in the beginning. Later, the Danube movement grew, and now it counts as one major factor for the transformation in Hungary in the 1980s. Of course, other reasons and developments also applied in that situation, but the movement around the Danube dam had a remarkable influence. The exact cause gave different groups a reason to work together. They cooperated on an *action base*. This focus point allows activist groups to join, even if they do not agree on other terms, demands, or central themes (cf. Harper 2005; Harper 2006).

Nowadays, social and climate activist groups are often dependent on the same grants (cf. Kythreotis et al. 2019). Many groups fall into a rivalry for funding when their theme is broad and awareness building is their primary focus. The need for cooperation with other activist groups may not be visible because no concrete action is on the agenda. Still, also without concrete action, *awareness-based collaboration* can enhance activist influence potential. The necessity of awareness building does not lead to funding for every organization. A specific and detailed awareness-building process can help movements to address people directly. The close cooperation between groups and the ability to rely on different awareness-building approaches can foster the diversity of approaches and appeal.

Due to a collective theme and action point, different activist groups can collaborate and join actions to gain recognition. A joint *master frame* that gives a common denominator is vital for coworking (cf. Benford and Snow 2000). Through cooperation, activist joins their members, aware people and target group. The range of activist groups for a possible action group is broader in a collaborative action (cf. Harper 2006). To overlook differences also gives the

possibility for open conversations and connecting different issues (cf. *ibid*). The first point of this tool of strategies could also enhance the chance for interdisciplinary action against social and climate issues. The connection of different groups and joint action is an important strategy to create awareness and foster social change.

Additionally, cooperation between groups provides the basis for exchanging best practices and knowledge and profit from one another's mistakes and activist action (cf. Kythreotis et al. 2019)(cf. Kythreotis et al. 2019). By not sharing these experiences, activists again start rivalry and prevent activist groups from flourishing within their action plan. Good relationships between groups to foster exchange and knowledge transfer can enhance the success of an activist action and perception acceptance of the activist group by citizens (cf. Börzel & Buzogány 2010).

3. International recognition

Through the complex political situation and the influence of the government on the media in Hungary, activist groups are often seen as anti-movement, or the coverage of their actions is repressed (cf. Antal 2019). This makes it more challenging to reach people who aren't already aware of Hungary's social and climate crisis. Furthermore, the complex political situation in Hungary and the nationalist, the correct orientation of politics has led to difficulties for progressive environmental policies. To foster the political pressure activist groups can lay on politicians, international media recognition could support their action (cf. Harper 2006). In other countries, the focus on environmental politics might be more substantial. Even on an international level, media coverage of the climate activist movement is more common in countries where environmental politics are more focused. This can help the action create more political pressure on a national level and gain popularity within the society (cf. Kythreotis et al. 2019)(cf. Kythreotis et al. 2019). If international media cover climate action within Hungary, they pressure local news to do the same (cf. Harper 2006).

Moreover, international organizations can support climate action on national levels. Through international recognition, established organizations with political influence can stand behind local activist groups and strengthen them through knowledge transfer, corporations in action, or even monetary or law basics (cf. AFP 2020).

Hungary is part of the EU, and this state association recommends or even demands different environmental policies than the ones currently active in Hungary. For example, the EU agreed on reducing carbon emission by 55 percent until 2030 (cf. AFP 2020). A rule that is not

yet set within Hungarian environmental policies. Börzel & Buzogány (2010) argue that activist groups could use regulations and laws applied by the EU to foster their standing within the Hungarian society and even get international grants to fund their actions. This would help the activist groups to gain independence from state recognition and maybe even enhance political tribute within the country (cf. Börzel & Buzogány 2010).

4. *Political recognition*

To gain political recognition is a very important basic for activist movements. By getting political attention, the action can influence policy-making and decision-making with demands and fundaments of the movement. To achieve this recognition, activist groups use different strategies.

Political cooperation means cooperating with a political party or an affiliated party organization. This also includes collaboration with political parties. Climate activist groups always exclude people by taking a political side because the climate crisis and climate issues are not automatically connected to one political side. For a climate group, the decision on a political side is mostly delayed or avoided (cf. Harper 2006). The party's support could help to create a more prominent target group, but at the same time, people with other political orientations might be deterred by political differences Harper.

Antal (2018) mentions in her research that choosing a political framework should be done by the left-wing parties in Eastern European Countries. She argues that more citizens would be open to a political change that promises a new solution because of social inequalities and growing dissatisfaction with economic policies. Through the connection of social crisis and climate crisis, climate change could be set in a personal relationship and therefore attract citizens to get active within the movement (cf. Antal 2018).

Climate activist groups often try to demand and pressure politicians to pass environmental laws or change paradigms. To achieve this, an alignment with politicians in an unofficial way or a direct address of politicians is helpful (cf. Börzel & Buzogány 2010). The *thrive for political influence* is a vital push factor to enhance political change. Contact with politicians can be an essential tool to achieve an alliance. Through political participation in referendums or seeking political influence on a local level can foster a more profound impact on policies, even on a national level. Climate activist groups can promote from lobbying with politicians an institution with political influence to directly address their demands and simultaneously gain civil and

political activist movements (cf. Antal 2019). In Table 2, an overview of the different strategies, key factors, and possible influences and consequences.

The different strategies have strong dependencies with each other and can influence success. To connect these strategies and the framing strategy, **Fehler! Verweisquelle konnte nicht gefunden werden.** will list the various tools and how dependencies between them affect each one. **Fehler! Verweisquelle konnte nicht gefunden werden.** and **Fehler! Verweisquelle konnte nicht gefunden werden.** show the necessary details on each tool, key factors and possible consequences. The similarities and interdependencies are already visible.

Strate- gies	Connecting social and cli- mate issues		A corporation with other activist groups		International recognition		Political recognition	
Sub strat- egies	Connect- ing thru action- based content	Connect- ing by content- based values	Action- based coopera- tion	Aware- ness-based co- operation	International media recognition	Participation in International meetings	Thrive for political influ- ence	Corporation with political par- ties
Key fac- tors	• Simple speech • The direct address of af- fected citizens • Bottom-up explanation • Social movement • Connecting different social issues and groups •		• Exchange with other groups/movements • Specification of the task area • Openness for other perspec- tives and new angles		• Openness towards other per- spectives • Contact to international media • Decisive ac- tion to inter- est media	• Contact to in- ternational movements/ groups • Interest in ac- tion/content exchange •	• The decision about the political framework • Lobbying with politicians	
Possible consequences	• Bottom-up social move- ment • Broader reach within the country •		• Bottom-up social movement • Knowledge exchange • Broader reach of group action •		• International media recognition ex- erts pressure on national media • Political/economic influence on national media can be overthrown • National media recognition and broader reach		• Reaching broader target group • Influence on decision making • Achieve/pressure political change	

Figure 3 Overview "analytical tool"

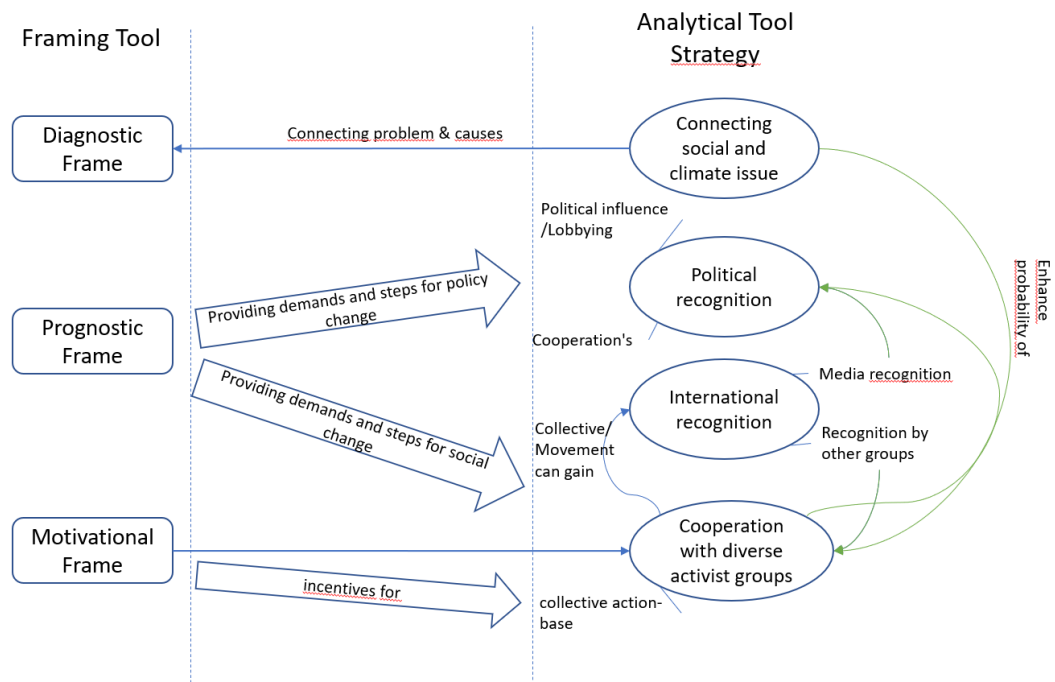


Figure 4 Connecting framing and strategic approach

In the following analysis and discussion of the research, the focus will lie on these four core strategies, their sub-strategies, and the framing approach. This will help to highlight techniques that were already analyzed by other researchers and gain a more focused picture of the actions of the movements and their possible goals. Especially the connection between the framing and the strategic approach will highlight

4 Methods

4.1 Strategy and design

The research question “*How does climate action influence socio-ecological transformation in Hungary?*” and all associated sub-questions were deposited with necessary theories through the literature analysis. To answer the question and subquestions, a qualitative research was conducted. Therefore one group interview and two semi-structured expert interviews were carried out. Beforehand key questions were prepared for the expert interviews. Even though the discussions were semi-structured, the questions had to ensure that the different strategies of activist groups, defined in the previous chapter, were queried. The findings of the interviews are discussed with the previously described process from the analytical tool and connected to different framing approaches.

At the beginning of the research, eight to ten interviews were scheduled, but many activists and organizations canceled due to the critical political situation in Hungary. In 2017 the government passed a new law forbidding non-governmental organizations from receiving money from governments or companies outside Hungary. If the organizations receive money from international bodies, it is possible to ban them or make them move to another country. Where one part feared to get interviewed, others were even more open to an interview and gave contacts to other interview partners.

Because of the critical political situation and the lack of interview partners, the research was expanded. The movement and groups interviewed all have some kind of online presence. While some are only active on social media channels, others have a website with projects, actions, and demands. The research was expanded to achieve a broader range of data and analysis. The “cases” of these movements were analyzed with the help of websites, articles from the interview partners, newspaper coverage, and the group's online presence. All these different tools were called in the categories of the analytical tool and the framing theory defined in the first part of the analytical tool.

4.2 Sample and sampling

Through my activist work in Vienna and the degrowth movement, I connected with people from different movements in Budapest. One contact who is very active in Budapest joined me with other members. The experts should always be active members of a group or movement for more than a few months. If they take more responsible part or complete the team through additional work played no role in the selection process. Possible participants were contacted through different social media channels and other online contacting options in the same way. About 20 potential participants were contacted. Five did not reply. Ten had some additional questions about the research and the process but dropped out later due to concerns. One possible participant said that he needed the questions in advance due to the lack of a personal meeting. After the questions were sent, the meeting was canceled because the content about international recognition and cooperation was too critical for him without a private session and trust. After other interviews were conducted, he was contacted again but didn't reply.

Since 2015, global awareness for climate change has risen, and many different groups and organizations are active on different focus points of climate change. While some organizations only focus on concrete actions and situations (example: third runway Vienna), others focus on the substantial necessity of change on different levels and a social, political and economic

perspective (example: Fridays for future). To maintain a good picture of broader and more focused perspectives, different groups in Hungary were contacted. All the contacted groups are active as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and are civil society organizations. Especially groups from Budapest and around were contacted. Unfortunately, the response ratio here was meager. Two organizations, active globally with local branch offices, were able to participate in the research. As these organizations participate within the climate activist movement globally but focus on central themes within their branch offices, the variety of influences can still be seen through their participation.

Their focus area chose the contacted movements and groups. There are so many focus areas and movements within the socio-ecological transformation that the containment was needed to focus on the theory by Feola (2015) mentioned in this thesis.

In 2016 the degrowth conference was held in Budapest. This international conference got colossal recognition and was one of the more critical events in Hungary. The meeting in Denmark before was a success and because the nationalist, economical-based political direction was a significant step for the movement to hold the conference in Budapest. Degrowth, post-growth and circular economy are three of the more radical calls for economic change. The main argument is that only by reducing our economic production and reusing and recycling raw materials will we be able to maintain life on this earth based on natural food (Cargonomia 2021b). Representatives of the degrowth movement in Hungary were therefore contacted and asked for an interview.

The participant is also part of a collective called *Cargonomia*. The collective contains three enterprises that act on a socially and environmentally conscious level and develop sustainable projects. The companies are active in “*sustainable food production, promoting low carbon transport solutions, bicycle competency advocacy*”(Cargonomia 2021a). With their cooperation and hub location, they combine their perspectives and significantly impact the community. The collaboration is active in and around Budapest and provides a community space for activities focussed on sustainable transition, conviviality and Degrowth. The main activities of the collective can be classified into two categories: individual-action-based, collective-awareness-based. *Individual-action-based* projects focus on individual consumerism, local food production and everyday-life changes that a person can take to act against the unsustainable economic system. Collective-awareness-based includes research the collective activists provide on climate change and sustainable transition, amongst other things. Additionally, educational actions enhance awareness of climate change and sustainable activities (Cargonomia 2021b).

On a global level, *Greenpeace* and *Extinction Rebellion (XR)* are two more recognized organizations active against unsustainable action and climate change. *Greenpeace* is a well-established organization that has been active for 50 years. The organization is well established globally but works in small branch offices in different countries. Every branch office stands for itself but can also participate in international actions with other *Greenpeace* branch offices. *Greenpeace* is more known for its protest action and political activism. It also tries to connect different organizations and provides a community for smaller organizations or activists who want to participate or create their actions. While *Cargonomia* is more active through awareness-building, *Greenpeace* tries to pressure politicians and create awareness through protest and collective action. *Greenpeace* also provides information about climate change, socio-economic transformation and sustainable transition for knowledge and awareness-building purposes. The main activities are cooperation between activists and organizations and collective protest action against political decision-making. *Greenpeace* has a clear organizational structure and develops projects to act against climate change and protest action as an activist group (Greenpeace Hungary 2020).

Extinction Rebellion is not as well established as *Greenpeace* but grew very fast since its foundation in 2018. *XR* sees itself as a movement where local groups can join in and develop their projects and join international actions.

4.3 Data collection – instrument and procedures

Because of the current pandemic and the problematic travel opportunities, the research was conducted online. This limits the research potential because active participation in climate activist groups is not possible. All interviews were held via Zoom—a platform for online meetings. The recordings of video and audio were as well conducted with zoom. The transcripts of the interviews can be seen in appendix 9.3. Anonymity is given to every participant because the legal situation for activists in Hungary is critical, and no harm or critique should come because of the research. To protect the data, the contact information will not be published in the master's thesis. All interview partners will get the final dissertation in digital form.

Semi-structured expert interviews are used to generate data on a topic through a semi-structured format. The open questionnaire used during the interviews is created based on theoretical background and the core pillars defined in the analytical tool. Every category of the analytical instrument is covered with one to three questions that are used differently within the interview. Through the open character of the questions, the answers can differ, and amongst

other things, the actual situation, mood and involvement of the participant influence the structure of the solution (Dannecker and Voessemer 2014:159ff.). The questionnaire is a bit more detailed than other semi-structured interviews to avoid silence or react to the need to ask again. This questionnaire is characteristic of semi-structured expert interviews and was used differently in every interview due to different responses and openness of the participants. This opens the possibility of a relatively open interview process. The essential questionnaire for interviews helps focus on every relevant topic for the research question (cf. Dannecker and Englert Birgit 2014).

Furthermore, the interview structure starts with personal and straightforward questions. More sensitive and complex topics are set in the final part of the interview. The provision of a ready-made guideline interview is intended to create comparability of the data obtained (Dannecker, Vossemer 2014: 159ff.). The interviews lasted about 30 to 45 minutes, depending on the answering structure and openness of the participant. Since all interviews were conducted via Zoom due to the pandemic situation, there was less room for personal encounters and long pauses or other unexpected troubles, which could quickly lead to strange interview situations.

All sub-questions of the leading research question and categories of the developed analytical tool lead to a theme block in the interview. Different questions for every theme block were created to fill these theme blocks and make sure every topic is talked about. The theme blocks were: personal information, political recognition, international recognition (media), connection with other groups, link btw. Climate and social issue, demands about social-ecological transformation, problem/restriction facing right now.

By answering the question to these theme blocks, the different subquestions described in the first section of this thesis can be analyzed, and an understanding of the leading research question should be given. Additional information about the theme blocks was collected by exploring the website or, if not available, the social media pages. Their different projects, official statements and cooperation with other organizations are listed. Moreover, the organization's coverage and its actions by newspapers and other media were also considered for the analysis.

5 Data analysis and interpretation

Qualitative content analysis is qualitatively oriented text analysis and is characterized by a strictly rule-guided procedure. This is followed by a process model, which is adapted to the respective analysis. The analysis units are defined in advance, ensuring that content analytical quality criteria can be meaningfully checked (Mayring, Fenzl 2014: 546ff.).

Because of the semi-structured form of the interviews, every conversation had a different structure, and the questions were asked slightly differently to react to the participant. After a short introduction of the topic and some basic questions about the participant and the organization, the questions focus on five main issues: political work and intension of the organization, primary focus and topics of the organization, cooperation and national focus, cooperation and international focus, and recognition and target group. A more detailed overview of the questions can be found in appendix 9.1. In advance of every interview, a content analysis of the website and the social media channels was conducted to react to the participants' questions and detail projects and structures.

To answer the research question “*How does climate action influence socio-ecological transformation in Hungary?*” the different strategic tools presented in this thesis will now be connected to the answers of the participants. This process is taken to get new insights into the strategies of different movements and activist groups. Through their approach and the possible motivational effect, this thesis tries to give an insight into how their actions can influence the possibility of a socio-ecological transformation. The data will be presented in the following section.

5.1 Frame analysis

The current climate crisis affects the whole world. Every nation and every member of a society will sooner or later be concerned by the consequences of climate change. As mentioned in the theoretical part of this thesis, the current system has to adapt and change to fulfill the 1.5-degree goal. Different initiatives and organizations were founded to meet this need. To attract people to join and address contemporary political, social and economic issues is very important for each movement. The durability of this movement is decisive for future developments.

When social movements, in the case of this research and thesis the organizations Cargonomia, Greenpeace and Extinction Rebellion, use mobilization strategies, the particular issue is presented to the audience in a certain way. This construction of the specific problems by the organizations, which is called framing, influences the participation of the population in Hungary. Therefore, framing theory is a valuable perspective to understand the mobilization strategies of activist groups. In the following analysis, the above organizations are searched for the identified problems, offered solutions, and incentives as the basis of mobilization strategies. In a further step, the primary frame is briefly presented before the frames are finally examined for their mobilization potential according to resonance criterion.

Mobilization is crucial to apply and execute the strategies elaborated in the Analytical Tool. Therefore, an analysis of the mobilization potential is fundamental to conduct further research of the data. During the examination of frames, we will focus on the climate activist movement in Hungary. Therefore, the surveyed groups are not analyzed separately but present different approaches.

5.1.1 Diagnostic frame

A typical diagnostic frame of the activist groups in Hungary exists in the complex current political and economic system. Extinction rebellion names the current crisis directly on their website: “We are in the midst of a climate and ecological breakdown. We are facing an uncertain future - our world is in crisis, and life itself is under threat. Now is not the time to ignore the issues; now is the time to act as if the truth is real.” (Extinction Rebellion 2021b). The current government and big companies are, as a result of this, seen as a clear opponent of a problem-solution, and scientists provide a sort of truth-speaking companion in this fight for change: “The science is clear. We are in the midst of mass extinction of our own making, and our governments are not doing enough to protect their citizens, our resources, our biodiversity, our planet, and our future.” (ibid.). Through this statement, all non-environmentally friendly actions are seen as unfavorable.

Greenpeace has a very similar approach but does not provide such a clear problem description. Within the communication on the website, the focus on problem-solving and new solutions is noticeable. “As a politically and financially independent environmental organization, we work for a greener and more peaceful future. We use spectacular, courageous and peaceful means to draw attention to environmental problems and their solutions.” (Greenpeace Hungary 2021c). The government or big companies are directly named by the opponents. On different pages, they discuss the problems of high consumerism in capitalist structure and the high air pollution in Hungary. Still, the focus is not on opponents, instead on the people who can change (Greenpeace Hungary 2021a): “Together we will save the earth” (ibid.).

Cargonommia also takes this approach. While their research group also communicates the originator of our current crisis, the website and communication of the activist group provide a solution for an alternative way of living. The strong opinion against the current government and the power of big companies in Hungary is visible through the interviewee.

“Well, to be honest, those I mean, it's about it's what I keep. I mean, we talk a lot about it with my friends, not only the foreigners but also the Hungarians [...] that if in 2022

Orban is reelected, this is the end of democracy or maybe it's already too late.” (Interview Cargonomia:397ll.)

The climate activist movement in Hungary articulates the misconduct of the current government and big companies as problem focus, and some groups even blame them for the current ecological and climate crisis. Still, the focus is on possibilities individuals have to change and don't go on as it is. Here groups and organizations see the problem focus because consumers and voters have the influence. The attribution of blame is used to justify protests.

5.1.2 Prognostic frame

Every group provides different roles and projects within the prognostic framework and follows plans and strategies to achieve change. Greenpeace Hungary articulates four main demands to complete the change the group sees as necessary: “Protect biodiversity and rich terrestrial life; prevent pollution of the oceans, freshwater, farmland and air; end the nuclear threat and the use of polluting energies that cause climate change; advance peace, build a future of nonviolence rather than armaments” (Greenpeace Hungary 2021a). Through petitions, individuals can participate, and through cooperation with other groups, their reach is enlarged. The independence from fundings of political institutions or the government enhances the problem-solving approach of the organization.

“Governments must act now to halt biodiversity loss and reduce greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2025.” (Extinction Rebellion 2021b)

A core element is the support of the nonviolent, civil protest. Extinction Rebellion goes as far as to include this as their core demands for a problem-solving strategy. “3,5% of the global civilization have the global influence to change and transform the current system.” (ibid.). As the group especially demands change through new policies and governmental interventions, protests and individual differences are seen as their problem-solving strategies to achieve change from the government to the economic system - top-down.

