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The present volume introduces the first results of the LearnInnov Project (Community Learning and Social Innovation) and the chapters show the theoretical frame of the research project, its first results, methods, and future perspectives.

The LearnInnov Project has grown from the LeaRn Project (Learning Regions in Hungary, 2012–2016). The result of the LeaRn Project was a cartographical map of learning regions, cities, and communities in Hungary. The LearnInnov Project dealt with several questions. How will a territorial unit transform into a learning community? What do the inhabitants need for it? How can it be supported? The LearnInnov Project aims at discovering, describing, presenting, and analyzing social innovations by which territorial units might become learning communities.

The main concept of the research is “Social innovation,” which means grassroots initiatives that change the community and prove to be sustainable. Meeting the challenge community hunts for new information, knowledge, and competencies. Social innovation is closely related to social learning.

The first chapter of the book tries to explain the relationship between social innovation and community learning.

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This volume interprets “Social innovation” as such, highlighting two particularly important motions: networking and learning. Social networks change and transform continually. Innovations are stemming from this dynamics of the networks. The place of innovators in the network determines the birth and spread of innovation. Organizations are built up slowly but collapse hard. Networks are vulnerable, but they are reorganized quickly. Sustainable innovations arise from the ideal cooperation between organizations and networks.

In the second part of this volume, we can read about the methodological background of the research. The research attempts to examine the role of learning: adult learning and community learning are overcoming disadvantages and the ways and means by which a community might break out of its disadvantaged situation.

The first step of the research is the investigation by the indices: area, population, migration balance, aging index, rate of unemployment of the region (mostly township) under survey, as well as the proportion of unemployed young job seekers, the number of enterprises in operation for 1,000 residents (pieces), and the number of registered NGOs for 1,000 residents (pieces). The second is taking the data of the LeaRn index generated in the Learning Regions in Hungary research, as a point of departure. Using the LeaRn database, the township results are compared with national averages, the standing of the settlements in the township are examined and compared to those of similar social and economic standing.

In the next part, we can read about some settlements namely about Drávafok, Tésenfa, Földeák, Hajdúnánás, Hajdúhadház, and Sátorajáújhely. I would like to introduce the community projects and its effects in Hajdúhadház. The case study attempts to show the role that learning can play in overcoming disadvantages, how learning contributes to the development of settlement and region through innovative initiatives, and what about cultural learning (fields of sport and the relationship between sport and learning in the district of Hajdúnánás and in the center of the district). There are several prominent types of sports: football, handball, swimming, karate, kendo, kayak and canoe, wrestling, and athletics. Based on interviews with trainers, association managers, and players showed what is necessary for making a community, how sports can contribute to the development of a community, via learning to the children’s and parents’ physical and mental as well as spiritual development, the role of sport in learning and community building, long-term population retention is also seen as a goal.

Conclusions are the “local heroes” and the actors involved the value and motivating power to start learning, shaping communities, improvement of the quality of life, reaction to lifestyle changes, the related learning, and the learning and intergenerational effects of the community experience.

We can read about other community activities in other researches, for example, local festivals, local knowledge gatherings, local environmental protection (e.g., park care), local music bands and choir, pilgrimage organized by the local parish, various sports and games events, and martial arts.

In fine about the conclusions: bottom-up and top-down initiatives have to go hand in hand and social innovations (local initiatives) are compulsory for the recovery of rural Hungary, building a national policy on those social innovations.