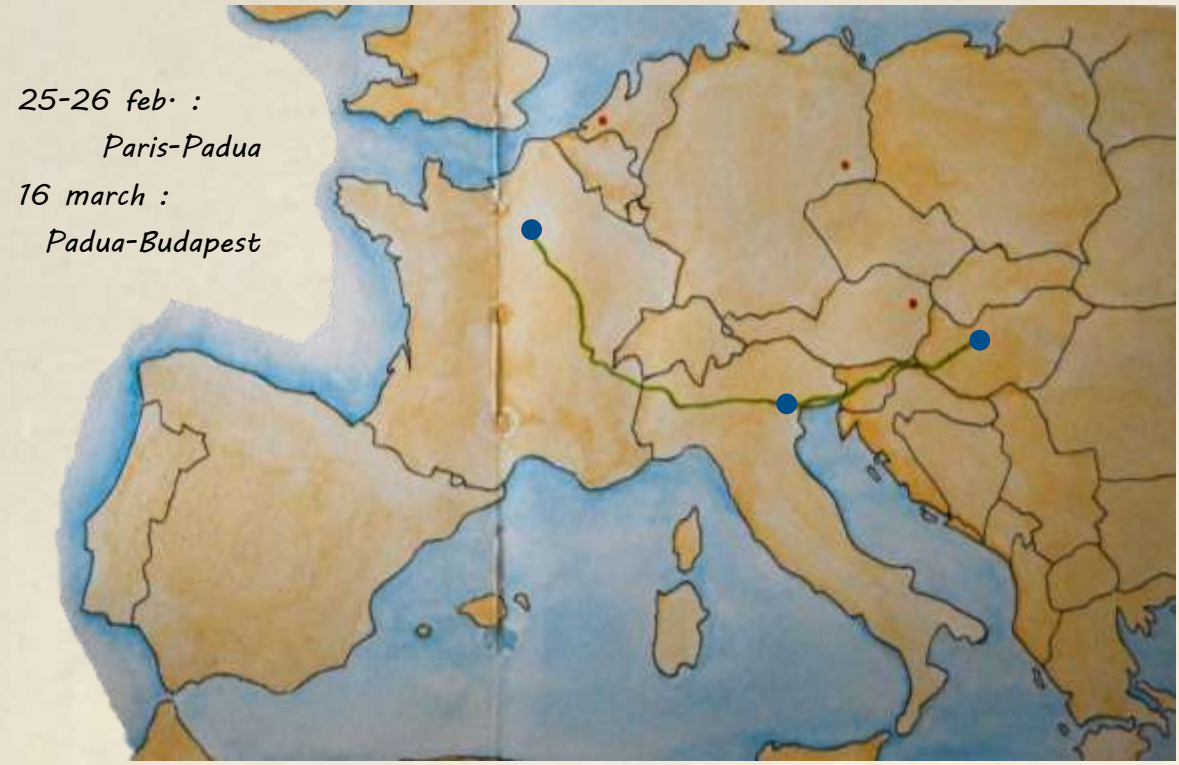
Etincelles *(Sparkles)*

Hírek Budapestről

After Padoue, I am now in Budapest, for the second and longest step of my adventure. I will be a trainee at Cargonomia for 2,5 months. Describing Cargonomia's activities in a few words would not be enough. This is why I only open appetite with the following ones : degrowth, agroecology, cargobikes. If you want to know more, let yourself travel by reading these few pages 🥰

* = for more details, or to read the previous step, you can follow this link :
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1NGG1U3lY7uW8BOjAxUN4htQkQ268F7_B?usp=sharing

Arriving in Budapest



I took the bus in Padua, and got a private ride with the two drivers to Venice· From there, 4 people joined us until Trieste· Without detailing all the stops, I can assure you that the peak population of this Flixbus was reached in Ljubljana, with around ten passengers (nice carbon footprint...) But at least I had some peace and quiet, so I could sleep for a good part of the journey, with a few awake breaks to admire the beautiful landscapes·

I arrived in Budapest at around 7pm and had no trouble getting to József Eötvös Collegium, the school where I would be staying, occupying the room that Julie kindly lent me (thanks Julie and Mr Berr!)· After a quick 3-word many-gesture interaction with the moustachioed Hungarian-speaking receptionist, a student showed me where my room was, and everything went very smoothly!