“Creating a culture which is healthy, resilient and adaptable.” (ibid.) is articulated as a goal of problem-solving strategies. The call for transformation and a system change is reflected in the statements. *Cargonomia* provides an alternative style of consumerism and living approach. “Cargonomia and its partner's activities aim to display how environmentally friendly and equity-based partnerships can create sustainable and meaningful community empowerment opportunities which offer concrete alternatives to standard profit-driven social and economic systems.” (Cargonomia 2021b). By providing a space where this alternative lifestyle is established,

and possibility for socio-ecological transformation is insight. A more drastic communication by XR describes the possibility of transformation as still doable but necessary now: “We can acknowledge the truth of what we are facing, or we can continue to kick the can down the road and allow the effects of a heating planet to have even more detrimental outcomes on all living beings. We are already locked into a certain amount of warming and biodiversity loss, but there is still time to change this story.” (Extinction Rebellion 2021b).

Within the framework of the prognostic frame, a need for socio-ecological transformation is seen as necessary by many organizations but not necessarily communicated directly. The call for transformation is more often articulated as change because the current negative, disrupting situation is feasible. As a problem-solving strategy, the climate crisis movement in Hungary communicates political and economic instability and even a possible transformation as primary goals. While bottom-up approaches, where education of citizens and protest of grassroots movements, are used to achieve change, political pressure is enhanced to achieve a top-down shift in the economic system by replacing current policies. The groups provide space for exchange, which can be used to support peaceful, non-violent resistance by civil society in Hungary.

5.1.3 Motivational frame

Above all, motivational framing plays a central role concerning the research question, as this frame refers, among other things, to a sense of solidarity and identification to mobilize people.

"Together we can do it" is used by groups as a means of identification that is intended to get individuals to commit to "our country, our future." (ibid.). Since the climate crisis is a global problem, the Hungarian groups break down this abstract problem to the national or local level. The solidarity and identification with those affected by the crisis is the principle to involve people.

The simple communication of the complex problem is another principle that the groups base their communication on. Although this sometimes results in very striking statements, it can explain complicated relationships that make the current crisis comprehensible.

“Cargonomia and its partner’s activities aim to display how environmentally friendly and equity-based partnerships can create sustainable and meaningful community empowerment opportunities which offer concrete alternatives to standard profit-driven social and economic systems.” (Cargonomia 2021b)

Although not all groups exemplify or model positive solution strategies, these are crucial in justifying activism and showing that it is possible to do things differently. That change is possible. Open networks create a new space for new ideas. Not only the motivation through negative examples but the positive motivation through new approaches can actively change. The identification with the movement through utopias provides a very broad approach possibility for groups. Different people can be addressed through other utopias and therefore identify themselves with the new situation.

5.1.4 Master frame

The identification with the movement and the consequences for one's own life can be mentioned as the basic primary frame of the climate movement in Hungary. By showing that all people are affected by the impacts of climate change, the movement wants to show the injustice that everyone suffers together from the pollution and exploitation of the world, but only a few benefit from it. By clarifying the consequences for one's own life or that of one's children, personal involvement in the issue is to be established. The abstract impacts of climate change are often difficult to grasp, but through the concrete representation in everyday life, the involvement of other people is more accessible.

The second point that can be mentioned is the demonstration of solidarity. This includes solidarity within Hungary itself, for example, among the different strata of the population and transnational solidarity between the people in Hungary and the people in countries more affected by climate change. This solidarity, and thus a specific acknowledgment of responsibility for the consequences of climate change, is required above all from political and economic authorities since they can make far-reaching decisions limiting future pollution and exploitation.

Through these two approaches to involvement, the organizations want to draw attention to the fact that "business as usual" is impossible and that change is necessary if people want to live a dignified life.

5.2 Interpretation through the analytical tool

While the frame strategy was mainly used to analyze activist groups' online and social media communication in Hungary, the strategic approach developed in 3.2 will provide a more literature-based analysis. This perspective will examine the statements made during the interviews supplemented with crucial statements from the online communication. The findings presented in 5 are connected to the *Analytical Tool* developed in 3.2 by analyzing different theories. The activist research carried out by Krista Harper in Hungary gives an insight into the historical

development of activism in Hungary. These findings are connected to current research on activism and strategies groups and movements use to gain influence and recognition (cf. Antal 2019, Borzela & Buzogány 2010, Kythreotis et al. 2019).

Connecting climate and social issues, cooperation between different activist groups, international recognition and political recognition combine different approaches under one strategy title. During this chapter, the findings are evaluated and reinterpreted due to the theories and background of this thesis. The four main categories developed through this analysis were the main focus of the interviews and the research on the movement and group background.

“No regime in the 20th century managed to stand against an uprising which had the active participation of up to 3.5% of the population” (Extinction Rebellion 2021a)

The data and statements given through the interviews show a broad picture of the different categories developed in the analytical tool. The various statements will be connected to the information on the different online communication sides of the groups and movements. They will be related to the theory of framing in the next section. The research question *How does climate action influence socio-ecological transformation in Hungary?* is answered by analyzing the current action of climate activist groups and how this works towards systemic change that is content-related with socio-ecological shift and is fostering the needed change to achieve this transformation. This will provide an insight into the influence of climate action in Hungary and give a future perspective on required action.

The different Sub questions listed here will be answered and help analyze the main research question. To avoid including misleading information, this work tries to focus on the sub-question developed through literature analysis.

Which strategies do climate activist groups in Hungary use to initiate change?

What actions do climate activist groups in Hungary use to attract people/media?

Within the following part, these impressions and other details of the websites and interviews will be presented, discussed and interpreted.

5.2.1 Connecting climate and social issues

Data presentation

The connection of the climate crisis to more personal topics and themes people can relate to in their everyday life is an essential step. Within the movement research, Harper (2005, 2006) analyzed this as one of the more critical strategy strategies to motivate people for action.

Moreover, groups can use their activity to provide ideas, and the coherences can be made visible by presenting problem-solving ideas. This action-based approach is highly dependent on the awareness-based approach, where coherences are communicated and delivered directly. During the interviews, the participants from all groups affirmed this as a strategy in their action plan. The participants of *Extinction Rebellion Hungary* mentioned this strategy explicitly without question as crucial in their concept.

“We are trying to be quite principled in our activism of selecting what sorts of causes and issues we are supporting with our activism, like one of our core tenets is to marry ecological justice to social justice, saying that they are inseparable and as such, we would like to push this into the mainstream [...].” (Interview XR:147ll.)

Other groups mentioned the interconnection of the climate and social topics as a basis. The participants did not necessarily directly mention this strategy. The combination of different issues to achieve a systemic change is still seen as a necessity. Additionally, the economic and political influence on climate and social issues were mentioned in the connection between environment and social matters. This mirrors the complexity of the climate crisis and the different consequences. The different approaches of the groups simplify coherences display the broadness of the movements within the climate movement. The member of *Cargonomia*, part of the degrowth movement, goes as far as declaring it a new lifestyle. The organization's action shows the coherences in an academic way and by displaying a sustainable bubble.

“For me as a political activist, independent researcher and type of, I would say lobbyists [...] For me, Budapest and Cargonomia, it was a bit like the ‘in-action small utopia’. So when [...] I am in the garden, I eat the food we produce and cook. I am on the cargo bike, which we constructed. I am connected to different types of people. We experience an alternative way of life-based on reciprocity and so on. And, it was a good balance for me and the good thing that it's not only degrowth, we explore intellectually or academically or in the conference and talking. We were trying to really connect everyday life, [...] degrowth and all the type of relationship with each other, with economics, with democracy and so on.” (Interview Cargonomia:128ll.)

The participants see the importance of these interdependencies even with their exploration of climate action. Even though they did not mention this as a core strategy, the use of the process is visible. Especially the motivational factor that can be achieved is valued.

The analysis of online communication and the groups' demands also shows the importance of the interconnection between different disciplines.

“Cargonomia also seeks to be an incubator which can enable synergies between new and currently existing social and environmental projects.” (Cargonomia 2021a)

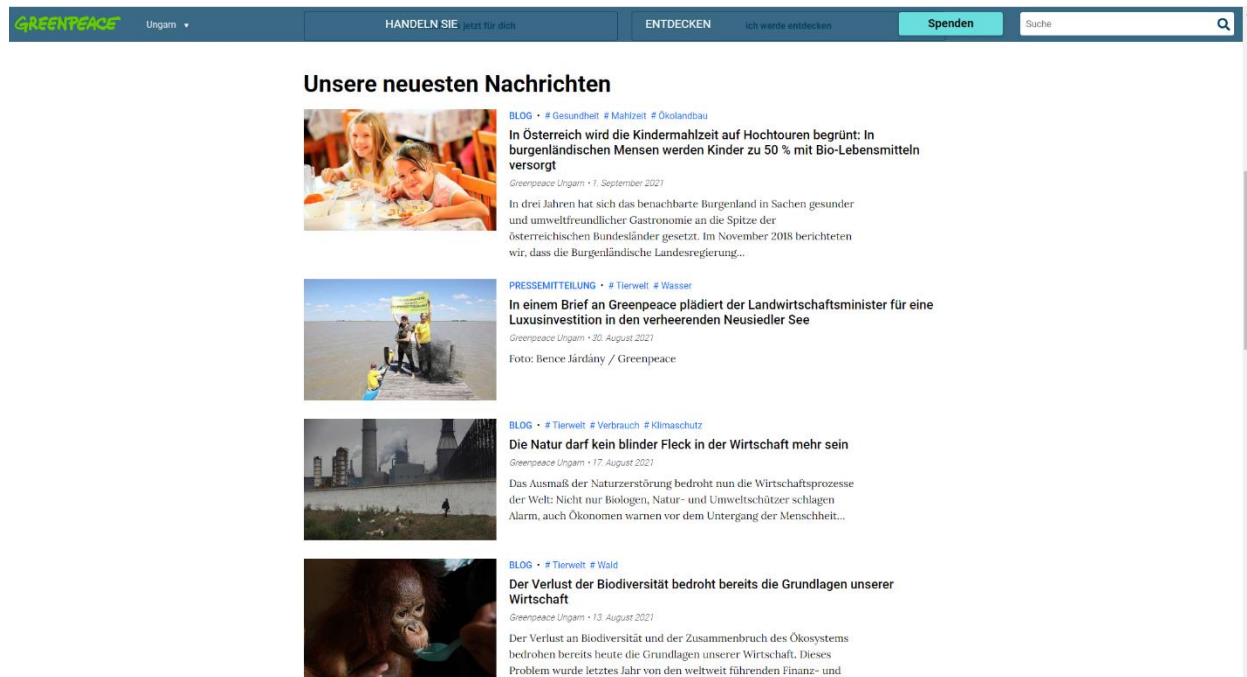


Figure 5 Greenpeace homepage - diversity of topics

This suggests that the interconnection between these topics is given without necessarily focussing on it. The approach of *Cargonomia* is to provide a possibility where various issues are connected and lived in a sustainable, regenerated way is one of a kind within this research. This creation of a place where systemic change can be seen and lived shows the interdisciplinarity of the climate crisis.

Analysis and interpretation

The climate issue is a relatively abstract issue, which can not always be seen in everyday life situations. The consequences of climate change can be seen through long-term evaluation of surroundings, weather situation and global warming, but not on a day-to-day ratio. Therefore, a connection between climate issues and social issues is necessary to feel connected to the topic. For example, Greta Thunberg and the global climate movement started to connect the climate issue to social inequalities and the generation contract (cf. Börzel and Buzogány 2010; Extinction Rebellion 2021a; Nover 2009). More people feel social involvement through the different framing of the issue.

I feel like that's a delicate line. Trying to push whatever we can towards social justice and in that territory” (Interview XR:147ll.)

Different climate organizations address social issues on different levels. While *Greenpeace* and *XR* are internationally and locally active, they address global social problems in their website communication. In their social media communication or events, they address local social issues. Regarding the content-based strategy, social issues with related consequences or backgrounds are integrated.

Groups try to use a content-based strategy to involve people. Mainly the generation contract is often used to enhance pressure on current and older generations to influence decision-making and address climate issues (see Figure 6). The social responsibility of each person is connected to their personal consumer decisions, their everyday influence on economic decision-making. As seen in the frame analysis, the questioned groups use this connection between online and social media communication.

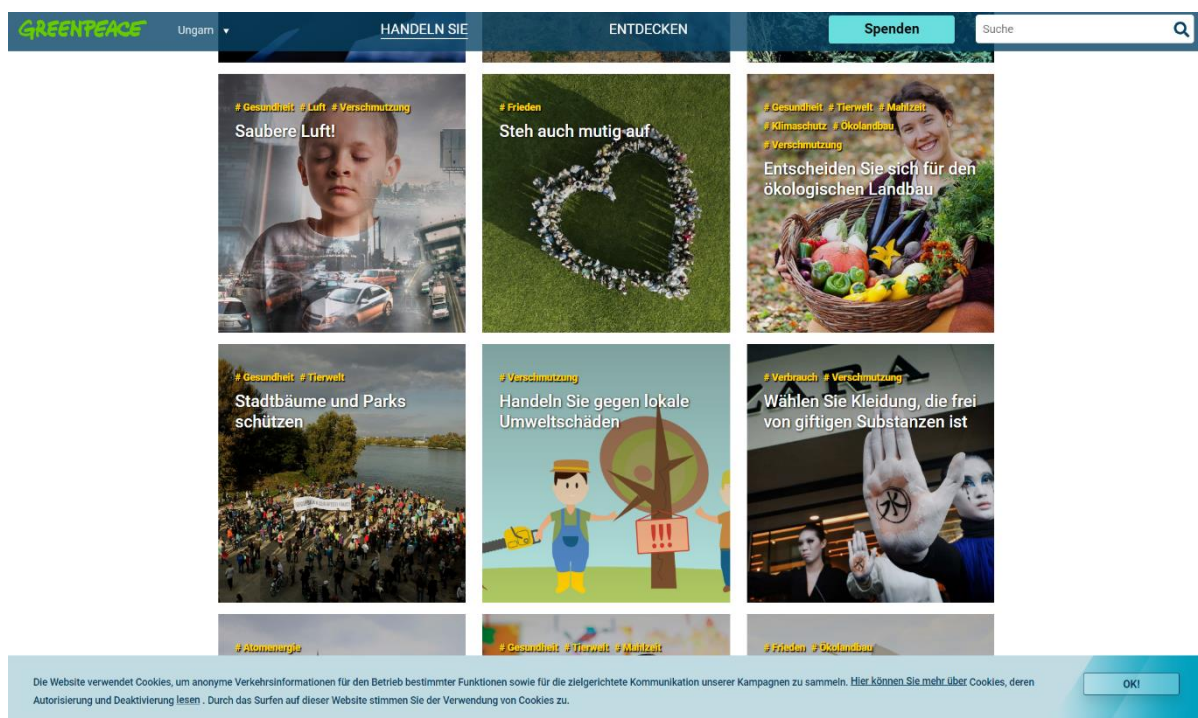


Figure 6 Headlines of current petitions by Greenpeace

The action-based strategy tackles concrete national or international social problems and Hungarian decision-making. By supporting concrete action, Greenpeace helps citizens voice their opinions and stand in the decision-making process. The complex decision-making on which activities to invest in is dependent on the organization. Furthermore, Greenpeace and XR

cooperate with other organizations that are more focused on the social issue and include the thematics through the different perspectives.

“We want to [...] drive social change in a way where we could live in a society where nature [...]and citizens are not extracted. It's a really bad word, but in Hungarian, it makes sense. So, where society doesn't work in a way that nature and the will of [...] normal citizens, [...], not prominent decision-makers, [...] are taken into account.”
(Interview Greenpeace:55ll.)

Cargonomia is focussing on social issues within our everyday life within their communication online. While the participant said that the connection is significant and is taken into account by the organization, it is managed differently from other organizations. Their space and different portfolios of action provide a place for many different subjects from various organizations. The social issue is introduced through different strategies: by other organizations and their event in *Cargonomia*, through co-host events with other organizations, or through the intended influence of the actions the group introduces in their portfolio.

As mentioned by the interviewee, “*small utopia*” sets the tone for a different system. Through places and collectives like this, the idea of change can be introduced, and more and more people get to know the possibilities that could be a reality through different standards. Furthermore, these integrative styles can be politically introduced. This will be mentioned in 5.2.4 where the political recognition of the groups will be analyzed.

The reader feels directly addressed through an inclusive language where pronouns “we” and “us” are used. Organizations try to involve the reader within the first contact and show that the climate issue is everyone's issue, as the XR website cites.

“We cannot allow the greed for profit and power of corporations and governments to continue to destroy the rich wildlife of our planet. We must put an end to unsustainable consumption.” (Extinction Rebellion 2021a)

On a political level, these organizations connect climate and social issues through their demands. Within the organizations' public statements, the consequences of these issues are often included and related to one another.

“With our large-scale chemical agriculture, use of polluting energies, and unsustainable lifestyles, we are destroying the rich terrestrial ecosystems that sustain our lives. Future generations will face more severe phenomena than today - water shortages,

famines, and spreading diseases. It is time to change!” (Extinction Rebellion Hungary 2021a)

Social inequalities in Hungary are a significant social issue and have deepened over Orban's presidency since. As the member of Cargonomia states it within his interview:

“[...]he made a good move, for example, where a lot of car companies are closing factories all around Central Europe. Orban managed to get a very good deal with the German car industry who invested [in transforming] the factories in Hungary into electric cars where money is rushing. So Orban is brilliant and smart [...] and better than the opposition. And that is a problem. And it makes it very difficult to challenge within the framework the mindset of the Hungarian people. They want to get their jobs, their wage and to be free to enjoy their life on the weekends and holidays as a family. And they don't want to hear about anything else. And [...] he manages to do it successfully. And [...] it's unbelievable. BMW is investing [...] a lot, and [...] Orban is using the central bank to print money to support, with no conditions, the car industry. (Interview Cargonomia:472ll.)

This political issue complicates the communication of the relations between climate and social matters. Through the strength of the Fidesz party and the economic connections to big companies, Orban manages to increase the financial wealth of most people. The middle class is fading. While more people have a steady job, the gap between richer and poorer is growing (see Interview citation above). The aversion of Orbans politics is very rare because of the positive framing through the political party. This could influence the connection to climate activism because economic wealth often leads to less political interest.

5.2.2 Cooperation with diverse activist groups

Data presentation

The cooperation between groups can support the need for a broad audience because the reach is enhanced. Moreover, joint events can give new insights into different projects, connect and transfer knowledge and best practices. Activist groups often tend to communicate with diverse groups. Harper (2006) mentioned here that the diversity of the focus topics of the groups could enhance the mentioned advantages.

A coworking between groups or movements can be action-based through motivation for one particular situation or action. Here groups from different disciplines focus on cooperation due to one action, maybe more. Different perspectives address the theme of the action, and other

target groups reach different people. Awareness-based group collaboration is often based on the same view but different main focus points and unrelated to one action.

The interview partners also highlighted the cooperation between groups. During the interviews, the interview partners mentioned three main content points in case of collaborations. These included: the importance of a place for activists to meet, exchange and create ideas, group cooperation with the same focus points and awareness, and collaborations due to needed support within one action.

Cargonomia as a collective tries to provide a space for exchange. The member of Cargonomia mentioned that cooperation often happens naturally, not as a formal collaboration, but through a conversation in everyday life. The places for discussion and alternative meeting points were emphasized.

“It was not like a formal type of cooperation. It was just happening because people were used to meet every day, every night in this type of place where you had the network of 15, let's say from 10 to 20, [...] alternative bars and alternative cultural community centers, [...] you went there, you met, and projects were happening. So you went for a discussion, you went for a workshop, you went just for a beer, for a movie screening, and so on, and things were happening.” (Interview Cargonomia:71ll.)

Through various activities (workshops, shared cargo bikes, collective gardening, etc.), people from different disciplines and backgrounds can meet at one place, and exchange ideas and new opportunities can be developed (cf. Cargonomia 2021a). Through meeting points or locations for exchange, the variety of actions and the variety of partners broadens. Other groups mentioned that different activists could exchange by creating a summer event, and new activist activity was planned following this meeting.

The participant of *Cargonomia* was also involved in the organization of the degrowth conference and had, therefore, experience working with different partners or creating a common working ground. This statement about the interaction and chosen partners paints a picture of the strategies and shows the effects of this partner variety.

“Mostly dialogue and interaction with a very large diversity of potential partners. I think it's really what you can see when we organize a degrowth conference in 2016. If you look at the list of partners and places we've been in, you will find a lot of people who run degrowth groups who even didn't hear before. But these groups and will even sometimes face some contradiction of degrowth principles and thought it was very

important to implement a dialogue with a large part of the local Budapest society or Hungarian society, but also in a broader way.” (Interview Cargonomia:143ll.)

When asked about cooperations, XR referred to main partners within the same discipline. The creation of joint events, like workshops, screenings or collective protests, were mentioned. Other NGOs would join the events, but the core planning team listed organizations with the same thematical focus. The accessibility of the event for different groups was emphasized and analyzed concerning future activist action.

“We organized joint events a couple of times. For example, there was a summer camp last year that was a joint effort from Greenpeace and XR, and like a lot of other NGOs, not just climate NGOs were present. That's still a good basis, a jumping-off point for further activism down the line.” (Interview XR:221ll.)

Involved in this event, *Greenpeace* also collaborates with smaller NGOs or activists. The member participating in this research was responsible for supporting movements and grassroots movements. *Greenpeace* Hungary tries to give smaller NGOs and grassroots movements the possibility for cooperation. If they need support with activist action, preparation, or consequences, they can ask the well-established organizations for help. In the following statement, an example of a collaboration like this is mentioned by the participant.

“One project, well, the national oil and gas company wants to drill fossils in the national park, and we would like to prevent that. And how we got to know about this is that local citizens who live there reached out to us, and now we try to support them with media attention and offline activities and joining the legal case. As we are a formal NGO, we can support them with the network and infrastructure [...] which a grassroots wouldn't have.” (Interview Greenpeace:20ll.)

Every participant mentioned cooperation between organizations and movements, especially highlighting the importance of places/situations for exchange between organizations. Some organizations that were questioned even organized joint events with each other. One member also pointed out this cohesion between the organization:

“There is an overlap between activists and different NGOs. For example, I joined XR Hungary through one activist friend who was also an intern at the Hungarian Civil Liberties Union, where I was also an intern. So that's why I heard about it when it started. It's very important to understand that in Hungary, these NGOs are working

closely together and politically active people are [often][...] involved in other NGOs in rotation or at the same time [...]" (Interview XR:244ll.)

Data interpretation and analysis

As mentioned before, *Greenpeace* and *XR* Hungary connect this strategy to the first described in 5.2.1 by cooperating with organizations focused on social issues. This action-based approach fosters the organizations' connection because they focus on one common goal from different perspectives (Harper 2006). *Greenpeace* and *XR* both described the other one as a partner for shared events. Especially during workshops or discussions, the groups seem to interact to present a broad perspective on climate change.

