

BUDAPESTI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND ECONOMICS  
DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT ECONOMICS  
TRANSPORT SCIENCE PH.D. PROGRAM

**DEVELOPMENT OF APPRAISAL METHODS  
FOR THE WHOLE LIFE CYCLE OF TRANSPORT FACILITIES**

**overview of Ph.D. thesis**

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## 1. THE TASK AND PRECEDENTS OF THE RESEARCH WORK

Transport infrastructure development projects generally require a remarkable amount of financial sources, and effect the environment, the economy and a large number of passengers on the long term. In order to appraise the efficiency of transport projects and project versions, more and more indicators must be included in the assessment process during the pre construction and decision making period.

In order to guarantee the long term sustainable development of the transport network the importance of the environment friendly transport modes is continuously increasing, so when evaluating transport construction projects, multimodal project versions must also be appraised. Besides in the case of the long-distance transport projects (mostly in the case of the trans-european transport corridors) and the suburban transport projects the several transport mode versions can be considered as alternative project versions, and the comparison of these alternatives is also required during the decision making process.

In most of the cases the finances available for the development of the transport infrastructure are limited, they are remarkably less, than the proposed projects would require, so it's an important task to designate the most efficient projects or project versions. The criteria and indicators taken into consideration during the assessment process are very varied – depending on the transport modes, the level and the objectives of the assessment process –, currently there is no unified, general method applied in the international assessment methodology.

The appraisal methods applied in the practice are mostly used only for the preparation and the foundation of the decisions, but they are rarely used to control the real costs, incomes and efficiency, partly because of the absence of the instruments that could support this activity. The importance of such monitoring activity is emphasized by the fact that in the case of many transport infrastructure projects the costs are underestimated, and the revenues are overestimated during the planning period. As a result of these the necessity for the refinancing of the project can occur in a relatively short period after the activation of the project, and the appraisal of the project efficiency often has to be done repeatedly.

Many changes can occur during the operation, the “life” of the project, e.g. the real costs, revenues, the financing costs, the real economical environment indicators will differ from the forecasted values, and so the refinancing of the project can also be required. To handle these complex requirements a unified assessment method should be created, that is able to handle and control these parameters and is appropriate for the continuous re-evaluation of the project during the whole project life cycle. Partly based on the traditional assessment methods I have created a new appraisal method and software tool, that is appropriate for the completion of such complex analysis, and the continuous and repeated efficiency control during the whole life cycle of the projects.

The dissertation summarizes and presents the results of a 10 year long research and development activity.

## 2. AIMS OF THE RESEARCH WORK

By developing the model presented in the dissertation my aim was the creation of an efficiency assessment method, that is not only available for the preliminary appraisal of the projects, but also provides new tools and methods to

- control the fulfilment of the preliminary efficiency requirements during the whole project life,
- continuously re-evaluate the project to handle the consequences of the changes in the operation, the financing of the projects and the changes in the macroeconomy,
- analyse the refinancing possibilities of the project,
- analyse the consequences of the uncertainty during the whole project life cycle, generating and handling a large number of sensitivity analysis project cases,
- explore the values or ranges of the input variables, where the efficiency indicators fulfil the preliminary requirements,
- include hardly or not at all monetarizable indicators into the assessment process.

In order to fulfil the aims of my research activity I have created an assessment method, that can appraise a wide range of effects to the individuals, the society, the economy, and the environment, and that can handle the complex set of the criteria indicators in a unified structure.

It was an important aim to handle the more and more complex financing techniques (e.g. PPP) occurring in the national and international financing practice, and to calculate and control the use of the financing sources and the financing liabilities generated by the use of these sources accordingly to the international standards.

### 3. THE METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

A wide range of literature deals with appraisal methods supported by traditional tools.

In general two appraisal methods are applied to the assessment of the transport project efficiency, and to the comparison of the different project versions:

- Cost-Benefit Analysis: CBA
- Multicriteria Analysis: MCA

The Cost-Benefit Analysis can evaluate only monetarizable effects, at the same time it represents a reliable, objective assessment method. The results of an analysis completed by the Multicriteria Analysis contain much more uncertainty due to the subjective evaluation and the specialities of methods applied to summarize the results of the individual evaluations.

The appraisal can be carried out on two levels:

- financial, and
- social - economical level.

As a rule methodology difficulties are not occurring in the case of financial level assessments. On the other hand during a social - economical level assessment process external effects must be also evaluated (e.g. environmental effects, accident costs, synergistic effects to the economy and the whole society). For the evaluation of these external effects currently there is no internationally unified, widely applicable method.