Hungarian is not easy...

Here is the proof in a few anecdotes from the first two days in Hungary :

- I didn't stop saying « Ciao » and « Grazie », my brain probably stayed in Italy...

- I took twice the tram in the wrong direction because I was unable to recognize the direction

- People said « Pardon » and « Merci » to me, in different contexts, without interacting before. My conclusion is that either these people were French with a strong accent, either these words are also used in Hungarian (it would be the only ones looking familiar), or it is written on my forehead that I am French. Or, more likely, I transform what I hear and think it is French even if it is not...

- I almost bought 1kg of salt instead of sugar.

But how do you expect to have it easy with an agglutinative language, where no word even remotely resembles French or English? In theory, words can be infinitely long, but the officially-considered longest word is : "Megszentségteleníthetetlenségeskedéseitekert" (44 letters). It roughly translates as "for your behaviour, which claims to always be desacralised". I hope this information brightens your day!

When it comes to shopping, you'll just have to trust the phone's automatic translation, which doesn't always work... At least, I hope not, because here's what I once read when trying to translate a label:

Whitch means « There is a lot of cut tourists, porc and a lot of marshmallows. I cannot eat it. »

But don't worry, as Budapest is a global city, English is still widely spoken!

Lucie, Cargonomia trainee :

« No matter how distressing the situation, you can't live without hope. If you want to take care of yourself and those around you, it's essential not to give up, and to look for solutions rather than focusing on the problem."

JP, stagiaire Cargonomia :

"Less injustice, less intolerance, more empathy. The anger I feel drives me to add my brick to the construction of better living conditions, to the nurturing of communities that I would love to live in : if what I do succeeds in "only" paving the way for others, in making their struggles less painful, then I'm fulfilled."

Cargonomia

Martin, stagiaire Cargonomia :

"I often get the impression that there are beautiful people around us with whom we haven't had the chance to talk, perhaps because of a lack of curiosity or a lack of space for discussion."

At Cargonomia, everything is done to create this space for discussion. At the moment, we have a lot of interns: Anna, Basile, Dorota, Flora, Hortense, Jade, Jean-Paul, Lucie, Maïlys and Martin. Czechs or French, students or changing profession, in the social science, environmental studies, political science, agro-ecology or engineering, we've all come to learn, expand our knowledge, exchange ideas... The Cargonomia members with whom we interact the most are Vincent and Logan. There's never a dull moment with them! They give good advice and we always have great discussions!

Cyclonomia
Social cooperative of making or repairing bikes by yourself

Zsámboki Biokert
Organic farm that distributes weekly vegetable boxes in Budapest and where we can learn about sustainable agriculture

Kantaa
Self-organised messenger and bike delivery association (Now : Golya)

What about **Cargonomia** ? It is the formalisation of the cooperation between these three small socially and environmentally responsible initiatives !

It is a **community space**, where topics like **local and healthy food**, **soft mobility** or **sustainable urban way of life** are the core of the various activities, workshops discussions. It is a **convivial** way to discover or deepen the practise of **Degrowth** theory.