The interviewee from *Greenpeace* also shared his collective work with smaller NGOs or just individual activists. *Greenpeace* comes in as well as established and known organization and supports activists with their projects. Often this only includes best practices, but the support is needed to create political pressure in some cases. The distribution of contacts, legal aid and political contacts helps smaller groups and activists to gain influence. Through this diverse group, *Greenpeace* gains partners with different focus points and connections in various country areas. This grassroots network with close relations and similar goals has a broader spectrum and a more substantial chance of influencing the system, citizens and politics (Harper 2006).

I actually work with grassroots and communities as my position is not like a traditional campaigner at Greenpeace, [...] most of the time, even when I'm working on climate issues. Usually, I reach out to the affected communities [...]. How we got to know about this is that a local citizen who lives there reached out to us, and now we try to support them with media attention, [...] offline activities and joining the legal case. And as we are a formal NGO, we can support them with the network and infrastructure and that kind of stuff, which a grassroots wouldn't have.

Additionally, *Greenpeace* and *XR* also work with other activists and groups through a content-based approach. Here the different perspectives don't need to be overcome through one action focus, but the demands, views and goals offer enough similarities that the organizations can connect. As mentioned in the interview, joint workshops and events are established as well as common political statements and petitions (see Figure 6).

The combination of content and action-based cooperations gives the organizations a broad field of potential partners. Mainly the political focus of the organizations gains importance through the variety of supporters. The diverse focus points could also help to divide the

responsibilities and cover more political and economic backgrounds for further demands and actions (cf. Börzel and Buzogány 2010; Kern 2007)

Within this strategy, Cargonomia is analyzed separately because of the unique foundation and cooperation this organization has had from the beginning:

“Cargonomia is a social cooperative organized around a partnership between an organic farm, a bicycle messenger company and a social cooperative for the DIY-repair of bicycles and increasing access to cargo bikes for all citizens. Around its activities, it is also involved in research projects on Degrowth, eco-feminism, transition, sustainable agriculture and transport, low-tech solutions, social economy and educational projects on environmental awareness.” (Cargonomia 2021b)

Cargonomia developed a space for cooperation in their own area. Groups can meet their and discuss and develop projects together. The interviewee emphasizes that this is already a change because it is different to develop new and necessary things. Combining social issues and evolvement of projects through social change strengthens a possibility of transformation (cf. Brand 2014; Brand 2016; Wissen and Brand 2019).

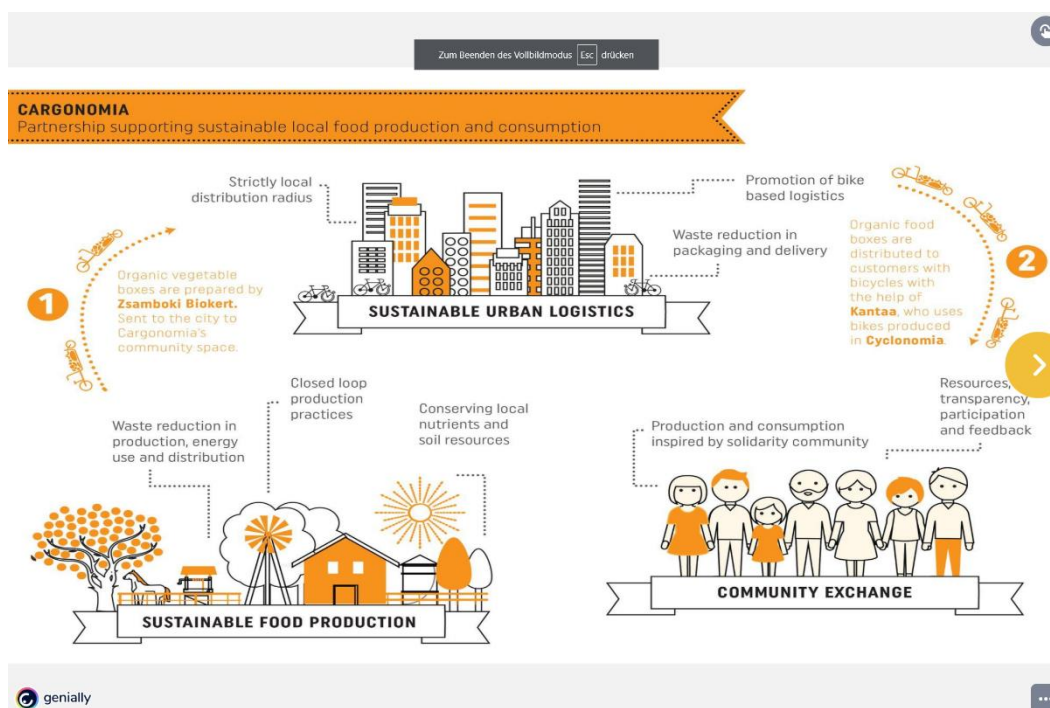


Figure 7 Holistic circle of Cargonomia

On their website, Cargonomia offers a timeline and overview of projects. Further cooperation with schools, institutions, and other organizations through conferences and projects is visible (Cargonomia 2021b). The educational events in schools and universities show that the

interest to establish systemic changes in the younger generation is there. At the same time, the broadness of the events indicates that Cargonomia tries to develop a holistic project cycle with many other organizations to foster the possibilities of change, especially politically. As shown in Figure 7, the organization attempts to build up a model of life. From food production to supply and logistics, everything is happening on a local and sustainable level. At the same time, this area provides a space for “community exchange”.

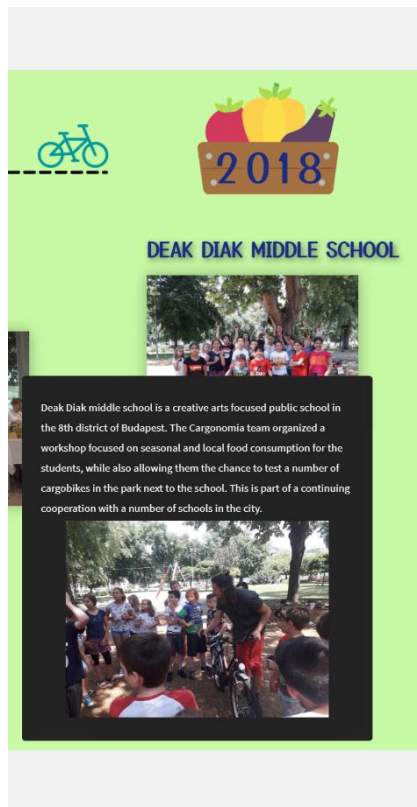


Figure 8 Timeline 2018

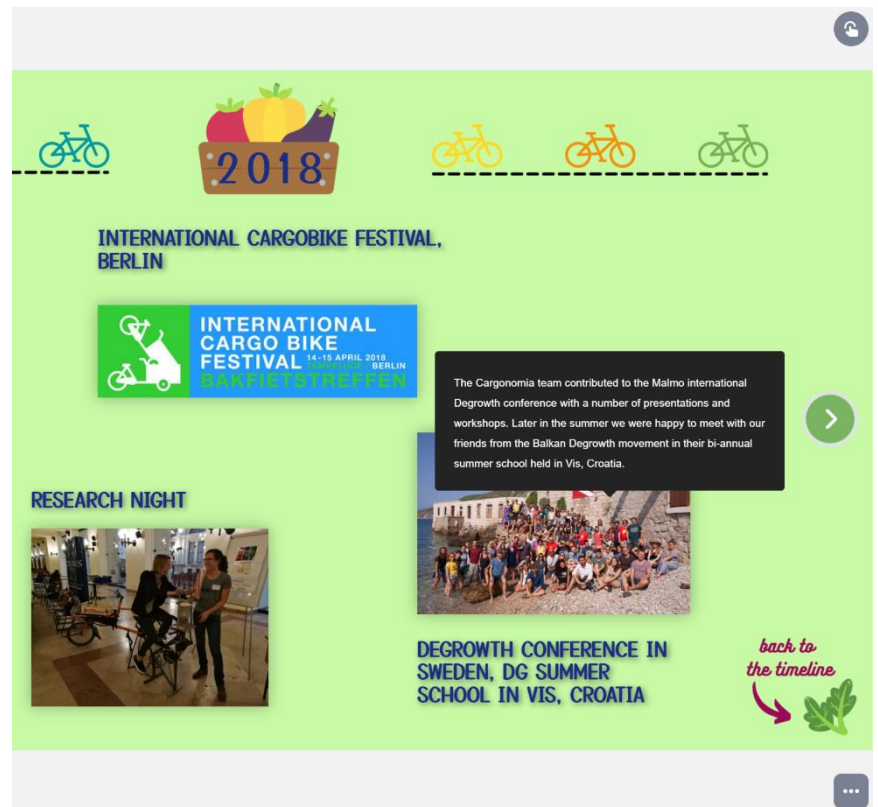


Figure 9 Timeline 2018-2

All of the organizations mentioned in this thesis push news from different organizations on their social media accounts and sometimes websites.

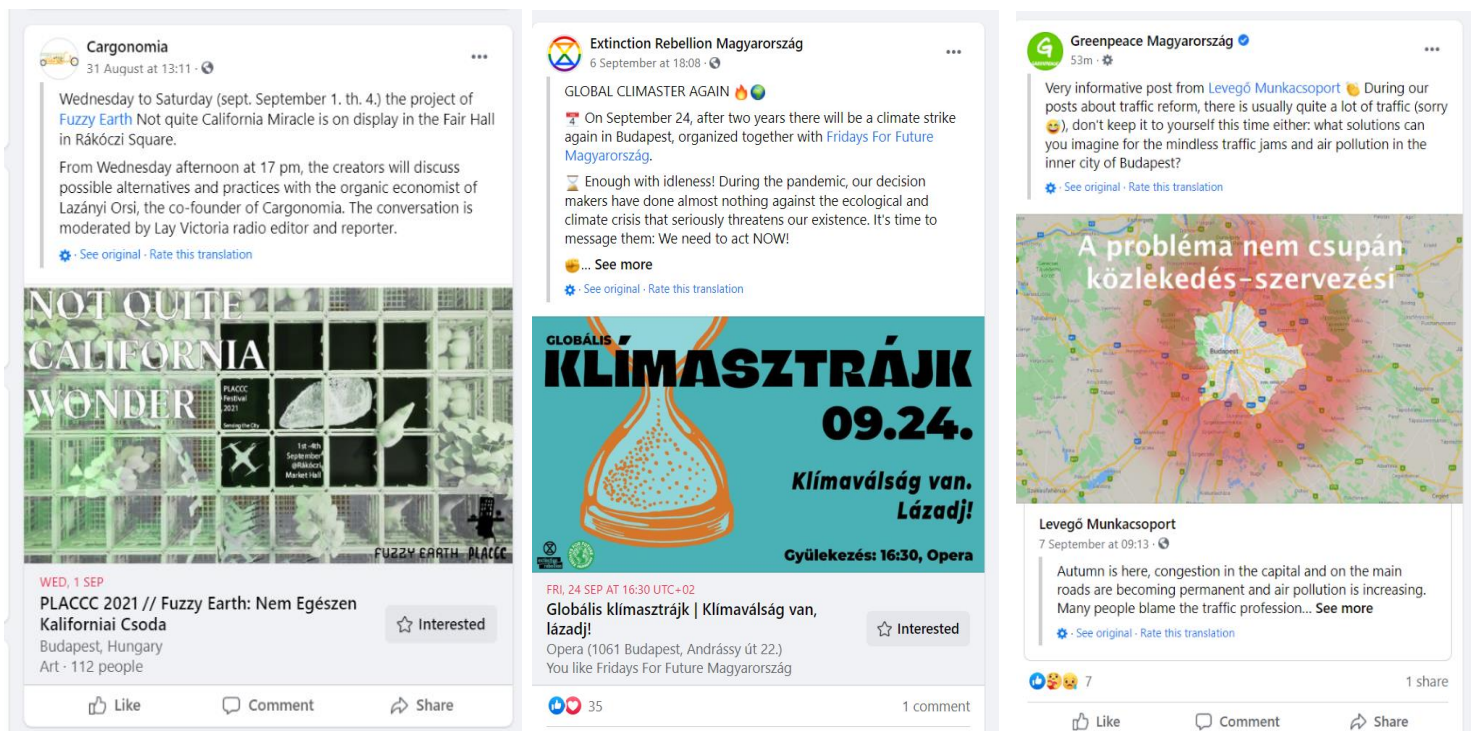


Figure 10 Representing foreign group actions

This online communication provides a strategy to gain popularity and followers and share influence with the other group.

Greenpeace and *XR* are international organizations and could provide many international partners, but the Hungarian branches are primarily focused on local politics. This could either be because of the conservative political situation on a national level or because international influence (predominantly European influence) does not always provide a positive image among Hungarian citizens. Both organizations strengthened that they are independent branches, attached to the international organization, but not in compliance with everything that happens internationally.

5.2.3 International recognition

Data presentation

Extinction Rebellion and *Greenpeace* are international organizations with national departments. While *Cargonomia* is a national organization, the degrowth movement is also internationally connected. The organization of the Degrowth Conference in Budapest in 2016 made international connections within this area visible.

Even though *XR* and *Greenpeace* have an international component, the national departments work independently. The organizations also intend global action, but most activist movements happen nationally (cf. Greenpeace Hungary 2021b). Still, both organizations are connected to international action in other countries by name without influencing the activist action happening there. Participation in international events is decided singularly for every action and is not necessarily seen as only positive.

“It has its upsides and downsides for sure. What we always stress is that we are an independent, autonomous group with a loosely knit connection to the global movement.” (Interview XR: 306ll.)

With this statement, one participant was made aware of the radical international action and how it is received by people living in a conservative country. The group has to find a balance between global connection and positive recognition and distancing from more extreme action by other national departments (e.g., Blocking the underground in London, UK). The international mention of the name and the safety net of an international organization are still seen as very important. The member of Greenpeace described the international recognition and exchange as follows:

“So as an international organization, we are regional and arrow [...]. In practice, it means that on some level, we are in international or regional working groups. Still, these are mostly communities of practice where we share best practices, lessons learned, and sometimes we collaborate on common campaigns. So, let's say we want to change [the] European Union legislation. Then obviously Greenpeace offices in [the] EU would collaborate. But on a[...] daily basis, no one from another organization or another Greenpeace organization would say what tactics I should choose [...].” (Interview Greenpeace: 112ll.)

The questioned organizations mentioned national and international cooperation with other departments of the same organization, within the movement (e.g., the degrowth movement) and with organizations. The Degrowth conference in Budapest in 2016 gave the movement in Hungary the possibility to connect with international activists and groups. The organizers invited international speakers and presented the diversity of groups within Hungary (cf. Budapest Degrowth conference team 2021). The international recognition of the conference gave participating groups and activists confidence to continue. The conference is happening every one or

two years in a different city (e.g., 2021 in Manchester, 2020 in Vienna). The international factor of this conference gives the movement broader recognition and media coverage.

International recognition is not only connected to credit by other groups or international organizations but also media recognition. Even if Hungarian media do not cover activist action, global coverage can enhance the awareness for the group and their activity and pressure the national press to cover their action. As one participant mentions, the coverage is not particular in the interest of the Hungarian elite.

“I mean, five years ago, in the time of the degrowth conference, for example, we got fantastic media coverage. I mean, every media produced interviews, articles, very good quality, about degrowth at the time. But we made good work. I mean, we had a strategy and so on. So, it's not like it was censored, but it's not necessarily in the interest of the intellectual elite [...].” (Interview Cargonomia:427ll.)

The climate crisis is accelerating, and in international media, climate issues and international policies are covered regularly, with detailed articles. This global coverage also pressures the national media to cover the climate crisis. The focus on the climate issues mentioned is hard to be influenced.

Analysis and interpretation

International recognition of movements and organizations is essential for changes that could lead to a social-ecological transformation. Within a global economic system, political and social changes can often only be achieved by international awareness (cf. Harper 2006). Especially in Hungary, where the media and politicians often foster a negative picture of activist groups, international recognition can help the movement gain more positive media coverage (cf. Antal 2019). Significantly, international media coverage could influence people who work globally and people who use social media channels.

As mentioned before, *Greenpeace* and *XR* are international organizations but don't use their international relations very often. This is because of the public awareness in Hungary of transnational influences in the country and the drastic measurements other branches of the organizations use to gain attention for climate change. While international events occur (e.g., “XR action week”, “Earth Day”, etc.), they are not the main focus of the group. The international relation of the group is still used if it is suitable to the national cause of the group. As they mentioned in the interview, the group stresses their independence due to the often reluctant reaction of Hungarian citizens on international action. One even said that often people don't

even know that a national branch of the organization exists in Hungary (Interview XR:296ll.). Under these circumstances, it is unclear if international recognition would foster the popularity of the national branches at all. Especially since NGOs and other organizations in Hungary are not allowed to earn money from international donors except institutions, public opinion on global influences is slightly negative.

“[...] that Anti-NGO thought has been prevalent for a longer time in Hungary, since twenty seventeen, there is a legal basis for making it harder for NGOs to exist with [...] And Fidesz has basically [...] hostility towards them or disdain towards NGOs saying that they're all funded by George Soros. With that, climate activist groups including.” (Interview XR:191ll.)

The interviewees also mention that when the government recognized that the “*green movement*” could not be held down, they started their own NGOs which support the opinion of the government but call “*green*” (Interview XR:177ll.)

The interviewee from *Greenpeace* mentioned that, especially on an EU level, there is a high cooperation level. While he said that there are no international rules within the organization, different branches work together to either use international laws to pressure national governments or pressure international communities of the state. As Borzel & Buzogány (2010) describe, organizations and activists can use international restrictions and laws to enhance the pressure on politicians on a national level. Especially in Hungary, that would be an interesting case since Victor Orban often delays or rejects decisions made by the EU. Already several EU laws are not fulfilled or not enforced in Hungary.

Other than *Greenpeace* and *XR*, the degrowth movement is very well connected also on an international level. With international conferences and international research groups, the campaign tries to stay connected and exchange information. *Cargonomia* participates in these actions and also communicates this on their website (see Figure 9). The media coverage of the conferences is excellent in the hosting country and other media reports on the topics and participants of the conference. Through the academic research that groups provide on degrowth, also academic circles recognize the movement.

International Media often focuses on Orban’s politics and the stressful situation for activists. Still, due to the lack of an action that affects more countries (like the *Danube movement*), the activists don’t stand in the focus of the media coverage. Through conferences and participation in international events, the groups try to enhance the international recognition of the

activist movement in Hungary. The national media also treats the subject very carefully due to the complex political situation and the political pressure on media.

“There is a connection between state oppression, international media coverage and the overall climate crisis that is in the international media recognition, and that therefore the media in Hungary is also [covering].” (Interview XR:120ll.)

As the interviewee from *Cargonomia* states, his engagement is more often covered through media because of his work on an international level. This could indicate a helpful strategy in which activists gain recognition individually and then attach this recognition to a group or organization (e.g., Greta Thunberg and *Fridays for the future*).

5.2.4 Political recognition

Data presentation

Each group mentioned political pressure and influence on decision-making as a goal of the activist action. How this pressure on politicians and decision-makers should be achieved varies from every organization. There exist many different strategies to gain political influence. For an activist group, the difficulty is to oppose current policy-making while still not challenging parties' acceptance as a whole. A member of XR describes this as follows:

“We're trying to skirt a fine line where green activism, climate activism isn't considered political, too much. [...] I feel like that's a delicate line. Trying to push whatever we can towards social justice and in that territory [...].” (Interview XR:170ll.)

Demands towards politicians and decision-makers are articulated on websites and in statements of every group. The necessity of a political change is explained but not connected to a political party. This involves the groups in political discussion but does not connect them to a particular party and does not exclude those who follow it (cf. Greenpeace Hungary 2021b)(cf. Greenpeace Hungary 2021b). The following three core demands show the direct address of politicians:

“We demand that governments, including the Hungarian government, recognize the severity of the global climate crisis and declare an ecological and climate emergency. Work with the media to inform the public about what individuals, communities and companies need to do to improve the situation.

We demand that the excess greenhouse gas emissions in Hungary be zero by 2025, that the government introduce the necessary regulations and cooperate with other countries at the international level in order to achieve the goal.

We demand that the decisions taken to prevent a climate catastrophe be made with the involvement of experts and under the supervision of the citizens so that the radical steps taken to survive do not result in the current government being overwhelmed, but in resolving the crisis.” (Extinction Rebellion Hungary 2021b)

Apart from this problem, each group mentioned different tactics to achieve this pressure on politicians. While XR said no direct contact but a general address in protests and activist action, other organizations go in direct contact. Through a formal letter or email, the government is obligated to respond.

“[...] the government, they are obliged to do so [answer]. They must respond in some way. OK, if it's a formal organization and you send a formal letter to the ministry, let's say they have to respond within two weeks. But what's in their response is obviously, [...] they can just reply [a] nice formal letter with basically no content in it, but at least we know that they read our letter and have to reply something. But in other cases, actually, with some issues, we could really bring change from the legislation perspective with continuous work with the minister [and] our experts [...].” (Interview Greenpeace:157ll.)

One activist mentioned cooperation with politicians. During the last elections in Budapest, he supported the candidate from the *PM - Párbeszéd Magyarországért* (engl. Dialogue for Hungary), the green party. The party was founded out of former members from the political party *LMP – Magyarország Zöld Pártja*. *PM* is known for environmental politics and sustainability. The former candidate Gergely Karácsony is now significant in Budapest. The activist is very hopeful for the future of his candidate and the political party.

“So personally [...] I always have been in a good relationship with the Green Movement in Hungary and that the politicians in politics. [...] I followed from quite close with a lot of debate because we disagreed a lot. [...] PM is still alive and the mayor of Budapest is a leader of them and it's quite likely this is the last hope to defeat Orban. So maybe he [will] become the next prime minister.” (Interview Cargonomia:301ll.)

The activist sets hope in the party and the candidate, even if he does not agree with everything. The cooperation is seen as the “*last hope*” against Orban and his policies. It is unclear if the opposition to Orban and the current government is the only reason for the cooperation.

The political recognition of the movement is achieved through focussing on one party, their politics and their electorate. This cooperation with one party sets a clear statement. By supporting one party or candidate in election campaigning, the content and demands of the NGO are connected to the policies of the party. The activist expects this candidate or party to change the current political direction. This alignment is often critical because political expectations are sometimes not fulfilled, and the cooperation can backfire.

Climate change is a very complex problem. The right way to tackle this problem or the best way to start facing the challenges are not clear and every perspective, every organisation and political party wants to push through a different approach. The different approaches organisations use to gain political recognition mirror this diversity. These very different approaches to achieve political recognition and influence decision-making through this recognition show no actual knowledge of the perfect aim to accomplish this.

Analysis and Interpretation

During the interview of the *Cargonomia*, political cooperation (as described in 4) with individual politicians was mentioned. As the interviewee stated, he supported the current mayor of Budapest Gergely Karácsony in 2018 & 2019 during his campaign. He also says a close relationship with two parties LMP and other parties. Antal (2018) states that it could be a chance for left-wing parties to connect climate change and combine social inequalities because these inequalities in Eastern European countries are highly influenced by the consequences of climate change (cf. Antal 2018). As she mentions in her research, parties could connect these issues and use the current activist movement on climate change to gain influence. In this case, it is not known how the politicians see the cooperation between *Cargonomia* and their work. However, the politicians could still benefit through the positive influence of this strategy.