In the dissertation I review and evaluate the different appraisal methods based on the Hungarian and the international scientific publications.

In Hungary in the last years Monigl ([Mon99], [Mon00]), Tímár([Tím02]), Tánczos([Tan98b], [Tan03]) published articles dealing with similar methodological issues.

From the international scientific literature it is worth emphasizing the research activity of Nash, C. ([Nas91], [Nas02]), the assessment method created for the TINA program, and the normative method created by the EU ([Ecd03a])

The complex evaluation method presented in the dissertation is a result of a continuous development. All of the elements of the method are verified in detailed analysis and also during the numerous applications in the practice. During the continuous development I was also taking into consideration the post-verification of the earlier projects, if it was possible.

Most of the processes included in the development process are based

- on the rich database of the numerous transport projects analysed by this method in the last decade,
- on the mathematical statistical analysing of this database,
- on the application of vector and matrix transformation methods to create a consistent way to handle cash-flow vectors and matrices,
- on the verification of state of the art financing methods in the real life

#### 4. NEW SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS, THESIS

1. **I have developed a new method to handle the project data, the cash-flow elements as matrices, and so it can support the execution of the calculations in a transparent, repeatable, well controllable way, and it supports the latter sensitivity analysis aims.**

The project costs are contained in the  $\underline{CO}$  matrix, which matrix can be broken up into two hypermatrices: the construction and operation cost matrices. A  $\underline{CO}_1, \underline{CO}_2, \dots, \underline{CO}_t \dots, \underline{CO}_n$  cost vectors – which compose the cost matrix – can be constructed by the element by element multiplication of two vectors. This multiplication is signed by the  $\otimes$  sign.

$$\underline{CO}_i = \underline{CO}_i^O \otimes \underline{CO}_i^{UC}$$

where

$$CO_{it} = CO_{it}^O * CO_{it}^{UC}$$

$$i = 1, \dots, n, \quad t = 1, \dots, m$$

$\underline{CO}_i^O = [CO_{i1}^O, CO_{i2}^O, \dots, CO_{it}^O, \dots, CO_{im}^O]$  represents the quantity of the production measured in physical measure, and

$$\underline{CO}_i^{UC} = [CO_{i1}^{UC}, CO_{i2}^{UC}, \dots, CO_{ij}^{UC}, \dots, CO_{im}^{UC}]$$
 represents the actual unit costs.

In a similar way to the cost structure the incomes are stored in the  $\underline{IN}$  matrix, where the income values can also be defined by the multiplication of the performance values defined in physical measure and the unit income values.

For each of the two matrices (the cost and the income matrices) parameter matrices must be defined (called the  $\underline{CO}^P$  and  $\underline{IN}^P$  matrices), which contain the name of the cost and income vectors, the currency and the price index of the corresponding series. These data are used in the latter calculation steps and in the presentation of the calculation results.

The indicators of the economic environment are stored in the  $\underline{ME}$  matrix, to which a parameter matrix called  $\underline{ME}^P$  is also assigned.

With the use of the cost, income and macroeconomy matrices together with their parameter matrices two transformation matrices can be generated (called the  $\underline{CO}^T$  and the  $\underline{IN}^T$  matrices), with the help of these the so called “cash-flow before financing” ( $\underline{CF}^{BF}$ ) time series vector can be produced.

After that the utilization of the financial sources and also the payment liabilities generated by these sources can be calculated.

After successfully completing these calculation steps the tax calculations, and after that the calculation of the efficiency indicators can be performed.

**2. I have extended the model by a new module, which supports the execution of an extensive range of sensitivity analysis in order to explore the effects of the uncertainty occurring during the project life.**

The new module has two main purposes:

- the easy generating, handling and presenting of a large number of project versions and of the calculated data, and
- the support of the sensitivity analysis

The project versions can be varied by

- the different time schedule in the construction period,
- the technical realization versions,
- the financing structures,
- the tolling systems, etc.

With the help of the sensitivity analysis the effects of the changes of the following parameters can be assessed:

- construction costs,
- incomes,
- operation, maintenance costs,
- traffic volumes and traffic profile,
- exchange rates,
- macroeconomy indicators,
- financing conditions, etc.

