

## PREFACE

This paper has been prepared for the presentation of the research results of the project titled 'Urban Areas, Socio-spatial Inequalities and Conflicts – The Socio-spatial Factors of European Competitiveness'. The project was performed between 2004 and 2007 and funded by the Hungarian National Research-Development Programmes<sup>1</sup> in consortia cooperation (the participants were as follows: Institute of Sociology Hungarian Academy of Sciences, as consortium leader, and Centre for Regional Studies HAS, Pestterv Ltd., János Kodolányi University College, Fejér Enterprise Agency as consortia members).

The project's basic research tasks were as follows: to analyse the socio-spatial inequalities manifesting in social conflicts in the metropolitan regions of Hungary and to prepare a comparative analysis between the socio-spatial inequalities and conflicts in the metropolitan areas of Hungary and Central Europe. The investigation of the major social factors of the competitiveness of urban areas was another key target of basic research. On the basis of primary research results a research concept has been prepared on the practical implementation of research objectives i.e. reducing socio-spatial inequalities in urban areas, finding solutions for the management of local social conflicts improving the socio-economic competitiveness of urban areas. This paper 'Social Inequalities in Urban Areas and Globalization' is going to summarize the major research results of the problems of social inequalities in metropolitan areas as a basic theoretical study illustrating it with case studies from Hungary, Austria and the Czech Republic and provide a general summary on findings. The remaining results of the project will be published in another paper in Hungarian language.

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<sup>1</sup>The Project has been registered by the ID of 5/083/2004.