“PM [Hungarian party] is still alive and [who] knows the mayor of Budapest is a leader of them. And it's quite likely this is the last hope to defeat Orban. [...]

I personally participated and supported the campaign in Budapest for the election of [Gergely Karácsony] with no big hopes, because I'm quite experienced in this type of things. I've been involved in the municipal movement around Europe for years, and I

know how difficult it is when you arrive in the affair to connect with civil society, to connect with a more direct democracy” (Interview Cargonomia:329ll.)

As the participant also drastically states, he thinks many activists will leave Hungary if Victor Orban is elected again in 2022. This statement shows how strong the suffering of activism in Hungary is connected to the decisions made by the current government. The political connection for activists is seen as a chance and necessary for their work in Hungary. Therefore, political alliance with politicians could also be interpreted as pushing everything for “the last chance” in gaining political influence or a political ally. It also shows the potential the participant sees in a political change. With this political change, activists who focus on climate change and its consequences could gain possibilities. This could lead to the assumption that he identifies with some of the political work this politician is doing or at least sees the potential for his cause and his organization's cause better represented by the supported politician. Suppose the politician that the organization actively supported got elected. In that case, there is also a chance for more substantial political influence or lobbyism of this candidate because the latter gained popularity and voters through the positioning of the groups. Right now, even projects that were already planned are stopped because of the decision made by the government to cut the budget and influence the climate movement through this decision.

Political demands are usually a key factor for climate activist groups to give a political statement and address current climate change issues. The three main demands stated by XR are mentioned in 5. Each national branch can develop more precise demands and communicate them online or during their actions. Often these demands are specific to one topic that is tackled through a particular activity. As shown in Figure 11 *XR Hungary* is communicating specific demands through their social media platform and directly addressing necessary steps that need to be taken by political decision-makers.

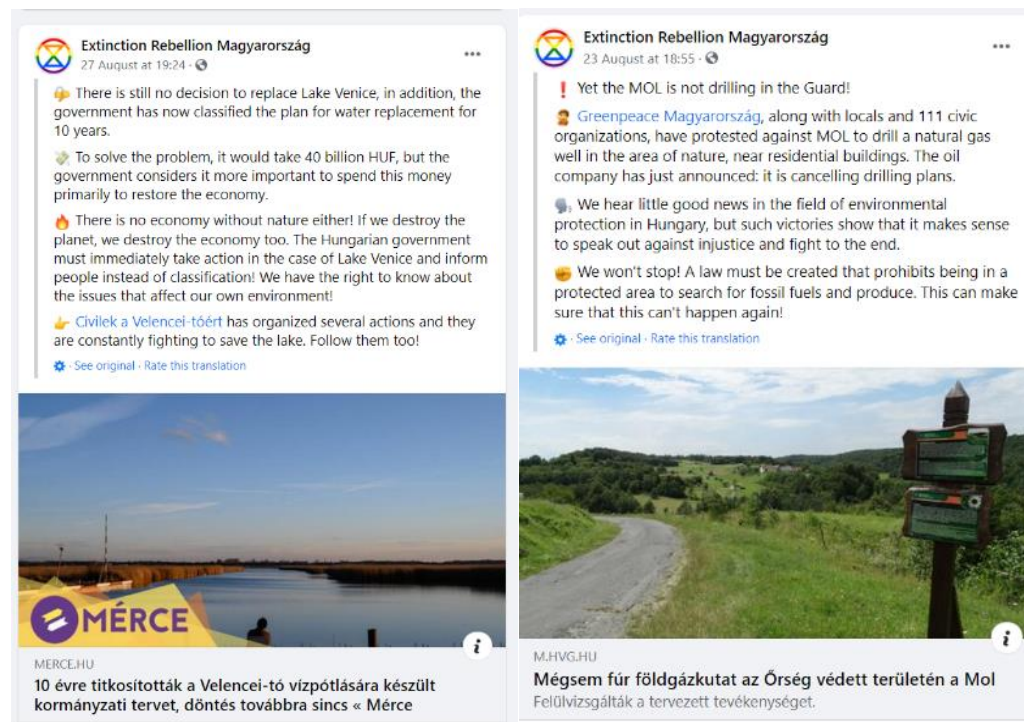


Figure 11 XR national demands

Political demands on a national and EU level are used to enhance the pressure on decision-makers to challenge the current problems (cf. Borzel & Buzogány 2010). The interviewee from Greenpeace mentioned the same strategy when cooperating with local and grassroots activists to pressure politicians on a local level. By addressing politicians on a more local level, the movement tries to influence decision-making bottom-up. This approach can also be related to the action the member of *Cargonomia* mentions when describing his action during the campaign for the current mayor of Budapest. By supporting a local politician, the bottom-up influence and pressure on decision-makers should be enhanced.

While the political cooperation and political recognition of the questioned groups differ, the main goal of attacking current politics and influencing decision-making is very similar. Only through political recognition and influence can the current policies be changed towards a more sustainable system.

So basically we are just criticizing them over Facebook sites or Instagram or whatever, and then we as we gather followers and when we do like a demonstration or something like that, then basically these, the presents of these people are the ones that take pressure on politicians” (Interview XR:162II.)

These demands often attack current policies. Throughout the interviews, the scepticism of Hungarian citizens towards activist groups was mentioned. But new studies show that 96% of

Hungarian citizens think of the climate crisis as a significant issue. If their demands would not attack the current system but rather provide different solutions, a broader group of people could be attracted. This is on the basis, that as the groups mentioned, people feel rejected by harsh criticism of the current system and prefer slighter changes.

5.2.5 Restrictions within the country

During each interview the participants mentioned different restrictions and problems within their working progress. In advance of the first interview, a question about rules was not included in the interviews. A follow-up question about country-specific issues and restrictions was therefore included in the process. The variety of problems each group and each activist includes different factors which should be seen in more detail.

The members and groups that are involved in this research all worked in and around Budapest. The exchange between organization and reach of more people with the group's actions was described as more accessible than in more rural regions. Still, the member of the degrowth movement described the elite of Budapest as a complex target group:

“Not the most fertile space for degrowth because the intellectual elite of Budapest is rather liberal. They still believe in green growth and green innovation, green development and green capitalism and so on.” (Interview Cargonomia:166ll.)

Historically, organizations and movements that vote or protest for change often faced hostility and restrictions by the current government or elite because change could hypothetically also change their status in society. In Hungary, the climate for NGOs is described as ‘hostile’. Every activist and organization faced difficulties in their processes, significantly since the government changed the law in 2017. As one member told it:

“And I could add that Anti-NGO thought has been prevalent for a longer time in Hungary. Since twenty seventeen, there is a legal basis [to make] it harder’ for NGOs to exist, and Fidesz has basically like a blanket of hostility towards [...] NGOs saying that they're all funded by George Soros. With that, climate activist groups including.” (Interview XR:191ll.)

This problematic situation for projects and NGOs is also mentioned by another activist, who describes the restrictions from the government as active due to money issues:

“We have a connection with all the local mayors. [...] We had some projects in the pipes, and all of them went down when Orban started to attack the budget of the

municipality, and the municipality is bankrupt. [...] Projects we have in the pipes are blocked because there is no money anymore. Like we planned to develop our Cargo-bike sharing system, we plan to develop a community garden movement and these type of things and to all the energy of all our friends in the municipality is driven, is eaten by this bankrupt situation.” (Interview Cargonomia:334ll.)

In his eyes, the drive for change and the project to develop awareness and change within society is blocked due to money issues. This development-stop in smaller municipalities can be very dangerous for the country's development and economic situation. Especially in a pandemic situation, the need for a strong city and resilient monetary government is necessary. One activist even said that time for experiment is over, and the crisis is visible on so many levels that without action and change in political activity, the situation will worsen:

“So, it's not an appropriate time to experiment further degrowth or to go into more radical critics to the dominant system or step aside [in] great philosophical debates and so on, because it's more resisting and surviving [...].

If in 2022 Orban is re-elected, this is the end of democracy. Or maybe it's already too late, and we will start to think about moving abroad, moving somewhere.” (Interview Cargonomia:342ll.)

When talking about change, transition and transformation in post-socialist countries, the historic *transformation to democracy* always has to be considered. The recent shift has not only had positive consequences. The willingness to be active for another transformation is essential but hard to estimate. As one member described it, the opposition and strong demand for change are often critical because people want different circumstances but are afraid of radical change.

“I think, on the one hand, the situation that one generation [before], we had the big system change. I think that this could definitely mean that it's in the hands of a society that big system change is possible because we had just a generation before us. On the other hand, I think it also could mean that people are afraid of changing again, because actually, like in a let's say, in human rights and political change was really necessary in the 90s. So that's not out of the question. But actually, economically, it was a disaster for most people in Hungary, especially people in industries and working-class people. For them, the system change was really bad economically. And still, people are struggling with their income, basically. And from that notion, I would say

that people are afraid of change because they haven't experienced stable income and no economic struggles.” (Interview Greenpeace:250ll.)

5.2.6 Overlap of demands/opinion and socio-ecological transformation

When asked about socio-ecological transformation, most activist groups didn't respond with a clear comment. Activists instead explained their opinion on change, where it is needed and which crisis is being tried to tackle right now. One activist explained this phenomenon like this:

“we are functionally anticapitalists. However, that message is not necessarily received as well or as directly. So [we] sort of coded it into our language like anti-big corporations, anti-exploitation and things like that, without saying the big ugly c-word.” (Interview XR:338ll.)

The communication of demands and thematical statements are handled very carefully. It is essential to avoid strong comments, which could scare away a target group members or position the organization with extreme opinions. The groups and movements communicate their unhappiness with actual politics and the necessity of change but are careful in the direct message and its implication. NGOs and activists are often presented in opposition or against the government and the current system. This is used to extract these organizations.

An activist mentioned that to commodify society, the exchange and network of different alternative places are necessary. When themes like *antigrowth* are part of an open conversation, the fear of this change can be minimized. The new changes are established without actively searching for systemic change but changing towards a sustainable lifestyle.

The strong call for systemic change is more crucial than individual change. The distinction between these different levels is critical and challenging to explain. Activists mentioned that organizations have various approaches. While some pressure the necessity of individual change, some try to focus on systemic change and attract more people for their cause:

“What differentiates us from other green movements in Hungary is maybe that we are emphasizing the value and the importance of systemic changes, and so we are not emphasizing [...] individual responsibility [that much]. [...] we see the program as a whole.” (Interview XR:322ll.)

After analyzing the finding of the interviews and the scanning of online communication according to the analytical strategy approach and the framing approach, this chapter will

connect this analysis to the possible influence activism could have within a transformational process at this point in Hungary. Therefore, the strategies used by the groups will be evaluated. Possible scenarios for changes in Hungary are mapped out according to the current developments that can be seen through the interviews.

A topic that was never directly mentioned by the interviewees but played a huge role within the climate crisis and activism is *the mobilization capacity* of the different activist groups in Hungary. Activism is often volunteer work and demands a lot of active people. Furthermore, the voice of an activist organization is only valuable on a political or economic level if enough people are standing behind the statement or protest.

5.2.6.1 *Mobilization capacity of activist groups in Hungary*

The way a topic is presented inevitably shapes the perception of it. Of it. Do the frames of the climate movement in Hungary have the potential to influence the decision of the civilian population in Hungary to participate in the necessary change to encounter climate impacts? The mobilization capacity will be examined in the analysis of the resonance of the framings based on the three qualities, cultural compatibility, consistency and relevance (Johnston/Noakes. 2005: 15).

When the frames of the climate movement in Hungary are considered, the narratives seem to be consistent with the cultural mindset of the target audience in several ways. It should be noted again that the target audience in Hungary consists of different population groups. First, it should be noted that the values and changes necessary according to the climate movement in Hungary must be in line with the importance of the civilian population in Hungary. For this, the necessity of the changes for preventing the destruction of human livelihood is highlighted.

“We rebel against the systems that got us here. We rebel for the future we want. We rebel because it is our responsibility to act. We have no more time to waste. Nothing is impossible - we can still write the story we want and we will. We as individuals can make a difference, collectively.” (Extinction Rebellion 2021b)

Furthermore, the identification is put in the foreground to establish a relationship between the individual and the consequences of the climate crisis. The climate movement in Hungary tries to connect social and climate impacts and create a personal closeness between the complex topic of climate change and everyday life. In addition, it is worked out how the current actions of politics and economy influence and aggravate climate change (Cargonomia 2021b; Extinction Rebellion Hungary 2021a).

The second criterion is the consistency of a frame. Johnston and Noakes (2005) explain that there must be consistency between a movement's beliefs, claims, ideology, and actions. They argue that inconsistency of a frame can weaken the frame itself (Johnston and Noakes 2005: 15). Climate activist groups strengthen an individual's agency by giving a voice in the community. "*Greenpeace* was created by people like you. To raise our voices together to defend our fragile Earth at home and around the world. Change is needed. We must act." (Greenpeace Hungary 2021a). Support between organizations, groups, and individual activists; and action against violations of the regenerative approach to nature appear to be directly related to the values of the movement-equality, openness, and environmental friendliness. This suggests that the beliefs and ideologies of the Hungarian climate movement are consistent with the actions they organize.

The third criterion for the resonance of a frame is relevance (ibid.). A frame is helpful if it can understand what is happening in the daily life of the target audience. The significance of a topic in everyday life of the target audience is often also related to the current mood. This, in turn, is strongly driven by the media.

On the one hand, it can be seen that activist groups try to break down the consequences and influences of climate change to everyday forces for individuals. The understanding of the impact on one's own life should thereby be improved.

On the other hand, the media currently covers climate change and its consequences in many ways. Several natural disasters are attributed to climate change, or it is discussed whether they can be attributed to climate change. The activities of climate activists are also partly reported by the media. Their actions can thus influence the current media coverage. However, as presented by the interviewees, the media reports here do not go far enough, and often rather conservative statements are made about the effects of climate change. In particular, the actions of the Hungarian government are rarely criticized and usually not covered at all in terms of their impact on climate change.

When the frames of the climate movement are analyzed in light of Johnston and Noakes' (2005) three criteria, the frames seem to meet the qualities of cultural compatibility and consistency fully and essentially meet the quality of relevance.

5.2.6.2 *Solidarity*

But most activists are not acting because of a self-focused idea, but because of the thrive towards a better living situation and equality among the country and sometimes even the world.

Solidarity has to be defined because, in the later analysis, this thesis works on the prediction that *solidarity* exists and is a primary key towards the thrive of activism as an influence. Furthermore, solidarity is an essential factor when connecting people to one's course, in this case, the importance of socio-ecological transformation.

Solidarity is a broad concept and can take on multiple meanings in different scientific disciplines. The term's origin lies in sociology and represents a key concept in sociological thought (Beckert et al. 2004: 9). In this sociological science, solidarity exists within a community based on a familiar feeling and unity of action. People identify with others, create social relationships, and form a common identity. The formation of social groups and the creation of a shared identity depend on the members of society to stand up for each other in the course of social integration. In these sociological theories, action motivated by solidarity refers predominantly to family relationships and the nearby environment. (Beckert et al. 2004: 9)

In the course of globalization, the concept of solidarity changed. Effects of globalization appeared not only in the form of compression of political and economic relations but also on an interpersonal level. Thus, new forms of understanding solidarity developed that focus on the family, intimate environment. , feeling solidarity with "unknown" people with no apparent social relations is thus a relatively new phenomenon.

Political scientists, in particular, are concerned with the concept of "transnational solidarity". For example, Beckert et al. (2004) examine the opportunities and limits of transnational solidarity and show the threat posed by processes of denationalization. Geographical and social borders of the nation-state have created certain feelings of belonging, which are accompanied by a fixed limitation of solidarity obligations. Current studies, whose logic is based on the disintegration of the nation-state, focus on the statement that this would lead to a decline in solidarity among citizens (cf. (Beckert et al. 2004). As the nation-state in Hungary is considered strong due to the conservative, nationalist political orientation, higher solidarity between citizens could be assumed.

However, it is essential to see a "common political formation of opinion and will" (Habermas 2004: 232) not only as a consequence of an extension of solidarity beyond national borders but as a necessary precondition. Building on Habermas (2004), I understand transnational solidarity in this thesis as a conscious political act of support expressed transnationally - beyond the familial and nearby environment. International solidarity does not focus on feelings of solidarity with familiar people such as relatives, co-workers, or fellow citizens, but with people

with whom no direct relationship is apparent. Furthermore, I focus on solidaristic behavior within the realm of political activism. That is, I understand solidarity behavior in this work as a conscious political act of support. This act of support is necessary when facing the climate crisis and the consequences for future generations.

5.2.7 Potential of activism within transformational processes

Still, the question needs to be answered: *How does climate action influence socio-ecological transformation in Hungary?*

The actuality of the topic is given, and internationally, the issue is imminent. As the frame analysis showed, the climate movement currently has a mobilization potential in Hungary. Many activists see their actions hindered by the current political situation in Hungary (see “Restrictions within the country”) but hope for the next election to change the government.

“We don't have an environmental ministry in Hungary, which is a mystery [but] from 2010 it was closed. So we don't have an environmental ministry” (Interview Greenpeace:140ll.)

“PM is still alive and knows the mayor of Budapest is a leader of them. And it's quite likely this is the last hope to defeat Orban. So maybe [he] could become the next prime minister.” (Interview Cargonomia:305ll.)

The government has a very conservative orientation and focuses on economic growth within its decision-making. Political cooperation is an essential strategy for activists to gain popularity and influence (cf. Antal 2019, Harper 2009). Though demands towards the government are made, they are only rarely acknowledged by them. On a local level, cooperation with the regional governments is more often because protests or activist action has a direct effect, and environmentally harmful projects have a direct influence on the region. Politicians are more likely to support the activist movement because local citizens are more likely to have a favorable opinion on the activist action against harmful projects (cf. Anheier et al. 2003; Kythreotis et al. 2019). As one activist mentions, even these cooperation are sometimes disabled by the national government through budget cuts.

We had some projects in the pipes, and all of them went down when Orban started to attack the budget of the municipality, and the municipality is bankrupt. So type of projects we have in the pipes are blocked because there is no money anymore. Like we planned to develop our Cargobike sharing system, we plan to develop a community

garden movement and these type of things and to all the energy of all our friends in the municipality is driven, is eaten by these bankrupt situation and how to pay the sallary. (Interview Cargonomia:335ll.)

On a national level, however, the demands by the activists against the government or economic action are often seen as radical and not received positively by the Hungarian population. The economic growth is easing the public opinion on governments' decision-making. As one of the interviewees' mentions, Orban manages to get foreign companies to invest in the economy and save jobs (Interview Cargonomia:472ll.). Moreover, the international correlation and connections of activist groups are seen as critical. On the one hand, this could be because of historical influence on Hungarians' decision-making by the “western”³ world. On the other side, this could also be influenced by the current policies against the EU and international funding of activism. Global media coverage of the movements in Hungary and cooperation with organizations on an EU level to achieve the enforcement of climate goals of the EU in Hungary would still be helpful. This is not yet done, but international cooperation seems likely to happen in the future through conferences within the degrowth movement (cf. Börzel and Buzogány 2010).

The close working relationship between the groups and mentioning them in different interviews shows a positive relationship and a reasonable possibility of influencing with providing a location where systemic change can be seen and lived. The connection between other disciplines is also essential within SET. As the member of *Cargonomia* said, the transformation of life through the link of different disciples is highly positive and can influence more people (cf. Interview Cargonomia).

The different strategies and frames used by the climate movement in Hungary show that an influence on a possible transformation is possible but not yet visible. The socio-ecological transformation is one of the organization's goals, and they see the necessity of change. Through their actions and protest, they want to build awareness amongst the Hungarian civilization. By offering common spaces for new holistic models of consumerism, their efforts want to show how change is possible in everyone's everyday life.

The abrupt change that is needed for a transformational process is not yet visible. Still, with the next election, the country's political orientation for the following years will be decided, and Hungary's broad field of activism will depend on this decision. The motivational factor of connecting different disciplines and the possibility and necessity of socio-ecological

³ Muss noch genauer erklärt werden

transformation activate the movement. The potential of their current strategies to influence the future orientation and a chance of mobilization depends on the Hungarian civilization's acceptance.

While the possibility for change is visible, there are still many difficulties the movement in Hungary is facing. Especially the indirect address of the Hungarian government can be complicated because no apparent government mistakes are addressed. To stress the errors can also provide a chance for other political orientations to address this issue and influence public opinion (cf. Antal 2019).

Furthermore, the possibility to act bottom-up could also work on a political level by addressing local and regional politicians. The risk that they will be influenced through government actions has to be taken into account. There is a high risk, especially in Hungary, where budget cuts affect local decision-making, as mentioned in 5.2.4. At the same time, this strategy presents a great chance for cooperation and local change (cf. Nischwitz, Molitor and Rohne).

Communicating connections between different climate and social issues and decisions made by the government or big companies are essential. To provide understandable material for citizens to understand the background is crucial. Providing this type of communication could provide a primary ground for organizations to build upon.

5.3 Findings and limitations

5.3.1 Summary of findings

The analysis of the interviews already hints back to the hypotheses made in 1.2.1.2 Hypotheses. Even though there was no specific indication by the findings of the interview, that international media coverage is needed, some of the other hypotheses can be seen in the analysis.

Through the interviews and findings of the interviews the strategies defined in the analytical tool were mostly confirmed and mentioned by the different activist groups. The strategies are derived from different research perspectives and focus on the initiation of transformations and the mobilization effect of activism, because this is one basic pillar of the initiation. While all the strategies and pillars were mentioned by the activists or could be seen in their online representation, this not automatically causes the initiation of an socio-ecological transformation. The factors and mobilization and solidarity are to other pillars that have to be taken into account when researching the possible influence of activism.

Furthermore the frame strategy shows that the climate movement in Hungary is well connected and uses similar frames to motivate and initiate movement among the target group. The similarities between groups build a good basis for cooperation and exchange of know-how. Additionally the groups interaction fosters the broadness of the target group and the political influence. Especially the last one, because the groups interact with politics on different levels and influence decision-making on local levels (ex. Cargonomia) and international levels (ex. Extinction Rebellion, Greenpeace).

As the papers by Börzel & Buzogany and Kythreotis et al. mention, the groups could use international laws to introduce change in on a national level (cf. Börzel and Buzogány 2010, Kythreotis et al. 2019). Currently this is rarely happening in Hungary, but the potential for this approach is growing, because the EU is introducing new international laws and paradigms that memberstates have to follow as well as the UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow could introduce new agreements that activist can use to pressure national politicians.

The current influence is due to the political influence not as big as needed to initiate socio-ecological transformation, but the basic strategies and demands could lay the grounds for future influences.