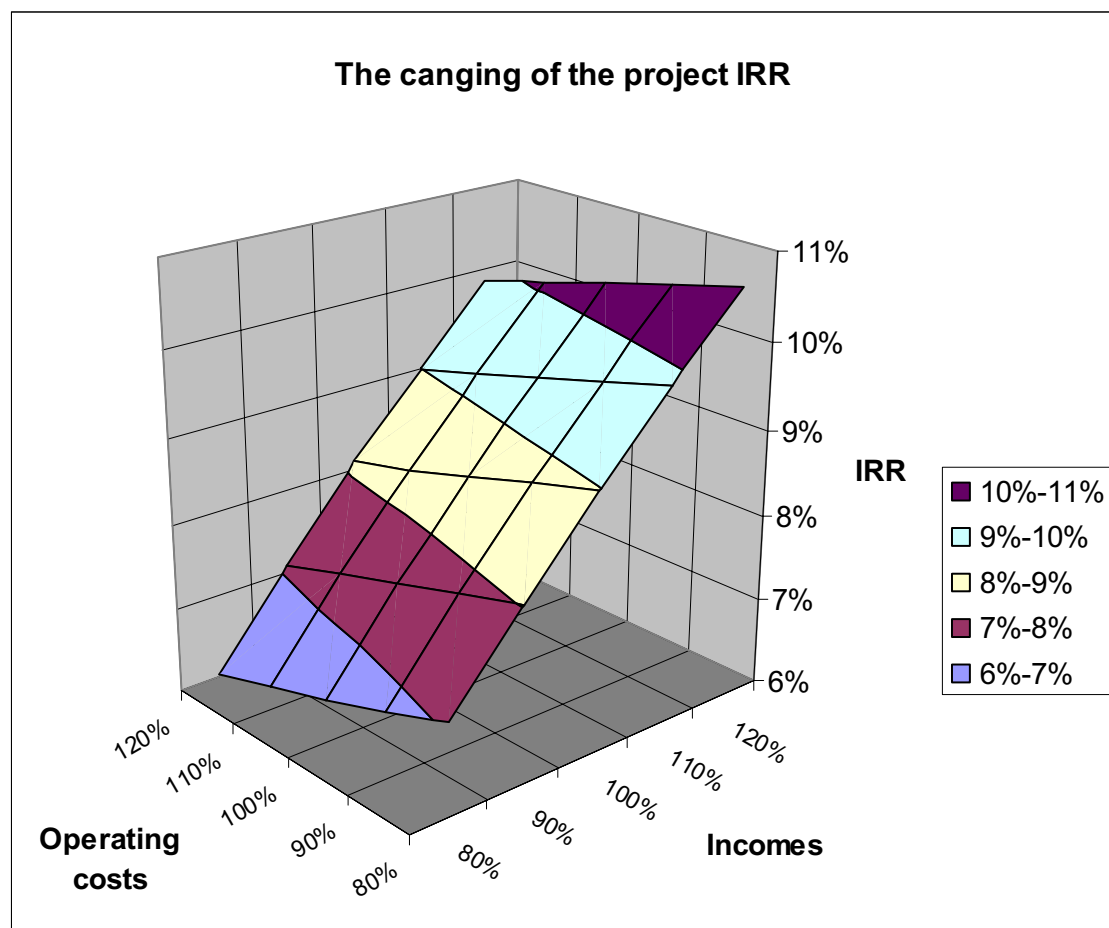
For the unified handling of these two rather different assessment types four version-handling matrices had to be developed (called the  $\underline{CO}^{VC}$ ,  $\underline{IN}^{VC}$ ,  $\underline{ME}^{VC}$ ,  $\underline{FIN}^{VC}$  matrices), which define the weight of the corresponding cost, income, macroeconomy and

financing source vectors during the calculations, or they define, if the vector is not included at all in the current project version or sensitivity analysis case.

### 3. I have developed a visualisation method for the better presentation of the results of the assessment calculations.

One of the most important benefits of the method presented in the previous sections is that it enables the execution of multivariate sensitivity analysis. But at the same time it emphasizes the need for the graphical presentation of the income and outcome variables.

For the most effective use of the built in methods the calculations should be executed in batch mode. The income variables and the results of the calculations represent a multidimensional space, from which two or three dimensional projection can be selected to visualize the effects of the changes of the income variables.



**4. The new methodology provides the possibility of exploring the values or ranges of the input variables, where the efficiency indicators fulfil the preliminary requirements**

The multidimensional space generated by the results of the sensitivity analysis calculations can be cut by contour-lines in order to explore and define that project versions or sensitivity analysis cases, where the calculated output variables (the efficiency indicators) exceed a predefined level or they fall in a predefined range.

For executing these calculations a  $N_{\text{bem}}+1$  dimension matrix – introduced in the 5.2.8 section of the dissertation – must be generated, where  $N_{\text{bem}}$  represents the number of the input variables used in the calculations. In this matrix the output (efficiency) indicators are calculated (stored) for all of the combinations of the input variables. With the help of these output variables it is possible to explore the project versions defined by the input variable combinations, where the output variables fulfils the predefined requirements.

**5. I have developed a complex set of procedures so that we could include the results of the CBA calculations into the assessment process of the ELECTRE method to use the advantages of both of the methods.**

During the appraisal of the investment alternatives the analysed criteria often contain discrepancy, and difficulties occur when monetarizing the criteria. To provide the opportunity to include such criteria into the assessment process a multicriteria module has been developed.

The method is based on the Electre II method (Roy and Bertier, 1973; Kiss, Táneczós, 1998). During the development of the module the purpose was not the transformation of the well known MCA method, but the utilization of the advantages of the Electre method and the transport oriented application of it for giving a deeper help to the decision making process.

- 6. The newly developed method is capable to perform the appraisal not only during the project preparation phase, but it is also available for the continuous control of the effects of the financial and economical changes during the operation period of the project. It is also capable of exploring the reason of the divergence from the forecasted indicator values and supports to define the required changes in the project parameters to reach the predefined efficiency of the project.**

Reaching the goals is made possible by the development of the following features:

- after the project activation the real project costs can be processed in the model, and so the effects of the over- or underestimated costs and incomes can be corrected
- the flexible financing module provides an effective tool to plan a new financing structure in case of the need of a refinancing process regardless whether the refinancing is made necessary by planning mistakes (e.g. over- or underestimated costs or incomes), or a favourable financing position of the project (better financing possibilities due to the decrease of the risks).
- if a discrepancy is occurring from the projected parameter values during the operation phase of the project the complex sensitivity analysis module enables the model to explore the necessary changes in the project parameters to reach the predefined efficiency indicator values or ranges.

- 7. The model helps defining the optimal financing structure of PPP type transport infrastructure development projects in case of different optimum criteria.**

I have classified the financial sources used for the financing of the projects in 5 classes:

- equity investment of the project owner(s). The amount of money invested in the project is signed by  $FIN_A$ , the share of it in the total finance cost is signed by  $\alpha$ .
- subsidy provided by international financing institutions (e.g. EU Cohesion Fund). It is signed by  $FIN_B$  and  $\beta$ .
- subsidized debts provided by international financing institutions (e.g. EIB, EBRD). They are signed by  $FIN_C$  and  $\gamma$ .
- local public sources (state, local government). They are signed by  $FIN_D$  and  $\delta$ .
- market based debts provided by commercial banks. They are signed by  $FIN_E$  and  $\varepsilon$ .

Using these notations the total financing requirement of the project is

$$FIN = FIN_A + FIN_B + FIN_C + FIN_D + FIN_E = FIN * (\alpha + \beta + \gamma + \delta + \varepsilon)$$

The mandatory regulations regarding to the sources (e.g. EU finance share can not be more than 85%, or the public source can not be less than 15%) can be handled as limit values during the optimisation process.

During the project construction and the financing structure definition significantly diverse optimisation goals can be set, e.g.:

- maximum use of the EU sources,
- minimum use of the public sources,
- the maximum improvement of the regional accessibility,
- the maximum development of the potential of the regional economy, etc.

The different goals can result in different optimal financing structures. With the help of the financing module the  $\alpha, \beta, \gamma, \delta$  és  $\varepsilon$  indicators – which represent the share of the sources in the total source utilization – can be calculated.

## **5. EXPEDIENCE OF THE NEW SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS**

The methods and modules presented in the dissertation are continuously built into the project finance and decision support software tool, called INNOFINance and they are continuously developed based on the experiences of the prepared project efficiency appraisals.

The number of the EU supported and also the public-private financed transport investment projects is increasing, so the demand for the efficiency assessment appraisals also will be increasing. During the construction and the operation period of the transport development projects partly financed by private sources highly educated specialists, consultants must be employed by the public and also by the private partners. In this environment the presented methodology can be applied efficiently.

The newly developed assessment methods introduced in the dissertation are presented in the graduate and the postgraduate courses of the TUB Department for Transport Economics. Not only the theory of the project appraisal methods is educated, but the students also carry out case study works.

In the frame of international research cooperation programs these methods are educated also in other EU universities.

## 6. LITERATURE

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