5.3.2 Limitations

Due to the scope and other influences, the result of this work must be limited. As this is a master thesis, three activist groups were interviewed, limiting the validity of the results. Furthermore, the activist groups are active in Budapest and surrounding, but not primarily in rural areas of the country. This limits their knowledge and influence geographically.

In the work, interviews were conducted with members and activists of various groups active within climate activism. Due to the differences between the groups and their multiple orientations, a representative picture can be presented. Again, the representativeness is limited by the number of interviews. Additionally, the interviews were not necessarily conducted with founders or leaders but also with new members. Due to the different perspectives from different positions, a bias may have occurred here. A higher number of interviews can remedy this.

Due to the pandemic situation over the last 16 months, it was impossible to conduct the interviews in person. In addition, most groups focused on Covid-19 conversions and therefore were not open to interviews. This limited the possible interviewees who were willing to participate in English, via zoom. To overcome the language and geographical barrier, another researcher, Krista Harper, was contacted. She already worked with activists in Hungary, and this

thesis relies on her research. She was asked for her findings or further insights into Hungary's activist situation, but unfortunately, she did not reply.

The background explained in the positionality statement shows that through my role as an activist, the sympathy for other groups is there. As an activist, it is essential to stay positive and believe in the meaningfulness of the actions. I tried to reflect this positive baseline during my interpretation of the finding, but a bit of this subjectiveness will have influenced my writing.

Additionally, communication with activist groups in Hungary was established through other contacts. Even if I wrote to many activists and former activists who are now politically active, as was to be expected, the ones I knew through a connection were more likely to answer. This could influence the activist groups and their orientation included in this work and limit the representativeness of the research. Most likely, activists addressed through contacts have an international orientation or exchange with other activists on an international level. This could indicate an openness towards questioning.

6 Conclusion and outlook

New studies show that 80 % of Hungarian civilization thinks the climate crisis is one of the significant obstacles of our time. The awareness for climate change and the necessity of change is visible, so maybe the solution-driven approach of the climate movement in Hungary will show where change is possible. Through the demonstration of these solutions, the possibilities are more tangible. System changes could be introduced bottom-up through minor changes. This could influence the current decision-makers or mirror itself in the next election.

How do climate movements influence a socio-ecological transformation in Hungary? Using the example of the climate movement in Hungary, applying the framing approach supplemented by the Analytical Tool revealed that the motivation to join the social movement is primarily based on the Hungarian society's identification with the consequences of climate change and feelings of empathy for future generations.

The current discourse concerning the climate crisis and international solidarity of the movement creates a basis for the need for social change and ecological transformation. Organizations in Hungary can use this to draw attention to the current circumstances and make precise demands for change.

The current political situation in Hungary limits the influence of activists. It makes political power difficult, but using the strategies discussed, it may still be possible for the climate movement to create a basis for change and support a possible social-ecological transformation.

However, what can be said is that the networking of civil society in a global context, supported by the display of solidarity locally and from afar, is taking on an important and influential character in today's political activism.

As the critiques in this research shows, there are many possibilities but no assurance that laid-out strategies will work. But the chance of influencing can motivate to further try as one of the interviews affirmed it:

“That's why I wanted to work here or in a community similar to Greenpeace because obviously, I understand that one organization, even if it's a big international one, cannot change the course of history. But at least we can try and try to. Address at least one, a few elements of it or influence the course of history in a tiny bit better way.”
(Interview Greenpeace:269ll.)

6.1.1 Outlook for further research proposals

For further studies within the thematic area "Influence by climate activism on socio-ecological transformation in Hungary" there are several possibilities for extension.

Building on the limitations, the number of interviewees could be increased. In addition, activist groups from all over Hungary could be interviewed, reflecting a broader picture of the nationwide situation. It has already been suggested in the interviews that cooperation with political figures is easier to achieve at the municipal level. Perhaps this is also increasingly true in rural areas.

Additionally, the theoretical background of the work could be expanded. Because of the broadness of the topic, an analytical tool was developed that focuses on two main perspectives. By broadening these perspectives, a variety of strategies used by activist groups to exert influence could be identified. These could be examined in the Hungarian context.

The specialization of the work in Hungary could be broadened to include other countries. One could compare two countries with different political backgrounds to examine the influence of political orientation on activist influence, or one could compare similarly oriented countries. This would allow for a more detailed examination of the effects neglected here.

7 References

- Adler, Frank, and Ulrich Schachtschneider. 2010. *Green New Deal, Suffizienz oder Ökosozialismus?: Konzepte für gesellschaftliche Wege aus der Ökokrise*. München: oekom verlag.
- Anheier, H.K., Toepler, and S. 2003. “Bürgerschaftliches Engagement zur Stärkung der Zivilgesellschaft im internationalen Vergleich.”, in *"Zukunft des Bürgerschaftlichen Engagements“ des 14. Deutschen Bundestages*, edited by Deutscher Bundestag Enquete-Kommision. 11th ed. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
- Antal, Attila. 2018. *Ecosocialism in the 21st Century from the Perspective of Eastern Europe: A NEW AGENDA FOR EASTERN EUROPEAN LEFT*. Berlin.
- Antal, Attila. 2019. *Neoliberal and Populist Autocracy in the era of climate emergency*. Faggi Italy.
- Antal, Attila. 2021. “Academia - Antal Attila.” Retrieved September 8, 2021 (<https://elte.academia.edu/AntalAttila>).
- Bader, Pauline, Florian Becker, Alex Demirović, and Julia Dück. 2011. *Vielfachkrise: Im finanzmarktdominierten Kapitalismus*. Hamburg: VSA.
- Beckert, Jens, Julia Eckert, Martin Kohli, and Wolfgang (H.) Streeck, editors. 2004. *Transnationale Solidarität: Chancen und Grenzen.*: Campus Verlag.
- Benford, Robert D., and David A. Snow. 2000. “Framing processes and social movements. An overview and assessment.” *Annual review of sociology* (26):611–39.
- Blokker, Paul. 2005. “Post-Communist Modernization, Transition Studies, and Diversity in Europe. . 2005;8(4):.” *European Journal of Social Theory* (8):503–25.
- Bönker, Frank, Helmut Wiesenthal, and Hellmut Wollmann. 1995. “Transformation sozialistischer Gesellschaften: Am Ende des Anfangs.” *Leviathan* (15).
- Börzel, Tanja, and Aron Buzogány. 2010. “Environmental organisations and the Europeanisation of public policy in Central and Eastern Europe: the case of biodiversity governance.” *Environmental Politics* 19(5):708–35. doi:10.1080/09644016.2010.508302.

- Brad, Alina, and Ulrich Brand. 2016. "Die Macht der ökologischen Krise: Perspektiven der Politischen Ökologie." *Politix, Zeitschrift des INstituts für Politikwissenschaft der Universität Wien* (40):5–10.
- Brand, Karl-Werner (Ed). 2017. "Die sozial-ökologische Transformation der Welt. Ein Handbuch" Frankfurt: Campus Verlag.
- Brand, Ulrich. 2014. "Transition und Transformation: Sozialökologische Perspektiven." Pp. 242–80, in *Futuring. Perspektiven der Transformation im Kapitalismus über ihn hinaus*, edited by M. Brie. Münster: Westfälisches Dampfboot.
- Brand, Ulrich. 2016. "Transformation" as a New Critical Orthodoxy The Strategic Use of the Term "Transformation" Does Not Prevent Multiple Crisis." *GAIA* (25/1):23–27.
- Braun, Bruce. 2015. "Futures: Imagining Socioecological Transformation—An Introduction." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 105(2):239–43.
doi:10.1080/00045608.2014.1000893.
- Budapest Degrowth conference team. 2021. "Degrowth Conference Budapest 2016." (<https://budapest.degrowth.org/>).
- Cargonomia. 2021a. "Homepage - Cargonomia." Retrieved September 9, 2021 (<http://cargonomia.hu/?lang=en>).
- Cargonomia. 2021b. "Who we are." Retrieved September 9, 2021 (<http://cargonomia.hu/who-we-are/?lang=en>).
- Chenoweth, Erica. 2020. "Questions, Answers, and Some Cautionary Updates Regarding the 3.5% Rule." *CARR CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY* (2020 - 005).
- Dannecker, Petra, and Christiane Voessmer. 2014. "Qualitative Interviews in der Entwicklungsforschung. Typen und Herausforderungen." Pp. 53–175, in *Qualitative Methoden in der Entwicklungsforschung*, edited by P. Dannecker and Englert Birgit. Wien: Mandelbaum.
- Dannecker, Petra, and Englert Birgit, editors. 2014. *Qualitative Methoden in der Entwicklungsforschung*. Wien: Mandelbaum.
- Extinction Rebellion. 2021a. "About us." Retrieved September 9, 2021 (<https://rebellion.global/about-us/>).

- Extinction Rebellion. 2021b. “Why rebel?” Retrieved September 9, 2021 (<https://rebellion.global/why-rebel/>).
- Extinction Rebellion Hungary. 2021a. “Climate and Energy.” Retrieved September 9, 2021 (<https://www.greenpeace.org/hungary/fedezd-fel/klima-energia/>).
- Extinction Rebellion Hungary. 2021b. “Homepage - Extinction Rebellion Hungary.” Retrieved September 9, 2021 (<https://rebellion.global/groups/hu-hungary/#events>).
- Feola, Giuseppe. 2015. “Societal Transformation in Response to Global Environmental Change: a Review of Emerging Concepts.” *Ambio. A Journal of the Human Environment* 44(5):376–90. doi:10.1007/s13280-014-0582-z.
- Gawel, Erik. 1994. *Umweltallokation durch Ordnungsrecht. Ein Beitrag zur ökonomischen Theorie regulativer Umweltpolitik (= Schriften zur angewandten Wirtschaftsforschung, Bd. 65)*. Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck).
- Gorz, André. 1989. *Kritik der ökonomischen Vernunft. Sinnfragen am Ende der Arbeitsgesellschaft*. 2nd ed. Berlin: Rotbuch Verlag.
- Greenpeace Hungary. 2021a. “Act now.” Retrieved September 9, 2021 (<https://www.greenpeace.org/hungary/cselekedj/>).
- Greenpeace Hungary. 2021b. “Homepage - Greenpeace Hungary.” Retrieved September 9, 2021 (<https://www.greenpeace.org/hungary/>).
- Greenpeace Hungary. 2021c. “Our core values.” Retrieved September 9, 2021 (<https://www.greenpeace.org/hungary/rolunk/alapertekeink/>).
- Handelsblatt. 2017. *Orban pflegt Sonder-Verhältnis zu Putin* (<https://www.handelsblatt.com/politik/international/ungarn-und-russland-orban-pflegt-sonder-verhaeltnis-zu-putin/19336908.html?ticket=ST-2731871-QKQODX2PiXG13bydxRK6-ap6>).
- Harper, Krista. 1999. “From green dissidents to green skeptics: Environmental Activists and post-socialist political ecology in Hungary.” Dissertation for Doctor of Philosophy, Anthropology, University of California. Santa Cruz.
- Harper, Krista. 2005. ““Wild Capitalism” and “Ecocolonialism”: A Tale of Two Rivers.” *American Anthropologist* 107(2):221–33. doi:10.1525/aa.2005.107.2.221.

- Harper, Krista. 2006. "Wild Capitalism: Environmental Activism and Postsocialist Political Ecology in Hungary." *East European Monographs/Columbia University Press*.
- Hellmann, Kai-Uwe, and Ruud Koopmans, editors. 2013. *Paradigmender Bewegungsforschung:: Entstehung und Entwicklung von neuen sozialen Bewegungen und Rechtsextremismus*.: Springer-Verlag.
- Johnston, Hank, and John A. Noakes, editors. 2005. *Frames of protest. Social movements and the framing perspective*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Kern, Thomas. 2007. *Soziale Bewegungen: Ursachen, Wirkungen, Mechanismen*. 1st ed. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
- Kocyba, Piotr, and Daniel Mikecz. 2020. "Lethargie, zivilgesellschaftlicher Aufruhr und Shrinking Spaces – Protest- und Bewegungsforschung in Ostmitteleuropa." *Soziale Bewegungen* 33(3).
- Kollmorgen, Raj, Wolfgang Merkel, and Hans-Jürgen Wagener. 2015. *Handbuch Transformationsforschung*. Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden.
- Kythreotis, Andrew P., Chrystal Mantyka-Pringle, Theresa G. Mercer, Lorraine E. Whitmarsh, Adam Corner, Jouni Paavola, Chris Chambers, Byron A. Miller, and Noel Castree. 2019. "Citizen Social Science for More Integrative and Effective Climate Action: A Science-Policy Perspective." *Frontiers in Environmental Science* 7:287. doi:10.3389/fenvs.2019.00010.
- Li, Minqi. 2011. "The 21st Century Crisis." *Review of Radical Political Economics* 43(3):289–301. doi:10.1177/0486613410395896.
- Merkel, Wolfgang. 2010. *Systemtransformation. Eine Einführung in die Theorie und Empirie der Transformationsforschung*. 2nd ed. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
- Nischwitz, Guido, Reimar Molitor, and Silvia Rohne. "Local and regional Governance für eine nachhaltige Entwicklung." *Schriftenreihe des IÖW* (161/02):1–43.
- Nover, Sabine U. 2009. *Protest und Engagement*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
- red, ORF.at. 2021. *EU setzt CoV-Hilfen für Ungarn und Polen aus* (<https://orf.at/stories/3227565/>).

- Reißig, Rolf. 2009. *Gesellschaftstransformation im 21. Jahrhundert. Ein neues Konzept sozialen*. Wiesbaden: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
- Reißig, Rolf. 2014. "Transformation - Ein spezifischer Typ sozialen Wandels. Ein analytischer und sozialtheoretischer Entwurf." Pp. 50–100, in *Futuring. Perspektiven der Transformation im Kapitalismus über ihn hinaus*, edited by M. Brie. Münster: Westfälisches Dampfboot.
- Robbins, Paul. 2012. *Political Ecology: A Critical Introduction*: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.
- Rohlinger, Deane A., and David A. Snow. 2003. "Social Psychological Perspectives on Crowds and Social Movements." Pp. 503–27, in *Handbook of Social Psychology*, edited by J. Delamater. New York: Plenum Publishers.
- Rustow, Dankwart A. 1970. "Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model." *Comparative Politics*, (vol 2 no. 3):337–63.
- Sandschneider, Eberhard. 1995. *Stabilität und Transformation politischer Systeme: Stand und Perspektiven politikwissenschaftlicher Transformationsforschung*. 1st ed.: VS Verlag für Sozialwissenschaften.
- Segert, Dieter. "Einfluss des Staatsozialistischen Erbes in Osteuropa nach 1989: Welches Erbe?" Pp. 259–69, in *Kulturen der Differenz – Transformationsprozesse in Zentraleuropa nach 1989*, edited by H. Fassmann, W. Müller-Funk, and H. Uhl. Wien: Vienna University Press 2009.
- Segert, Dieter. 2013. *Transformationen in Osteuropa im 20. Jahrhundert*. Wien: Facultas.
- Segert, Dieter, editor. 2015. *The Revolutions of 1989. A Handbook, Societal transformations in Eastern Europe after 1989 and their preconditions*. Wien: Verlag der ÖAW.
- Sweetman, J., and LE. Whitmarsh. 2016. "Climate Justice: High-Status Ingroup Social Models Increase Pro-Environmental Action Seem More Moral Through Making Actions." *Top Cogn Sci*. (8 (1)):196–221.
- Wissen, Markus, and Ulrich Brand. 2019. "Working-class environmentalism und sozial-ökologische Transformation. Widersprüche der imperialen Lebensweise." *WSI-Mitteilungen* 72(1):39–47. doi:10.5771/0342-300X-2019-1-39.

8 List of figures

Figure 1: Transformational concepts by Feola (2015)	23
Figure 2 Overview Framing concept by Benford and Snow (2000).....	33
Figure 3 Overview "analytical tool"	41
Figure 4 Connecting framing and strategic approach	42
Figure 5 Greenpeace homepage - diversity of topics	54
Figure 6 Headlines of current petitions by Greenpeace.....	55
Figure 7 Holistic circle of Cargonomia	61
Figure 8 Timeline 2018	62
Figure 9 Timeline 2018-2	62
Figure 10 Representing foreign group actions.....	63
Figure 11 XR national demands	71

9 Appendices

9.1 Abstract

Abstrakt

Diese Masterarbeit bearbeitet anhand der näheren Untersuchung drei verschiedener klima-aktivistischer Gruppen in Ungarn die Frage nach dem möglichen Einfluss von Klima-Aktivismus auf eine sozial-ökologische Transformation. Um einen Zusammenhang herstellen zu können werden Untersuchungen von historischen Klima-Aktivismus in Ungarn mit anderen Perspektiven auf mögliche Einflussnahme von Aktivismus zusammengetragen. Durch die Erstellung eines analytischen Tools werden verschiedene Strategien herausgearbeitet, die in historischen Situationen Transformationen initiiert haben und sich auch in heutigen wissenschaftlichen Arbeit zu sozial-ökologischer Transformation als treibende Faktoren wieder finden. Diese Strategien werden genutzt um die qualitativen Daten auf mögliche Indikatoren zu untersuchen. Die Ergebnisse werden anhand von Mobilisierungsstrategien untersucht. Diese Arbeit soll eine Aussage über die notwendigen strategischen Grundlagen von Aktivismus treffen, der Transformationen initiieren kann.

Abstract

This master thesis deals with the question of the possible influence of climate activism on a socio-ecological transformation by examining three different climate activist groups in Hungary. In order to establish a context, studies of historical climate-activism in Hungary will be combined with other perspectives on the possible influence of activism. Through the creation of an analytical tool, different strategies that have initiated transformations in historical situations and are also found as driving factors in today's scientific work on socio-ecological transformation will be elaborated. These strategies will be used to examine the qualitative data for possible indicators. The results will be examined in terms of mobilization strategies. This work aims to make a statement about the necessary strategic foundations of activism that can initiate transformations.

9.2 Interview Guideline

Name of organization

Since when do you work for the organization?

Which position and tasks do you have within the organization?

What tasks are included in your position?

Organization:

What is the primary goal of the activities of your organization?

How is the decision-making process within your organization structured?

Sub-question: Does your organization vote on political demands, or does it adapt them from other organizations?

Who are the members of your organization?

How is diversity fostered within the organization?

How is the organization trying to initiate change? (social, political-economic)

Which strategies does the organization use to enhance awareness about climate change?

Tool 4: political influence/cooperation

How is the organization trying to reach political change?

How are politicians and governments included in actions?

Tool 1: Connecting different activist groups.

How do you cooperate with activist groups, especially climate activist groups?

What actions does the organization use to attract people/other organizations/media?

What topics does the organization focus on?

Which topics mostly overlap with other organizations?

How does the organization use the focus of the topic to cooperate with others?

Tool 2: International recognition

What role do international actions play within your organization? (participation, co-operation etc.)

How is the organization attracting national and international media coverage?

How are international cooperations with other organizations initiated?

Tool 3: Target group

How would you define your target group?

How would you define your peer group?

How is the recognition of the organization outside of the peer group?

Which channels are the most effective to reach the peer group / the people outside of the peer group?

Tool 5: connection to SET

What is the organization's position on socio-ecological transformation?

Does the organization think a socio-ecological transformation is necessary?

How does the organization stand to core factors of economic change through consumer behavior or production processes?

How is the influence of society on political change seen within the organization?

Where do you see the potential for change?

Where do you see the necessity for change?

Self-perception, personnel assessment:

Do you think that your organization could have an impact on the future development of social change in Hungary?

If yes, where do you see the most potential?

Which change should be targeted first? (political, social, economic)

What would your ideal system in the future look like?

9.3 Interview transcripts

Transcript XR 13.04.2021

1 00:00:09

2 *Speaker 1:* OK. So Martin is also in the waiting room. All right, yeah, yeah. Thank you for
3 taking the time on such short notice.

4 00:00:30

5 *Speaker 2:* Hi.

6 00:00:38

7 *Speaker 4:* Hi. Seems like everyone is here

8 00:00:39

9 *Speaker 1:* Yeah, I think so too.

10 00:00:44

11 *Speaker 4:* Hi, Fanny.

12 00:00:47

13 *Speaker 3:* Hi.

14 00:00:48

15 *Speaker 1:* Hi. So can you hear me, quite good, or is it OK with the connection. Yeah. Oh
16 yeah. Thank you for taking the time and I'm really glad that three of you have time today. It's
17 perfect. And I'm doing interviews for my master's thesis. My master's thesis is about the
18 influence of activism on transformation or the possibility for a transformation. And ähm I'm
19 going to connect that historical influence of activism in Hungary on the transformation from
20 state socialism to capitalism to the possible transformation, social ecological transformation
21 and what climate activism in Hungary ähm how the influence of climate activism in Hungary
22 is going to affect everything. Exactly, so, yeah, thank you for taking the time and I'm going to
23 record this interview. I hope that's fine. ähm just start my phone. So. Perfect, ähm so just for
24 the record, what's the name of the organization that you're with? Maybe one should
25 answer.

26 00:02:31

27 *Speaker 4:* I think Fanny tried to say something, but we can't hear her because

28 00:02:35

29 *Speaker 1:* we can't hear you. I'm sorry. Now, that's good now.

30 00:02:42

31 *Speaker 3:* Now, extinction rebellion,

32 00:02:44

33 *Speaker 1:* perfect, and since how long are you with the organization?

34 00:02:51

35 *Speaker 3:* As for me, two years,

36 00:02:54

37 *Speaker 1:* two years, right, and for you Martin?

38 00:02:56

39 *Speaker 4:* For me, it's basically since its inception, so February of twenty nineteen and since
40 then.

Transcript XR 13.04.2021

41 00:03:02
42 *Speaker 2:* For me maybe the end of February as well.

43 00:03:09
44 *Speaker 1:* February? ok. And what positions within the organization or what are your tasks?

45 00:03:18
46 *Speaker 4:* I can I can start with that. So as far as I know, we are all active members or I'm
47 just going to speak for myself. I'm an active member of, äh of extinction rebellion, which
48 means that I am actively involved in all of the decision making processes that go on within
49 XR because of the coronavirus. It has been a lot less in terms of what we're doing. Ähm But
50 as for our duties, they have remained relatively the same. For me personally, I. I'm involved
51 in communications and media, as well as what is called regenerative cultures, which is
52 focusing on like sustainable activism. Within our organization.

53 00:04:19
54 *Speaker 3:* I don't have a specific role, but for a long time I was in outreach and before that I
55 was in the media group. But as for now, I'm just I would rather say I'm not as active and I'm
56 trying to help here and do.

57 00:04:41
58 *Speaker 1:* OK.

59 00:04:42
60 *Speaker 2:* I'm more likely, just an intern, so it doesn't take as much responsibility as the
61 other members, but I try to involve more and more street actions and maybe the legal
62 parties, which I can support or deliver, deliver a bit.

63 00:05:14
64 *Speaker 1:* Nice. So all the different Tasks. That's really nice. And so what is the main or what
65 would you say is the main goal of your organizations and the activities the organization
66 participates in.

67 00:05:35
68 *Speaker 3:* I would say that the goal has changed quite a lot during its existence, äh as for
69 now, I would say that its goal is to create pressure on politicians to äh to address the
70 problem seriously.

71 00:05:58
72 *Speaker 1:* The the problem of climate change or the problem of ..?

73 00:06:03
74 *Speaker 3:* Yeah.

75 00:06:03
76 *Speaker 1:* climate change, the climate crisis. Anyone something to add or are you all doing
77 with that statement?

78 00:06:15
79 *Speaker 2:* Maybe, maybe I can say something as well. Raising awareness for the climate
80 change and the current climate emergency situation and to influence the political decisions
81 to the thinking of the people. So when you in Hungary, when you can change the minds of
82 the people, it it could be affect the politicians, because as you heard about it, Hungary's

Transcript XR 13.04.2021

populist, illiberal, so-called democracy and the government [is] Very much aware of the people's opinion, not not because they wanted to hear it, but if a majority thinks something, they they will follow it, even though it's not the complete way or not the complete idea which became theirs. Only the the opinions, what they can use in a political debate, for example, in a greenwashing way or so. So that's how it works here.

00:07:36

Speaker 1: OK.

00:07:38

Speaker 4: Sorry, just maybe to just add a sentence or two, I agree with everything that my fellow activists have said so far. I would add that one of the goals is to push climate crisis into the mainstream. So that's an inescapable topic for for any following. Governmental communication or, or like election topics or whatever.

00:08:15

Speaker 1: And because just because you just said that, Martin, what the core strategies of the organization to achieve äh this to achieve media recognition and political recognition?

00:08:32

Speaker 4: So the way I see it is it's mostly through like artistic expression or street activism or things like that, or we have äh also has some curated art projects as well. You know, before Covid, we would participate in the protests and just trying to give a sort of, I guess more artistic spin to our predicament. Which once again raises awareness in terms of, ähm you know, we should tackle this climate emergency. What do the others think?

00:09:31

Speaker 1: It's not necessary that each of you three answer to every question, just if you want to add something or if you feel something missed out on, then you can always, please.

00:09:47

Speaker 3: I would just confirm that

00:09:51

Speaker 2: I can maybe do something to give some context to the answer, Martin, because 10 years ago, the climate topical issue wasn't that important in Hungary and also activism wasn't that much in the focus of political thinking. And also the media doesn't care about it too much. So until few people go out on the street before 2010, nobody can really. But now, because of state oppression, it became a political issue in Hungary. So the media is more likely aware of every, every little gathering and every activism. And also the the people who are interested in politics are, would like to read these topics and in the electronic newspapers or on the Internet. So now media is also aware of this situation and they try to cover all the activism and all the peaceful assemblies in Hungary.

00:11:13

Speaker 1: So you would say that there is a connection between state oppression, international media coverage and the overall climate crisis that is in the international media recognition, and that therefore the media in Hungary is also [covering].

00:11:32

Speaker 3: Yeah,

Transcript XR 13.04.2021

125 00:11:33
126 *Speaker 1:* OK? And did you feel a change in the peer group during your protest actions or
127 your artistic actions that the peer group changed, or is it a bit?

128 00:11:48
129 *Speaker 2:* Äh I guess both, so there is also, what I'm trying to say, this is the specific
130 Hungarian political situation, but you have right. The Fridays for future movement, also the
131 Hungarian media and over the years and the younger generations as well. So no one see that
132 many people who are interested in green issues in Hungary in the in the last 30 or 40 years
133 on the streets. So it's also a unique phenomenon in.

134 00:12:32
135 *Speaker 1:* OK. And so which strategies does your organization use to enhance the
136 awareness of climate change? You mentioned before that you are trying to attract through
137 artistic influences, but is there, for example, also a possibility to create awareness through
138 äh workshops or stuff or is your organization more on the protest side and also into the
139 workshops?

140 00:13:07
141 *Speaker 3:* Yeah, we actually had quite a lot of workshops and other gatherings that were
142 professional, but with the covid-19 would stop this because like the Internet, it's not really
143 what it is, what it should be about. We've definitely had some of the best.

144 00:13:31
145 *Speaker 1:* Yeah.

146 00:13:34
147 *Speaker 4:* Yeah And additionally, we are trying to be quite principled in our activism of
148 selecting what sorts of causes and issues we we are supporting with our activism, like one of
149 our core tenets is to marry ecological justice to social justice, saying that they are
150 inseparable and. As such, we would like to push this into the mainstream as much as we can
151 as one of the other tools we have. We also have, as Fanny mentioned, workshops. We do
152 some summer retreats where we spend the weekend, sort of like a team building slash
153 strategizing, sort of, Sort of gathering and also we had before Covid and also during like
154 inductions and like this sort of meet and greets types of events as well.

155 00:14:51
156 *Speaker 1:* And before you mentioned that you are also trying to pressure politicians or
157 putting some pressure on political decision making, and how are politicians and government
158 and the Hungarian government included in your actions? So are you trying to address them
159 through posts or official statements or how are you trying to put the pressure to political
160 decisions?

161 00:15:21
162 *Speaker 3:* I would say we do not do that directly. So basically we are just criticizing them
163 over Facebook sites or Instagram or whatever, and then we as we gather followers and
164 when we do like a demonstration or something like that, then basically these, the presents
165 of these people are the ones that take pressure on politicians and not how it's done. So we
166 we've never I don't think that we've never done directly.

Transcript XR 13.04.2021

167 00:16:03

168 *Speaker 4:* I guess the way I would describe it as we rather than endorsing any specific
169 politician or party or whatever, we are more critical of, of elements within and within
170 parties. For example, the äh Right [unverständlich]now, incumbents Fidesz party. We're
171 trying to skirt a fine line where green activism, climate activism isn't considered political too
172 much. And there's still some wiggle room within that. I feel like that's a delicate line. Trying
173 to push whatever we can towards social justice and that, In that territory, I should say.

174 00:17:08

175 *Speaker 2:* On the politics, on the communication level, when I first started Green
176 Renaissance in Hungary after the Greater Thunberg movement, the government tried to
177 avoid and denied the whole green issue, the whole äh. Minimalizing the the importance of
178 the of the green movement and when they saw that so many people are joined together and
179 there were mass gatherings in Hungary, they changed their mind. And they also started so-
180 called goon [?] goals, which are the opposite, opposite opposite reforms of the NGOs. So
181 governmental organizations which are looking like NGOs, but they are really not that. So
182 they are only supporting the government. So they try to outsource the issue and try to
183 polarize and influence the NGO level and also to reach young people to influence them for
184 their own agenda or propaganda. For example, the the Hungarian president has also one of
185 these gonegoes and he also has a podcast in Hungary, but they never, never attacking the
186 government policy and they never attacking big industries. So it's completely different than
187 a normal green activism.

188 00:19:06

189 *Speaker 1:* Yeah.

190 00:19:09

191 *Speaker 4:* And I could add to that that Anti NGO thought has been prevalent for a longer
192 time in Hungary, like since twenty seventeen, there is a legal basis for making it harder for
193 NGOs to exist with just äh. And Fidesz has basically like a like a blanket, I should say, hostility
194 towards towards them or disdain towards NGOs saying that they're all funded by George
195 Soros. With that, climate activist groups including.

196 00:19:51

197 *Speaker 1:* And do you feel that the äh your recognition or the recognition of your NGO is or
198 your organization is changing through that, or is this so the recognition of your organization
199 by the society is changing or Are there still people really pressuring climate justice?

200 00:20:18

201 *Speaker 4:* But what I think would be the most salient or important part of this would be
202 outreach, I think, because people within larger cities, or especially the capital city of
203 Budapest, it's easier to reach people, it's easier to organize larger protest movements,
204 whatever. And also like information travels faster and easier there than in the countryside,
205 where most of the discourse is dominated by government controlled news outlets.

206 00:21:02

207 *Speaker 1:* OK.

208 00:21:07

209 *Speaker 4:* We can't hear you, Funny.

Transcript XR 13.04.2021

210 00:21:09
211 *Speaker 3:* So, yeah, I think the here in Hungary, it's quite uneasy to not to be on one side. So
212 ever since we are criticizing the government, then we belong to the other part And yeah. So
213 it's kind of not easy to be independent.

214 00:21:32
215 *Speaker 1:* Yeah. OK, and are you connecting with other organizations or are you
216 cooperating with other organizations to gain more reach or to expand your reach? Yeah.

217 00:21:52
218 *Speaker 3:* Yeah, for example, Greenpeace, I think Greenpeace is one of the biggest, well,
219 ally and Friday for future. Yeah.

220 00:22:06
221 *Speaker 4:* We organized joint events a couple of times, for example, there was a summer
222 camp last year that was a joint effort from between Greenpeace and XR. And like a lot of
223 other NGOs, not just climate NGOs, where were present. And that's still a good basis,
224 jumping off point for, for further activism down the line.

225 00:22:38
226 *Speaker 1:* Was it possible to connect also organizations that are standing in for social justice
227 because you mentioned social, social justice and climate justice before? Was it possible to
228 connect them as well?

229 00:22:56
230 *Speaker 3:* I think that once we've had we're maybe several times, but as far as I can
231 remember, there was one time when Amnesty International, and XR did an joined event.

232 00:23:11
233 *Speaker 4:* There's this there's also one of the more popular I think it's funded by the
234 opposition run districts of Budapest, I think it's called the ähm School of Public Life. And
235 Hungarian because the electrical kalaya, and it's one of the one of the organizations which.
236 Which run and fund Mostly workshops around the topic of social justice. And they were also
237 present during this summer camp that I previously mentioned.

238 00:23:58
239 *Speaker 3:* I'm really sorry, but I'm afraid I've got to. You couldn't hear me.

240 00:24:07
241 *Speaker 1:* Absolutely no problem. Thank you for joining in. have a nice day to. OK, perfect.
242 And so we're just going, yeah, sorry.

243 00:24:22
244 *Speaker 2:* Äh maybe I have another thought about this topic. There is a, there is an overlap
245 between activists and different NGOs. For example, I joined XR Hungary through one activist
246 friend who was also an intern at the Hungarian Civil Liberties Union, where I was also an
247 intern. So that's why I heard about it when it started. So it's it's, it's very important to
248 understand that in Hungary, these NGOs are working closely together and the politically
249 active people are most of the time also involved in other NGOs äh in rotation or at the same
250 time as well. So it's quite a small scene in Hungary. And everybody knows everybody, let's
251 say.

Transcript XR 13.04.2021

252 00:25:24
253 *Speaker 4:* I can confirm that. Yes. Or at least I know a handful of people and basically all of
254 them.

255 00:25:32
256 *Speaker 1:* And and so when you say because the circle is really small, are there also
257 politicians from the opposition joining your events, for example, or?

258 00:25:44
259 *Speaker 4:* There have been cases, especially during protests, you see People from the
260 opposition parties being there, however, it's clearly defined that they cannot be there in
261 their colors basically so in the colors of that, the party they represent only as civilians. We
262 are making an active effort as to seem as apolitical as possible in this regard.

263 00:26:20
264 *Speaker 1:* Yeah.

265 00:26:22
266 *Speaker 4:* Yeah.

267 00:26:24
268 *Speaker 1:* Always a fine line.

269 00:26:26
270 *Speaker 4:* Yes,

271 00:26:26
272 *Speaker 1:* and and because it is also an international organization, are you trying to
273 participate in international actions with your part of the organization?

274 00:26:40
275 *Speaker 4:* Yeah, sometimes there was this I think it was called International Banking
276 Rebellion or money rebellion. I think money rebellion, I think money rebellion was the
277 name. That we had a small, like action connected to that, I'm not going to say much more.
278 So, yeah, there are some smaller and bigger points in which we connect to the global XR
279 movement. Unfortunately, that's also a question of capacity and manpower, and so it's one
280 of the things that fall, falls to the wayside, the easiest.

281 00:27:29
282 *Speaker 1:* What role do these actions, so because you say they fall away the easiest and
283 what yeah, what role do these participation and international actions play?

284 00:27:43
285 *Speaker 4:* I guess it's more like a sense of community that others also do this around the
286 world. Think that's that's chief elements.

287 00:27:54
288 *Speaker 1:* Äh and how would you say is the recognition of our outside of your main peer
289 group in Hungary?

290 00:28:14
291 *Speaker 4:* I'm afraid I wouldn't know too much, but most likely it's Not that many people

Transcript XR 13.04.2021

292 know too much about it, most likely people associate the climate movement with Greta
293 Thumberg and. Yeah, that's most people know about that. Really, realistically.

294 00:28:39

295 *Speaker 2:* And maybe some of my friends heard about the XR UK or London that, that they
296 are, They are just laying on the ground so that when when they when I am telling them what
297 they do, they sometimes they don't know about the Hungarian actions, but they know about
298 the UK actions. So sometimes this happens. But. Yeah.

299 00:29:09

300 *Speaker 4:* Exactly, I can confirm they're sabotaging metro lines and train lines and then you
301 get associated with that. whereas you don't do any of this.

302 00:29:24

303 *Speaker 1:* Yeah, So you would see it, you would see international connection to XR as a
304 problem then?

305 00:29:30

306 *Speaker 4:* Äh sometimes. It has its upsides and downsides for sure. What we always stress is
307 that we are an independent autonomous group with a loosely knit connection to the global
308 movement.

309 00:30:27

310 *Speaker 1:* And what is the position from XR on socio ecological transformation, if you
311 cannot answer that, what is your position?

312 00:30:37

313 *Speaker 4:* Aha, there was a time that was actually around last year when we actually went
314 to our last retreat before covid, where we were talking about our vision of our, like what our
315 long term goals in terms of what we would like to see or achieve in the world. But I can't
316 really remember, like what what we were talking about. As for me personally, I mean. It
317 would be nice to live sustainably to and for that, it's not just an ecological question, as I
318 mentioned, it's also a social justice question as well. Haaa, I think ecological transformation
319 is a very, very broad concept, and right now I don't think to like the sentences I can produce
320 right now would do it justice.

321 00:31:44

322 *Speaker 2:* What differentiates us from from the other green movements in Hungary is
323 maybe that we are emphasizing more the value and the importance of systemic changes.
324 And so we are not emphasizing that much individual responsibility. So most of the green
325 movements are saying that don't throw away, don't litter or don't throw away your waste or
326 low waste or or such things are more important for them. But we see the program as a as a
327 whole. That's why for us, so important for social justice. So we try to connect a social justice,
328 ecological feminism to our issue to handle them together. For example, we get a workshop
329 about ecological feminism and justice for women Were we invited Hungarian experts on
330 feminism. So they so we can and also bring experts and we connected these two topics to
331 show that äh That aggression and the äh Just a question [word in Hungarian] in Hungarian?

332 00:33:27

333 *Speaker 4:* exploitation

Transcript XR 13.04.2021

334 00:33:28
335 *Speaker 2:* Exploitation of women and exploitation of nature based on the same systemic
336 structures which should be äh break to reach our goal to a more equal society.

337 00:33:48
338 *Speaker 4:* Maybe one thing I could add is, like we are functionally anticapitalist, however,
339 that message is not necessarily received as well or as directly. So you have to sort of like
340 coded into your language like a.. Anti Big corporations, Anti exploitation and things like that
341 without saying the big ugly C word.

342 00:34:22
343 *Speaker 1:* Yeah. [unverständlich]. But so you would say that your organization is, stands out
344 for change or sets out for a change on a social and a climate justice, justice or ecological
345 change and social change and on a similar level? Just to sum up the the yeah,

346 00:34:54
347 *Speaker 4:* I think that's accurate, yeah, we see it as being inseparable, these two entities.

348 00:35:04
349 *Speaker 1:* Really Interesting. Thank you very much. I just have a few last questions for
350 yourself. Perception or your personal assessment, and you can answer, but you don't have
351 to if you don't want to. And do you think that the work of your organization could have an
352 influence on future change, social change and climate change? Do you think that and it
353 would be possible.

354 00:35:36
355 *Speaker 4:* Yes, if I if for nothing else, I think just for for our existence, there are questions
356 being asked that wouldn't otherwise be asked within, for example, other NGOs. Maybe that
357 is our legacy, that we've brought the discourse about climate, justice and social justice
358 closer.

359 00:36:01
360 *Speaker 2:* We are trying to influence the way people are thinking about climate justice and
361 maybe, maybe we will succeed. So let me change the minds of people and the people will
362 change the world. We hope so. So maybe that's one of your agenda. So.

363 00:36:24
364 *Speaker 1:* That's actually a really nice sentence to stop. I think, it's really a positive way of
365 ending this thing. Yeah. Thank you so much for the interview. And and I don't know if you
366 want to, but of course, because you're participating in my master's thesis, you have the right
367 to also get a copy of it. If you want to have a copy of my research after I finished. And of
368 course, all of your names will totally be anonymous. And just the name of the organization
369 would be parat, if you would agree to that.

370 00:37:08
371 *Speaker 4:* OK, sounds good.

372 00:37:10
373 *Speaker 1:* And, um, yeah, so if you have any further things that come to your mind, then
374 please tell me or you can always reach out via email if or whatsapp, if you want to. And then

Transcript XR 13.04.2021

375 we could schedule something else. Yeah. Otherwise, thank you very much and have a nice
376 afternoon,

377 00:37:35

378 *Speaker 3:* thank you, likewise.

379 00:37:40

380 *Speaker 2:* Bye bye.

Transcript Cargonomia 20.04.2021

1 00:00:09

2 *Speaker 2:* so I don't have a camera here hope it's not a problem for you but I'm happy to
3 see you.

4 00:00:12

5 but you can you hear me because my microphone is a bit strange at the time so just to let
6 you know

7 00:00:18

8 yeah I hear you very well.

9 00:00:24

10 ok. Thank you, that you take the time. So to let you know: I'm writing my thesis about
11 activism and the influence of activism on transformations and as an example asking different
12 movements or groups in Hungary who are active within climate action or social-ecological
13 transformation.

14 00:00:53

15 and who are you in contact with me and who did you already talked to and why Hungary if I
16 may ask?

17 00:01:05

18 Hungary because before, like when the transformation from state socialism to capitalism
19 took place in Hungary there were a lot of climate activists involved because of the Danube
20 movement and other parts and a lot of researchers at that time and after did a connection
21 or researched the connection between activism and the transformation and how the
22 transformation took place in Hungary. So I'm trying to replicate that on the current climate
23 action and social ecological transformation. and Hungary because right now with the more
24 nationalist, repressive political situation it's really interesting how activists organise
25 themselves.

26 00:02:08

27 and who did you contact talk with to know now?

28 00:02:10

29 Till now I contacted Extinction rebellion and Greenpeace

30 00:02:20

31 good yeah

32 00:02:23

33 That are the the two main organisations right now and I'm going to have a talk with Nathan.
34 I don't know if you know he's from the University of Vienna and he organised the degrowth
35 conference in Vienna. I'm going to talk with him too because he was living in Budapest

36 I don't know. I think we talk about the same Nathan.

37 00:03:30 And maybe but yeah but if you have someone else I could interview would it be ok for
38 you if I record the interview and of course the interview is going to be an anonymous, but
39 would it be fine if we talk about organisations or anything if I am going to write the name of
40 the organization in my thesis

Transcript Cargonomia 20.04.2021

41 no problem

42 schneiden bis 04:03

43 00:00:00

44 *Speaker 1:* So whats are your current Activities in Hungary regarding the movement?

45 00:00:05

46 *Speaker 2:* so not much, to be honest, compared to what we usually did, because maybe the
47 people you already interviewed said the same. But it's not only the case in Hungary. I feel
48 the same all around Europe in terms of projects and movements as covid-19 And the
49 restrictions really slowed down a lot of projects and group dynamics. And I would say even
50 more with what we were doing in Budapest compared to other types of project, because in
51 Budapest we we have this cooperative called cargonomia and everything was really oriented
52 and turned around the social life we are. We we organized a lot of social events, like, for
53 example, we have we are doing type of job and gardening, but we don't have a type of
54 organization which is formal with clear sharing of the land, of the task and so on. But it was
55 more like we were all when we needed to do something or wanted to do something. We
56 organized a local event, we invited the neighborhood, we invited the local consument, we
57 invited those the NGOs as a collective. And people came and that's how things were going
58 on. So for us, the pandemic's and the social distancing got a very strong impact on our
59 activities because everything was really organized on type of organic social dynamics. Also,
60 Budapest used to be a big question. These days it's it's not connected to the pandemic, but
61 rather connected to the level of economic development of Budapest in the last five years
62 and development of, of mass tourism where you have less cheap and free spaces, accessible
63 spaces for groups like us in the city center. So it was really oriented and organized around
64 the open network of alternative places where we could organize a lot of things. Like, äh for
65 example, California was definitely bold, bold and visible. So we celebrated the 10th
66 anniversary of the first degrowth debate in Budapest when we invited Sir Latouche and
67 translated some of these books. And like 10 years ago, you know, we were in the in the
68 Göda [name] club, which was part of the globalist scene of Budapest, which was really in the
69 city center on the actor. I mean, a very large concept and alternative place in the city center.
70 It's an example of the hours of things were happening. And we could organize 10 years ago
71 with event, with a lot of cooperation, with a lot of organization. I mean, it was natural. It was
72 not like formal type of cooperation. It was just happening because people were used to
73 meet every day, every night in this type of place where you had the network of fifteen, let's
74 say from 10 to 20, depending on the years of alternative bars and alternative cultural
75 community centers, where informally you went there, you met and projects were
76 happening. So you went for a discussion, you went for a workshop, you went just for a beer,
77 for movie screening and so on. And things were happening. And so the social distancing plus
78 economic development of the city center of Budapest really question this type of easygoing
79 alternative life and activist and intellectual debate, life in Budapest. And like you mentioned,
80 extinction rebellion, We organized a series of events with them two years ago, three years
81 ago, where we could go to places like Cowwarr. We organize events in one of our garden, in
82 our logistic center and so on, and it's the type of things we don't do anymore. So somehow
83 the situation is not so much active for us compared to what we used to do. So we still do
84 things time to time, but much less. And it also has an impact on the motivation of the team.

Transcript Cargonomia 20.04.2021

85 It has impact on how much we publish, how much your presence on social networks and so
86 on.

87 00:04:28

88 *Speaker 1:* Ähm when we talk about we because I recognize that you're in a lot of groups
89 when you talk about we, which group do you mean?

90 00:04:38

91 *Speaker 2:* I mostly mentioned Cargonomia and our partners. I mean, like I speak a bit in the
92 name of an open and open collective, our open network.

93 00:04:49

94 *Speaker 1:* OK, perfect. Thank you. And but because of the I mean, of course it's a bit strange
95 Now, because of covid-19 and all the different things, but did you try to connect with your
96 target group online?

97 00:05:09

98 *Speaker 2:* Yeah we have but to be honest, I personally and most of our colleagues, we are
99 also involved in international projects or research projects, so we already spent too much
100 time online. So I'm dying of being online. And and I think it's really a large part of how I
101 perceive degrowth to have this type of human interaction. It's sort of the debates What we
102 have with the International Degrowth Conference Support Group about online conference
103 Vietnam. It's something very wonderful and successful. But I think nobody would remember
104 in 10 years the energy conference come back to the formal ones when you have these
105 strong human interaction in Budapest, in Leipzig or wherever you've been. And and it was
106 also the debate now I am one of the co-ordinator of Manchester Degrowth conference. And
107 to be honest, I want to cry when I see how things are happening. I had the opportunity to to
108 spend some time in Manchester before the pandemic started and to connect with local
109 groups to connect to the local organising committee. And I saw great potential cities to be in
110 this fantastic city where capitalism, where Industrial Revolution started and to do it online.
111 You don't connect with history, with the world, with a soul, with the people and so on And
112 that's what we face as well in Budapest, you know, through our movement, because I really
113 believe that, With degrowth, intellectually, most of the debates have been driven, I mean,
114 we know that decoupling is not possible. We know that we will face [unverständlich] we
115 know about climate change. We know that we need to work on eco feminism. We know that
116 we need to protect and and estimate much more care. We know that unconditional basic
117 income that commands local currencies. I mean, we know how this type of thing. So what
118 we like it's more like to create human dynamics around beside this and without meeting It's
119 only like to publish always even more books or give online talks until you finish your thought.
120 You end up alone at home and so on. So it's not the same that you are really you can't really
121 create dynamics.

122 00:07:31

123 *Speaker 1:* So would you say that one of the main goals of your activities is to create these
124 human dynamics, to achieve a change and achieve maybe degrowth society?

125 00:07:44

126 *Speaker 2:* It can. And I would add. For me personally, as a political activist, independent
127 researcher and type of, I would say lobbyists publishing things, a lot of media is giving books

Transcript Cargonomia 20.04.2021

128 everywhere and so on. For me, Budapest and Cargonomia it was a bit like the in action small
129 utopia. So when I was in Budapest, in Noumea, you know, I am in the garden, I am eating the
130 food we produce. We cook. I am on the cargo bike, which we constructed. I am connected to
131 different type of people. We experience alternative way of life based on the reciprocity and
132 so on. And, and it was a bit like a good balance for me and for the good things that it's not
133 only degrowth, we explore intellectually or academically or in conference and talking. We
134 were trying to really you everyday life experiment tells degrowth and all the type of
135 relationship with each other, with economics, with democracy and so on and now its, and all
136 this type of things are really depending on the direct regular human interaction, which are
137 very difficult in this time of social distancing. So we kept the intellectual dimension, but we
138 lost somehow the collegiality and the human interaction.

139 00:09:17

140 *Speaker 1:* And before the day, before the pandemic, which strategies did you use to
141 enhance awareness for your organization and your main goals and what you stand for?

142 00:09:30

143 *Speaker 2:* Mostly dialogue and interaction with a very large diversity of potential partners. I
144 think it's really what you can see when we organize a degrowth conference in 2016. If you
145 look at the list of partners and places we've been in, you will find a lot of people run
146 degrowth groups who even didn't hear before. But these groups and will even sometimes
147 face some contradiction is degrowth principle and thought it was very important to
148 implement a dialogue with a large part of the local Budapest society or Hungarian society,
149 but also in a broader way. And and. And again, you know, it could work because you had this
150 type of places when you meet regularly. So it was more based on friendship and because we
151 knew each other than an intellectual convincing discussion with the people and so we could
152 put on board such a large part of the Budapest society. Because to be honest, intellectually,
153 Budapest is not a very fertile soil for these groups, because the intellectual elites, after the
154 fall of the I don't, I don't speak about state socialism, but rather state capitalism after the fall
155 of the former system, really moved to liberalism and too radical critics to capitalism is
156 something which is quite difficult in Central Europe, in Hungary and so on, which is much
157 less the case, for example, in the next Yugoslavia in some....

158 00:11:23

159 *Speaker 1:* I'm sorry, I can't hear you anymore.

160 00:11:25

161 *Speaker 2:* Hello can you hear me?

162 00:11:32

163 *Speaker 1:* Yes, I can hear you again. Hello. Yes, now I can hear you. Can you hear me?

164 [Name]

165 00:12:00

166 *Speaker 2:* Sorry, that's urban censorship. So, yeah, and I don't know where I was. Yeah, not
167 intellectualize. The most fertile space for degrowth because intellectual elite of Budapest is
168 rather liberal. They still believe in green growth and green innovation, green development
169 and to green capitalism and so on. But Budapest was a very fertile space to experiment
170 degrowth because the city was not economically so much developed and commodified. So

Transcript Cargonomia 20.04.2021

171 you still have a large parts of the city center which were not driven by business as usual
172 drivers, but more driven based on creativity, human interaction, reciprocity, friendship,
173 informal solidarity and so on. And that's how we could construct such a large conference
174 with such a large diversity of partners, with a lot of creativity and very self organized. Like,
175 for example, we put on board that [name], which is not degrowth, because it's a bank. But
176 inside, like everywhere, you have people interested in degrowth and it's a co-operative bank
177 and so on. But, you know, they woke up every morning calling me, bringing new ideas. Do
178 you mind if you organize yoga every morning of the conference along the Danube? And we
179 had all these type of dynamics, like a front from the public transport company of Budapest,
180 woke up one morning and said, do you mind if we make a call for poetry on degrowth that
181 you would put in the in the head speaker of the Tramways of Budapest and so on. And it's
182 two example of people who are not really degrowth, but like the creativity. And it was really
183 in the in the soul of Budapest to to have this very interesting city with a lot of things
184 happening all the time everywhere and so on. And we tried to bring degrowth into these
185 environments in respecting how it is, in respecting their diversity, but also occupying the
186 space to to open dialogue and debate with different type of people and to learn from their
187 creativity. And somehow Cargonomia, since it's beginning has been walking a bit in that way
188 to to to move all around these dynamics and so on and to connect with different type of
189 people. A lot of them first never heard about degrowth. And when they heard about
190 degrowth were a bit skeptical about it, but somehow based on friendship, you could work.
191 And in these days, it's more difficult because, as I said, de-commodified life is less prison than
192 five or 10 or 15 years ago. And the social distancing is a bit making these type of dynamics
193 more difficult. And like, for example, we moved and share an office with the historic
194 partners of Degrowth and Cargonomia in Budapest called VIU, which is about the common
195 and about reappropriating spaces along the Danube to to to to make a convivial, beautiful
196 life order on the Danube in Budapest and every year earlier historically is the organized
197 alternative places bars sometimes illegal, sometimes legal,, very creative and started to
198 occupy one of the bridge, which becomes a vehicle to greet the subheads movement,
199 bringing everything conceptual gussets parties whatsoever. So we've been working together
200 four years and for months We desperately tried to organize common events to make the
201 moving of the stuff to the new office We share, using cargo bikes and to go along the
202 Danube with a group of like twenty, thirty cargo bikes in France and bringing furniture and
203 so on. And it keeps being postponed. So so you lose a bit of motivation and so on. But that's
204 typically the type of things we used to do to, you know you speak about degrowth also by
205 bringing together people by cargo bike making and moving and enjoying good time along the
206 Danube, which is wonderful and creative and so on. So that's a bit of story nowadays that we
207 keep on concerning, postponing. Even so, we do it on a smaller scale and we go north of
208 France, which is nice, but we don't have the social impact we could have in the last year.

209 00:16:35

210 *Speaker 1:* Yeah, the creative action is really hard to be fulfilled during the pandemic. Yeah,
211 yeah. And but before you mentioned the degrowth conference in Budapest on the actions
212 you took afterwards in Budapest, and would you say that the international recognition and
213 the conference got, helped you to gain more recognition or participation in Budapest? Or
214 What drove that plane?

Transcript Cargonomia 20.04.2021

215 00:17:07

216 *Speaker 2:* I think it was a continuity and it is still a continuity with some dynamics where
217 degrowth is more spread around and also some dynamics where degrowth is disappearing
218 around. We made the conference in 2016 and I think around 2015 we were, or 16 At the
219 time of the conference, we were reaching a peak of this type of alternative lives in Budapest
220 resource generation, which which was about to reach an age where you go a bit less, how
221 you start to get babies and so on. And also some political drama, because just after the
222 conference, there was a re-election in 2018 of Viktor Orban. And I think it's been a shock for
223 a lot of alternative movements and resistance movements we've been working with for
224 years because we really hope and we were right to believe that there was a chance to
225 democratic defeat Orban in that election. And when we got the results on the on that night
226 of the election, in the spring 2018, it was really a shock which pushed a lot of friends and
227 historic partners to to move out, to move, to move out. I mean, to move abroad to, to
228 somehow a bit withdraw from politics and so on. And it converged also with äh with the fact
229 that alternative life in Budapest was more difficult because the price of real estate started to
230 increase a lot. So you couldn't be any more like an artist, an activist living on a few projects
231 time to time and be able to get an accommodation and be able to to get your your good
232 time and your alternative place. So one night you get the gigs and there's a night you get you
233 organize a workshop the day after you organize an exhibition to organize a conference and
234 whatsoever. So this alternative life somehow was a bit challenge And and went down. if you
235 look at the list of the main partners of the international conference in Budapest, some of
236 them disappeared like machine, which is where we are every day, and they organize a lot of
237 events and so on. Some of them totally change, or where under threat and organization
238 change like overall, we face economic problem because they have to prove the ball and so
239 on, like simpla [name], which we wanted to still work with because the funders are old
240 friends, but we don't go there anymore because simply become like an open touristic place
241 for idiots making bachelor parties in Budapest and so on. And, and somehow we culturally
242 lost them. I mean they're still alive. I mean those are closed because of the restrictions, but
243 still it allows us to present them. But it's not the same bar anymore. So the same soldiers
244 and network and so on. And GoYa had to move out from the city center. [unverständlich],
245 that reminds me, remind me from Maults, a type of squad to alternative places you will find
246 in Western Europe like they are authorized, but they are not exactly in the city center
247 anymore. So they'll be checking the syrup's and they are in their own bubble, disconnected
248 to the rest of the society and so on. And and no, we are in GoYa. We are cooperating a lot
249 with them because they are economically suffering and we cofounded with Cargonomia a
250 cooperative and the use of cargo bikes. But we are in GooYa. It's not any more like when we
251 were in the city center of Budapest. When you have all this network of alternative places
252 and you can move from one place to another one and you met the front end and you are the
253 concubine, can you have a book presentation? You have an exhibition, you have a project
254 and and you brought all these things. And again, what I told you that ten years ago when we
255 published a Latouche book and invited him and organized a series of talks, we were in Göda
256 almost every day and there were hundreds of people all around sitting on the terrace,
257 having a drink, speaking antigrowth, sharing books and stuff like that. So and and for me, it
258 shows that it's to experiment degrowth You need to I mean, it's really about. How to
259 decomodify the society! I mean, we were a bit in a situation that we all had the type of

Transcript Cargonomia 20.04.2021

260 unconditional basic income because life was very cheap and it could be free. And and I
261 would say the same type of story you could see in Berlin, for example, on historically in most
262 of the large cities. I mean, if you think about New York in the 1960s and the creative
263 creativity, you're wrong. If you think about Paris in the 1920s, 1930s, I mean, it's a city you
264 will find time where you have very interesting vibes and intellectual cultural dynamics and
265 experimentation of alternative life. Yeah. And unfortunately I would say that in the last two,
266 three years, Budapest is still exceptional. It's still a great city, but it's moving back to what's
267 happening all around. It's been commodified and we cannot compete against Airbnb or mass
268 tourism or bank and also a large EU funded infrastructure development in the city
269 center, so on. So that's a bit of the situation. Sorry for being a bit negative, but it's a bit my
270 mood.

271 00:25:26

272 *Speaker 1:* I know. It's yeah, I can totally understand. I think a lot of people have. Yeah. And
273 not a negative spiral but a negative connotation and a lot of things you do or you see. Yeah.
274 And then political situations are joining in then it's a bit strange.

275 00:25:49

276 *Speaker 2:* And one more thing. Cargonomia has always been very well connected to
277 Budapest University in general, Hungary universities. We also have good connection with the
278 one to the end, like in like Seget, for example, and universities are under deep
279 reorganization. So CU officially moved to, uh, to Vienna. So we lost a partner. Right We are
280 like, you know, every week or every second week. We had to we had to walk up to you
281 because one of the co-founders, Cargonomia, is a part time working at CU. So we always had
282 something like we were doing a roof gardening of the roof of CU. Like we brought some
283 lecture workshop. like when some friends came to Budapest We always organized a lecture
284 or a workshop with them and see you because you had a public forum that it was easy for us
285 to see you and to have the right connection. Also involved with some student projects, like
286 we brought them to the farm, like when we have a community event, we invited them and
287 they were happy to connect to the, because CU was a bit like a closed bubble. they were
288 happy to connect with the hungarian society and we had the same with Corbinues [uni
289 name?] because one of the other co-founders of Corgonomia is finishing up at Corbinues
290 [UNi Name?] on Palani and alternative economic systems since the economy and its Action
291 Research Project. But also she was always bringing something on board Some of her
292 students are the same when they wanted to organize a conference. We made a phone call
293 and we got the room. It continues to go to the Corbinues students or researcher or postdocs
294 and so on. So somehow the time of pandemic's and the reform of the university in Hungary
295 was some a lot of our friends resigned or been fired or moved to other cities and so on.
296 Killed also this type of of dynamics.

297 00:27:51

298 *Speaker 1:* Yeah. And and do you try to connect with politicians or the government in
299 another way or include them in your actions that you try to?

300 00:28:03

301 *Speaker 2:* So personally and it's more my part. I always been in a good relationship with the
302 Green Movement in Hungary and that the politicians in politics, you know, I, I followed from
303 quite close with a lot of debate because we disagreed a lot with a large part of the core

Transcript Cargonomia 20.04.2021

304 group of of fitted the time on degrowth and radical critiques of capitalism. So the funding of
305 LMP, which often was split into two parties. So LMO unfortunately is more or less deadzone,
306 fired everybody and everybody quit. PM is still alive and knows the mayor of Budapest is a
307 leader of them. And it's quite likely this is the last hope to defeat Orban. So maybe would
308 become the next prime minister. And his is on all fronts. And that's how when you realise,
309 for example, the middle of Zaghloul , we could create a group for your Binaggio forestry
310 project in Zaghloul. So I have interaction with local politicians. I think you should also
311 interview one of close friends from Corbinues who was a spokesperson in one of the
312 organizers of this conference in Budapest. My name is Alexandra. Maybe you heard about I
313 would give you a contact. She is great.

314 00:29:19

315 *Speaker 1:* Yeah, that would be nice.

316 00:29:21

317 *Speaker 2:* And she's walking and we work together but it's her was more driving this low,
318 being close to the political parties to bring degrowth into the opposition political platform,
319 because we know that there will be a primary election and a common platform. So to bring
320 some of the degrowth principles or ideas or proposals on the platform. So we are in regular
321 touch with the whole spectrum of the opposition except for the the äh far, far right wing
322 party. I mean, well, historically, they are quite close to degrowth as well because they like
323 localism and so on. But to try to reappropriate degrowth they didn't work much. So so we
324 have discussion and dialogue and it was stopped by the politics. But in last spring it was we
325 were designing a series of roundtable with the leaders of all the parties around degrowth
326 who are [unverständlich] would have been a bit like the facilitator, but the type of active
327 facilitator to bring these groups into the picture of the debate. And it's been unfortunately
328 suspended because because of the of the pandemic center and the and the restrictions. But
329 Sandra [Alexandra] still making a lot of move around that I personally participated and
330 supported the campaign in Budapest for the election of [name Mayor of Budapest] with not
331 big hopes, because I'm quite experienced in this type of of things. I've been involved in the
332 municipal movement around Europe for years, and I know how difficult it is when you arrive
333 in the affair to to connect with civil society, to connect with a more direct democracy or type
334 of degrowth movement and so on. And and we have connection with all the local mayors.
335 But again, sorry to be very negative. We had some projects in the pipes and all of them went
336 down when Orban started to attack the budget of the municipality and the municipality is
337 bankrupt. So type of projects we have in the pipes are blocked because there is no money
338 anymore. Like we planned to develop our Cargobike sharing system, we plan to develop a
339 community garden movement and these type of things and to all the energy of all our
340 friends in the municipality is driven, is eaten by these bankrupt situation and how to pay the
341 salary. How to pay for the schools, for the social services, for the local hospitals in time of
342 pandemics and so on, and also how to defeat Obama in the next election. So it's not an
343 appropriate time to experiment further degrowth or to go into a more radical critics to the
344 dominant system or step aside the two, while the great philosophical debates and so on,
345 because it's more like both resisting and surviving.

Transcript Cargonomia 20.04.2021

346 00:32:29

347 *Speaker 1:* Yeah, and which core focus points do you still include when you say you want still
348 to resist and to survive? But yeah. Which focus point of your lifestyle or your. So, yeah.

349 00:32:50

350 *Speaker 2:* So, for example, with Sandra, we we target we decided to target the political
351 parties of the opposition with type of ideas which would fit with the degrowth political
352 agenda. And also they may be able to understand easily and will fit with their logic. So, for
353 example, we we made a large focus on the universal basic services, which is something the
354 people are quite keen on, and it fits with the typical left ideology, like free, good quality
355 health system, free good quality education and so on, where all the money is not privatizing
356 and destroying everything. We put the last focus on on agricultural transition. So I don't
357 know if you heard about it, but it's something which is quite it is very interesting and very
358 sad that in 2010 when Orban was reelected, he put on board a good friend with whom he's
359 been working a lot and a lot of projects, was this was a funder of the foundation with I'm
360 now a member of the board. And he quit, but not to be to make the foundation attacked by
361 the government. So all but invited this professor of agriculture called [name] who was very
362 famous in Hungary and an expert in organic agriculture and rural development. And it was a
363 bit like a legend. And he accepted to join Orban's government and go to the Supreme
364 Ministry, putting together rural development, agriculture and environment. And it was
365 mandated by Orban to implement the strategy for rural development. What he did in
366 organizing a consultation, public deliberation, how to run the country and to develop good
367 projects and so on, in particular in using the land still owned by the state to distribute it
368 based on the principle of supporting Small-scale family agriculture and to accompany the
369 people to go to organic type of agriculture. So he developed a fantastic rural development
370 strategy for distributing the land, implementing local services, implementing a local
371 craftwork, implemented care-work, implemented implementing transition to organic
372 agriculture. So something really, really interesting, what we've been supporting like äh No, I
373 was working also in 2011-12 with Greenpeace to support him and to to push for that. And
374 when the strategy was ready, it was officially supported by Orban and voted by the
375 Parliament. But it was it was sabotaged. So there was a sabotage organized because it went
376 against the interests of big land owners and kept money. And arrive new actors, very strong,
377 and among them interim people with confidence and all, but decided to cut the head of
378 [name] and to destroy the strategy and to use the land owned by the state to distribute it to
379 the friends who are now making a lot of money with kept money. So it's a very dramatic
380 story that we could have had from 2012 in Hungary, and I believe that Orban believed and
381 supported ideologically on this project. But as a guy was always driven by power, he saw
382 that the group of cap money and large landowners are much stronger. He decided to kill all
383 [name] and to follow the others. But if not, we could have had a very interesting pilot
384 project in Europe of the with rural development and an organic agriculture. And so we've
385 been supporting the project and it's been killed. And it's it's also a story in 2012. It's also a
386 story where we lost a lot of dynamics and interesting friends and film. And it's quite funny to
387 imagine that in 2012 you had all the green NGOs, people in Budapest supporting a minister
388 for Urban Development. And it's a very interesting story

Transcript Cargonomia 20.04.2021

389 00:37:43

390 *Speaker 1:* strange when you think about it now.

391 00:37:46

392 *Speaker 2:* Yeah.

393 00:37:48

394 *Speaker 1:* OK, so you still try to and now attack these agricultural movements again and
395 take them still infocus and a connection to the political situations now.

396 00:38:03

397 *Speaker 2:* Well, to be honest, those I mean, it's about it's what I keep. I mean, we talk a lot
398 about it with my and my friends, not only the foreigners, but also the Hungarians and so on,
399 that if in 2022 Orban is reelected, this is the end of democracy. Or maybe it's already too late
400 and we will start to think about moving abroad, moving somewhere, but where to go
401 because situation is the better. But but it's a bit like the mood in Budapest these days. And
402 there was some hope. I mean, with the municipal election in 2019, some hope was back,
403 after the big deception of 2018 Orban's reelection. Even Orban was surprised because he
404 cried in the evening of his re-election in 2018. He was afraid of losing. And so now it's really
405 like what will happen then? And on the contrary to the last year, I mean, it's also connected
406 to a dynamic in in the beginning of the 2010s in Budapest, you had every month a lot of
407 large demonstrations which were also appropriate. That dynamic to open debate on
408 degrowth, because after the demonstration, you had the round tables, you had articles
409 published and we all met together or was it was like parties organizing these identity also. So
410 it was like happening. All these discussion were happening and and after 2018, you had the
411 in the winter a very large movement against the slavery law, which was the last time we had
412 the strong social movement, because since, like, you know, a lot of things are happening
413 now, Orban is stealing all the universities, but you cannot go to demonstrate. So it makes it
414 so difficult to to meet and to connect. I mean, but I could say exactly the same in France. I
415 mean, I'm I'm standing right in front and it's happening everywhere. And so it makes the
416 situation very strange. And and it's also occupies a lot of time and mindset of the people to
417 focus on 2022 election where we would be happy to do something else, but that the last
418 opportunity we have to change a system in a nonviolent way, because I'm afraid that after
419 we enter into something totally different.

420 00:40:35

421 *Speaker 1:* And do you think that the connection between the social issue and the climate
422 issue would help organizations to attack the government right now and help to attract a
423 diverse and more open target group also within the country?

424 00:40:53

425 *Speaker 2:* And so the point is that the debate on climate issues and the environment in
426 Hungary has always been poor, I'm sorry to say. And for example, you can see good quality
427 articles in the liberal media as mainstream media in Hungary only for a few years. I mean,
428 five years ago, in the time of the degrowth conference, for example, we got a fantastic
429 media coverage. I mean, every media produced interviews, articles, very good quality ones
430 about degrowth at the time. But we made a good walk. I mean, we had the strategy and so
431 on. So it's not like it was censored, but it's not necessarily in the interest of the intellectual

Transcript Cargonomia 20.04.2021

432 elite was more like liberal and so on. And it's only for one, two or three years that you have
433 good quality pieces on. Yeah, climate change is accelerating. It's already happening. And I
434 would say that is a debate among the intellectual elite in Hungary started very late and it
435 was one of the objectives of LMP when it was funded and they somehow failed. I mean, I'm
436 not blaming them, because there was no much opportunities to do so. And an LMP was
437 most famous at the time for their fight against corruption or against, against racism and
438 against racism. [unverständlich] against racism is the Roma, against former communities of
439 anti-Semitism and so on than the Green issues. And and it's very difficult because the
440 Hungarian people somehow they are really strong connection with the environment. They
441 love their countries and they love to go to the nature and so on. But ecological politics is
442 something which is only in small intellectual circles, but not among the dominant intellectual
443 circles. These are no left no right. And I would say that for me, for example, I was ridiculous.
444 It's always been. Much more difficult to publish a piece on degrowth in the in my friend's
445 newspaper, in the liberal newspapers, like I got very good interviews on degrowth, first on
446 the conservative media, even though sometimes criticizing Orban and so on. I took much
447 more time, much more fights to to get people some degrowth on the liberal media.
448 Somehow they started to follow when they saw that the conservative was speaking about
449 big, which is which is quite funny. And and and and yeah, it's äh it's something we should
450 have in mind. And also in the framework of the upcoming upcoming election, I'm afraid that
451 the platform will speak, will address environmental issues, but with a very classical business
452 as usual Green green growth, green washing, green energy, green whatsoever narrative, but
453 not with anti capitalistic one, or low tech one or radical critiques to green groups and so on.
454 And even among the people, some of them are aware of that and would agree with
455 degrwoth among the advisors of [name] of people. We took time to time in opposition
456 parties, but they know that it's not what the people want to hear. People want to hear are
457 still in the mindset that in 1990 they quit a system where they were lied to the West and in
458 the narrative that they want to get back on the west. And it's something that nobody really
459 understood. And Auburn was re-elected in thousand eighteen, not based on ideological
460 victories because most of the Hungarians don't care about this bullshit about EU and US
461 refugees, about all this. But because their salaries improved and the year before the
462 elections 2018, the average salaries improved by 15 percent. And it's the type of debate I
463 have not with some academics and journalists, it seems, but it's very difficult to get good
464 information and it's maybe too early to have a proper feedback. But the crisis is less harmful
465 in Hungary than most of the European countries, and even less if I compare to France or
466 even worse, countries like US or UK. So you don't have like people starving or people
467 expands from the expertshouse or alone choose a charity soup and so on. What you would
468 find out that in France or in UK, Orban managed to handle capitalism very smartly. This type
469 of nationalistic capitalism and to bringing on board the investment from Germany, from
470 South Korea, from Singapore, from China. And I really believe that the key issue for him and
471 for the upcoming election will really be whether the people still keep their job with a good
472 wage increased or not. That would be what will make the election. And and, you know, he
473 made a good and a good move, like, for example, where a lot of car companies are closing
474 factories all around Central Europe. Orban managed to get a very good deal with the
475 German car industry who invested to transform the factories in Hungary into electric cars
476 where money is rushing. So Orban is brilliant and smart and that and and and better than

Transcript Cargonomia 20.04.2021

477 the opposition. And that is a problem. And it makes it very difficult to challenge within the
478 framework, the mindset of the Hungarian people. They want to get their jobs, their wage
479 and to be free to enjoy their life on the weekends and holidays as a family. And they don't
480 want to hear about anything else. And he knows, he manages to do it successfully. And
481 and and it's unbelievable. BMW is investing with a lot of, and more over Orban is using the
482 central bank to print money to support with no conditions, the car industry. And and, you
483 know, it's very difficult to fight against it because the opposition parties, if I published a
484 small piece in a liberal newspaper, it would be censured criticizing electric cars and all deal
485 with the German industry. They won't want to hear about that because if they are reelected,
486 they still want to get this type of deal with the car. The German car industry because they
487 know that if not, what will they do with the people will lose their job. So it's very challenging.
488 Challenging. I know you have some big projects, big fight in Budapest, so. We wanted to
489 fight against large stadium and infrastructure development in Budapest, but Orban managed
490 to win somehow bringing even more project and so on and where we were fighting against
491 these developments. Now we are fighting against the new development to save the former
492 ones. So we don't want to have the large Chinese university, but we are happy with the
493 stadium. So we are losing on the on every level. And and whether you like him or not, let's
494 admit that Orban is really a brilliant strategists, which makes it politically very difficult. So
495 you leave there. We can see that how with nothing of the head of a very small country with
496 no poor is able to play everybody and locally even more. So it makes it very difficult to bring
497 degrowth debates in this perspective.

498 00:48:51

499 *Speaker 1:* Yeah, and also to initiate social change, if there is no social anger or social
500 inequality.

501 00:48:58

502 *Speaker 2:* Yeah, yeah, OK.

503 00:49:01

504 *Speaker 1:* Yeah, thank you very much. I think I ask my question.

505 00:49:05

506 *Speaker 2:* So, yeah. I think you should talk to Alexandra.

507 00:49:09

508 *Speaker 1:* Yeah. Ho is Koves spelled?

509 00:49:12

510 *Speaker 2:* I send to you, I sent you an email.

511 00:49:15

512 *Speaker 1:* Oh they're really great.

513 00:49:17

514 *Speaker 2:* She's a great person. And uh and I think about something else who's living in in
515 uh in the in Vienna/indiana. Her name is would be Vera Kaufer she's the head of the strategy
516 of Greenpeace. So she's Hungarian. She used to be a funder of LMP. She used to be an MP.
517 She resigned and she's a close friends, friends. And she tried to make some move around
518 degrowth in Hungary. But it's very difficult and also in Greenpeace, which is also very

Transcript Cargonomia 20.04.2021

519 difficult. So we work together quite a lot. So I also sent an email to her and she's also a great
520 person.

521 00:49:57

522 *Speaker 1:* Yeah, that would be really nice. Thank you so much.

523 00:50:00

524 *Speaker 1:* Stop hier!

525 00:50:01

526 *Speaker 2:* And I have I think about another group, though, maybe a bit less politicized, but
527 they are doing really great things in mocking the Hungarian countryside and we don't have a
528 view which is a bit different than mine because I'm really Budapest in this country. And even
529 if we have a farm and I spent some time there, but I'm not really leaving or connecting with
530 local families or colleagues of the farm, they are green dependent. Maybe you heard about
531 them. Yeah, it's a couple called Radovich. So your brother Witchetty nine, but we still work a
532 lot with them, but they are doing a very fantastic degrowth project, like bringing together
533 rich families from around the country and to question them about the environmental
534 footprint to transition these type of things. So I also send the contract to you and I think
535 goes and says it will set things different. And meanwhile, we would need to agree what I
536 said. But that makes it very interesting.

537 00:51:01

538 *Speaker 2:* Yeah, that's right. Thank you. Thank you so much. That would be really nice. And
539 yeah, because a lot of people ask for an interview day and said that they were
540 uncomfortable with doing that because of the political situation in Hungary. And they they
541 were afraid that their groups would be harmed if they would give an interview.

542 00:51:25

543 *Speaker 1:* They get I'm a bit surprised because I don't know. Yeah, I'm very surprised.
544 Moreover, it's anonymous and relatively unknown.

545 00:51:34

546 *Speaker 2:* Yeah, I know, but it's strange

547 00:51:38

548 *Speaker 1:* because among my friends, everybody would speak openly. I mean, yeah,
549 everything. What I told you today, I would say publicly to a journalist without any problem
550 but no.

Transcript Greenpeace 28.04.2021

1 00:00:00

2 *Speaker 1:* And what are your current activities for Greenpeace in Hungary?

3 00:00:07

4 *Speaker 2:* Um, I am so the name of my position is climate and community campaigner. Äh
5 And let's say I have two sides on the plate. One is to support movements and grassroots and
6 the other one is being involved in, in climate campaign at Greenpeace Hungary.

7 00:00:33

8 *Speaker 1:* What does climate campaign mean?

9 00:00:36

10 *Speaker 2:* Mm hmm. So and on the climate campaign, we do a lot of activities, but what I do
11 personally is to focus on phasing out fossil fuels in Hungary äj, ja.

12 00:00:54

13 *Speaker 1:* So you're are you more trying to work with the society, or are you trying to
14 enhance pressure on political parties or politicians?

15 00:01:05

16 *Speaker 2:* Mm hmm. Uh, so. So when I'm, most of my time, I actually work with grassroots
17 and communities as my position is not, not like a traditional campaigner at Greenpeace, but
18 I. So most of the time, even when I'm working on climate issues, Usually I reach out to the
19 affected communities and such. So, for example, just to give you an example, right now, I'm
20 working on, On project, well, the national oil and gas company wants to drill fossils in the
21 national park and we would like to prevent that. And how we got to know about this is that a
22 local citizen who lives there reached out to us and now we try to support them with media
23 attention and and offline activities and joining the legal case. And as we are a formal NGO,
24 we can support them with, with the network and infrastructure and that kind of stuff, which
25 a grassroot wouldn't have.

26 00:02:23

27 *Speaker 1:* Does this happen a lot, that other organization or private persons contact you
28 with climate issues or climate injustices and ask for your help?

29 00:02:36

30 *Speaker 2:* Well, yes, we have a publicly available phone number and email address where a
31 lot of people reach out to us, not specifically, usually not specifically on climate issues, rather
32 nature protection issues. So just to give you a few other examples that I'm working in are
33 trying to support this local cause. This is in the inner city and the countryside of Hungary,
34 right next to a lake, a private company with the help of the local government they want to
35 build a huge luxury hotel and locals want to fight that, because they would it would change
36 the atmosphere of their environment then. And it's also like a bird conservatory, let's say it's
37 not the correct phrase for it. So it also has a, That aspect as well, like nature, biodiversity
38 aspect.

39 00:03:48

40 *Speaker 1:* and so you work together with a lot of different organization within...,
41 organizations within hungary

Transcript Greenpeace 28.04.2021

42 00:03:57
43 *Speaker 2:* organizations in a broader sense. Yes, usually these groups that I work with are
44 not formal organizations. But if we just say organizations as a group of people for cause or
45 something, then yes, I work with quite a few.

46 00:04:15
47 *Speaker 1:* OK, that's really nice. And what would you say is the main goal of Greenpeace in
48 Hungary?

49 00:04:24
50 *Speaker 2:* As a whole organization or just my part?

51 00:04:27
52 *Speaker 1:* as a organization.

53 00:04:31
54 *Speaker 2:* I would say that we fight for greener and more peaceful future. That's like what
55 you would find on our website as well. But to make it a bit more tangible, we want to äh ...
56 Drive social change in a way where we could live in a society where nature and people and
57 citizens are not Extracted. It's a really bad word, but in Hungarian, it makes sense. So where
58 society doesn't work in a way that nature and the will of people and normal citizens, like just
59 not big decision makers, but just normal citizens are taken into account. And yeah so that's
60 that's...

61 00:05:35
62 *Speaker 1:* how you would, would you say that you connect the social issue to the climate
63 issue?

64 00:05:43
65 *Speaker 2:* Yeah, definitely, these are super interconnected and we see that protecting
66 nature and the environment, it is not possible if people cannot express their feelings or even
67 if they can express their feelings or what they want with their environment. If decision
68 makers and big companies doesn't just doesn't give a shit about it, then they cannot protect
69 it. So I think these social justice and climate and environmental issues are interconnected for
70 sure.

71 00:06:24
72 *Speaker 1:* And would you say that climate change or the climate issue is a topic in Hungary
73 or that the society and citizens are interested in that?

74 00:06:39
75 *Speaker 2:* So I would feel that there with a bit of a change in the last few years, so I think in
76 2019 you could perceive that climate is one of the top issues in Hungary, where media
77 attention was really wide and there were mass demonstrations on climate issues in Hungary
78 as well. So in 2019, I could see that there was a shift in that. But actually if you just look at
79 statistics and actually there was a really cool new European Union statistic published a few
80 days ago, I think I can send you later, which actually looks at European citizens' perspective
81 on what are the top issues. And it is focused on the youth, I think. And you can see that
82 Hungary, just as in other European countries in Hungary as well, people would say that
83 climate and environmental issues are, let's say, obviously in the top 10, but usually not in the
84 top three. I think. I think. But yeah. So but actually, when we make Poles ourselves and these

Transcript Greenpeace 28.04.2021

85 are representative but small-scale poles, then we see as well that people care about this
86 issue mostly on a on the theoretical level a lot.

87 00:08:33

88 *Speaker 1:* And if you say mostly just on a theoretical level, how I view as a organization
89 trying to initiate the social change, I mean, which strategies do you use to reach more
90 people?

91 00:08:50

92 *Speaker 2:* Yeah. So for social change, I see two main directions, let's say. One is to try to
93 convince decision makers to change legislations or processes. The other way is to influence
94 or influence the mass opinion, let's say. And I think these two strategies are interconnected
95 as well, because decisions make decision makers one make the, let's say, right decisions. If
96 most of the people or at least some of the people are supporting that that issue. But also, it
97 doesn't matter if a lot of people think some legislate or something is unacceptable, let's say.
98 But if the legislation lets that process go along, then it doesn't matter how many people
99 think it's wrong, it would still go. So I think both strategies are totally valid. And I think if you
100 have the resources, then it is totally OK to focus on both. But also I would say that it's totally
101 OK for a grassroots organization to just focus on one aspect.

102 00:10:15

103 *Speaker 1:* Yeah, yeah, for sure, it was just a question because Greenpeace has a worldwide
104 recognition and international media attention. So the the. Strategies that can be used are
105 different,

106 00:10:37

107 *Speaker 2:* yeah, yeah, definitely, definitely.

108 00:10:40

109 *Speaker 1:* And do you work on an international level as well or do you focus on the on the
110 local politics and Hungary?

111 00:10:50

112 *Speaker 2:* So I am so as an international organization, and we are regional and arrow, which
113 is an inside mosaic word, I don't even know what it is and stand for it. But in practice, it
114 means that on some level we are in international or regional working groups as well. But
115 these are mostly communities of practice where we share. Share best practices, lesson
116 learned, and sometimes we collaborate on common campaigns. So let's say we want to
117 change European Union legislation. Then obviously offices, Greenpeace offices and in in EU
118 would collaborate. But on on a daily day, they daily basis, no one from another organization
119 or another Greenpeace organization would say that what tactics I should choose or or
120 should I go for, should I support this local find or not. So we have a lot of dependency on
121 that.

122 00:12:15

123 *Speaker 1:* It's really nice. But for huge projects and projects that have international focus,
124 it's always possible to connect on an international level.

125 00:12:30

126 *Speaker 2:* Yes, but personally, I wasn't involved in international campaigns that much

Transcript Greenpeace 28.04.2021

127 before. But yes, so let's say yes to a European Union level. I already seen collaboration, but I
128 know that there is international collaboration as well. But so far I haven't really been
129 involved in the

130 00:12:56

131 *Speaker 1:* OK and how our politicians and governments and decision makers include it. And
132 your actions. Do you write to them directly or and how do you try to contact them?

133 00:13:12

134 *Speaker 2:* Mm hmm. Obviously, big decision makers, be that corporate government or
135 other institution heads are, of course, uh, are usually targets in our campaigns as they can
136 make the right decision or they can bring a change in legislation, let's say, um, and we have
137 different tactics. So things that you would probably have seen already, let's say we want to
138 have a legislation change, then we could send an open letter or do a petition or if it's a
139 strictly environmental issue, then we could reach out to not not the top level of the
140 government. So let's say not the minister. We don't have an environmental ministry in
141 Hungary, which is a mystery from 2010, it was closed. So we don't have an environmental
142 ministry by some of the issues are at agriculture. Some of the issues, our technology ministry
143 and so on are not in the top level, but on one like an expert level, we could reach out to
144 people who work in the government who are experts and and yeah. So we can have a
145 discussion on that with corporations usually. So what we would do is also we could reach
146 out and on a formal. Media, I mean, like send an email or such, but we could also bring
147 media attention to the problem that we want to address or yeah, so that's also to how we
148 would we would get in in direct contact with would decision makers.

149 00:15:32

150 *Speaker 1:* And when you say you write emails or you try to contact them directly, do you
151 get a response?

152 00:15:40

153 *Speaker 2:* From the government or from corporations,

154 00:15:43

155 *Speaker 1:* both

156 00:15:44

157 *Speaker 2:* are both well with the government, they are obliged to do so. They must respond
158 in some way. OK, if it's a formal organization and you send a formal letter to the ministry,
159 let's say they have to respond within two weeks or something. But what's in their response
160 is obviously it's not it doesn't have like formal. You must content so they can just reply really
161 nice formal letter with basically no content in it, but at least we know that they read our
162 letter and they have to reply something. But in other cases, actually with with some issues,
163 we could. Really bring change from the legislation perspective with with continuous work
164 with with the minister, our experts.

165 00:17:02

166 *Speaker 1:* And. Do you because in the beginning, you said that you also could connect with
167 other grassroots movements. Do you also connect with other organizations like huge
168 organizations in Hungary?

Transcript Greenpeace 28.04.2021

169 00:17:18
170 *Speaker 2:* Mm hmm. Yes. So, for example, the. Mostly what I can tell you about is what I do
171 so, for example, in this oil and gas company wants to drill in a national park in for example,
172 in in that we started the statement with Friends of the Earth, Hungary. And we. We gathered
173 one hundred eleven signatures from organizations, NGOs and grassroots, and then this
174 statement would say that the oil companies should stop. And they're in the signatures you
175 would see WWF and Bird Conservatory, which is the ultimate really big NGO and dungaree,
176 and also some not environmental groups and a lot of smaller or bigger grassroots
177 organizations and NGOs. So, yes, we work in coalition work for that.

178 00:18:32
179 *Speaker 1:* And would you say that this change is the recognition of your efforts to organise
180 Greenpeace in your peer group?

181 00:18:44
182 *Speaker 2:* I don't understand the question.

183 00:18:48
184 *Speaker 1:* Do you think that through the collaboration with other organizations and
185 grassroot levels, you widen your target group or you get more recognition within the
186 society?

187 00:19:04
188 *Speaker 2:* OK. I think every collaboration and coalition work is good for everybody involved.
189 So in that sense, yes, I think if people who wouldn't know Greenpeace or wouldn't like
190 Greenpeace, but they like, let's say, another NGO or they trust another organization or
191 they're just interested in local issue and they say and they see that Greenpeace also stands
192 up for this cause, then definitely it could mean that people see that we're involved in this.
193 And if they understand that the cause is right and we are there, then they could perceive us
194 better. Before that, they wouldn't perceive as good.

195 00:20:00
196 *Speaker 1:* Hey, I have one more or one question to socio ecological. Because in in my
197 master's thesis, I'm going to focus on socio ecological transformation. And because it
198 connects this social change, climate change and economic change and different levels, and
199 what would would you say that or what is your position on socio ecological transformation?
200 So do you use it as reference or position in your media or in your outreach?

201 00:20:48
202 *Speaker 2:* And with this, you mean. That do we say to our followers that social, economic
203 and ecological systems are interconnected and

204 00:21:02
205 *Speaker 1:* yeah,

206 00:21:03
207 *Speaker 2:* or I'm not sure you got it right

208 00:21:06
209 *Speaker 1:* and that you say that or social ecological transformation says that the system as it
210 is, as it exists right now, the capitalist system and with social inequalities and economic and

Transcript Greenpeace 28.04.2021

211 hegemonic. Challenges doesn't work or cannot work in future references if nature and
212 humans want to coexist. And so the system has to change and there are a lot of different
213 positions on how the system should change or why. And if it's more degrowth or if it's
214 communistic system or what, is there a lot of different opinions within that? But the whole
215 or the basic idea is that this social, ecological and economic change has to work together and
216 that this the system as a whole has to change. Would you say that you as an organization or
217 you as a person stand behind that or that you communicate that or that you communicate
218 parts of it and.

219 00:22:34

220 *Speaker 2:* Uh huh. Yeah, OK. I think that I understand it better. Thanks for the clarification.
221 So. Like in internal discussion, we we talk a lot about, for example, post growth and how
222 economical system is. So how the economic and economical system also has to change in
223 some ways because we see that the whole logic behind it is wrong because it says that the
224 big bubble economy in the economy, you have society and in society you have nature. And
225 it's totally wrong because it's nature, society, economy. So, yeah, we talk a lot about it
226 internally in the Hungarian office for sure. And I know in other European countries it's a it's a
227 topic as well. In our public communication. We communicate this as well. But I see that this
228 is kind of new approach for us. So we're still so for example, we have a lot of biologists and
229 energy experts and communication experts in the team in Hungary. I don't know how it is in
230 other countries, but let's say we don't have a lot of economic experts in the organization, at
231 least in our country. So that's why we are still. Yeah, so this is a new topic for us in a nutshell,
232 and but we communicate a lot publicly as well, that this consumerist kind of economic
233 system, which is built on infinite growth, is wrong. So we so we we definitely make that
234 connection, that infinite growth. And the current economic system is one of the main causes
235 of environmental and social problems that we face now and that we have to address this. Or
236 the future would be in danger.

237 00:25:15

238 *Speaker 1:* And said, because in of course, Hungary is also a post socialist country, so there
239 already has been a transformation within the last 30 years or 40 years. So the question is, do
240 you think that the the last transformation in the last system change has an influence and
241 potential?

242 00:25:48

243 *Speaker 2:* I've heard it until potential and then

244 00:25:52

245 *Speaker 1:* as a potential to. To influence or it has an influence on potential transformations
246 in the future.

247 00:26:03

248 *Speaker 2:* Uh huh. Well, that's an interesting question for sure. What I can say is that. It's
249 that. Hmm. OK, I have to think about, you know, intellectually challenging to to respond,
250 actually, um. OK, so I think on one hand, the the the situation that in one generation behind,
251 we had the big system change, let's say, I think that this could definitely mean that it's it's in
252 the hands of the society that big system change is possible because we had one just a
253 generation before us. On the other hand. I think it also could mean that people are afraid of

Transcript Greenpeace 28.04.2021

254 changing again, because actually, like in a let's say, in in human rights and political change
255 was really necessary in the 90s. So that's not out of question. But actually, economically, it
256 was a disaster for most people in Hungary, especially people in in industries and working
257 class people. For them, the system change was really bad economically. And still people are
258 struggling with with their income, basically, and. And from that notion, I would say that
259 people are afraid of change because they haven't experienced stable income and no
260 economic struggles. So everything that would. Threatened that evening carries its scars, and
261 I can understand that.

262 00:28:39

263 *Speaker 1:* Yeah, yeah, for sure, it's a really interesting. Influence that has to be taken into
264 account. Yeah, OK, so thank you very much, I don't have any other questions for your
265 organization, but just for for you as personal assessment or a self perception, what, do you
266 see potential for the work of your organization on the future development? And do you, do
267 you think that it has the possibility to change the future development or influence it?

268 00:29:18

269 *Speaker 2:* Mm hmm. Yeah, definitely. That's why I wanted to work here, or in a community
270 similar to Greenpeace, because obviously I understand that one organization, even if it's an
271 international big one, cannot change the course of history. But at least we can try and and
272 try to. Address at least one, a few few elements of it or influence the course of history in a
273 tiny bit better way. So ja, I believe in that, but i also see that it is really really limited and I
274 don't ... expect a quick shift.