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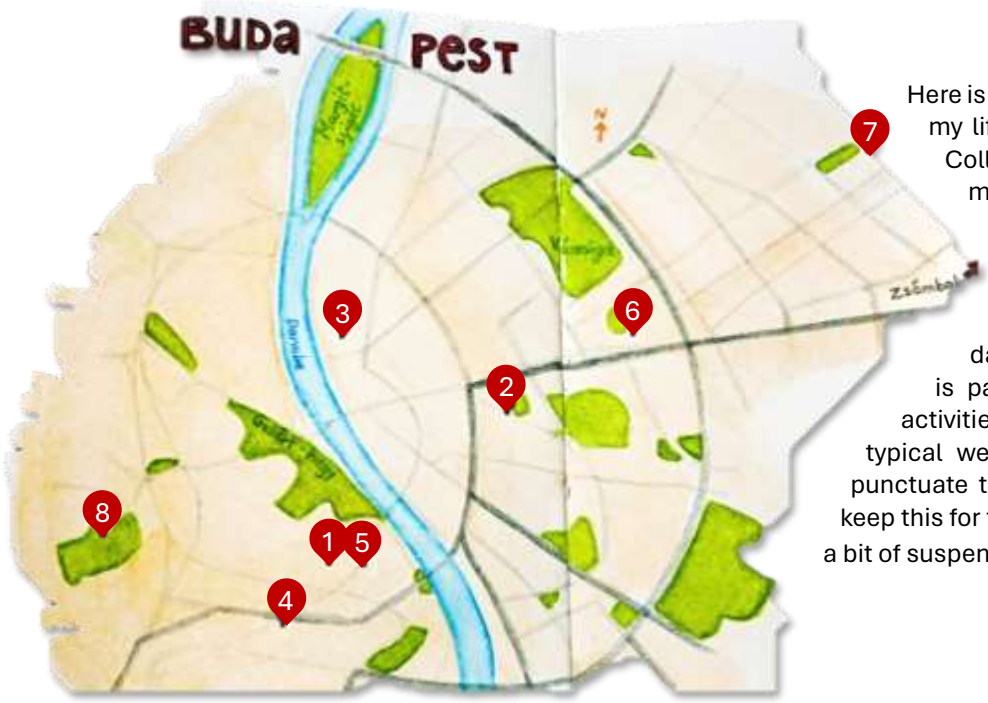
A busy week



Here is a map with some landmarks from my life in Budapest. I sleep at Eötvös Collegium 1, and I take the bike to move around the city since I have one. Otherwise, public transports are quite efficient ! For Cargonomia trainees, every week is similar, and yet no two days are alike. As you may notice, it is partly due to the diversity of the activities. Moreover, in addition to this typical week there are many events that punctuate the life of Cargonomia, but I will keep this for the next episode (I must maintain a bit of suspense 😊)!

Projects days and discussions *MON-TUE*

Two days are dedicated to our personal projects : workshops, podcast, sundryer, sensibilisation about sustainable agriculture, new imaginaries, working in the communal gardens at Zugló 7 et Sas-hegy 8 ...
Each trainee has the opportunity to be the driving force behind their own project!
Team meetings with Vincent and Logan (our « mentors ») happen at Cargonomia 2, at CEU 3 (Central European University) or at Valyo 4. It is the occasion to organise ourselves for the upcoming week and events, to share about our projects, and to have a discussion with Logan and the whole group to deal with a topic that changes every week (more or less linked to degrowth). We usually base ourselves on article readings : agroecology, environmental justice, conviviality, biodiversity...

Farm days at Zsámboki Biokert *WEN - FRI*

Early in the morning, we take a bus 6 to the village of Zsámbok, where we spend the day working on the farm. It's an opportunity to learn gardening methods (preparing the soil, planting, watering, weeding, harvesting...), the names of tools (which I now know in English but still don't know in French), but also to take a break from the urban frenzy to enjoy contact with nature! At the end of the day, before getting a good sleep during the 90-minute bus ride, everyone collects some vegetables from the farm for their own consumption (I'm becoming a pro at cooking spinach, Swiss chards and salads of all kinds!).

Distribution day *THU*

In the morning, around one hundred and fifty boxes from the farm are distributed to various distribution points around Budapest. Some of these boxes are then delivered by cargo bike, while others wait patiently for their owners to come and collect them. That's why the team of trainees has two afternoon shifts: one in Valyo 4 and the other in Cargonomia. 2
It's also often on Thursdays that you can drop in at Cyclonomia 5 to repair bikes (I've witnessed bikes enter the workshop in 3 rusty pieces, and come out rolling!)

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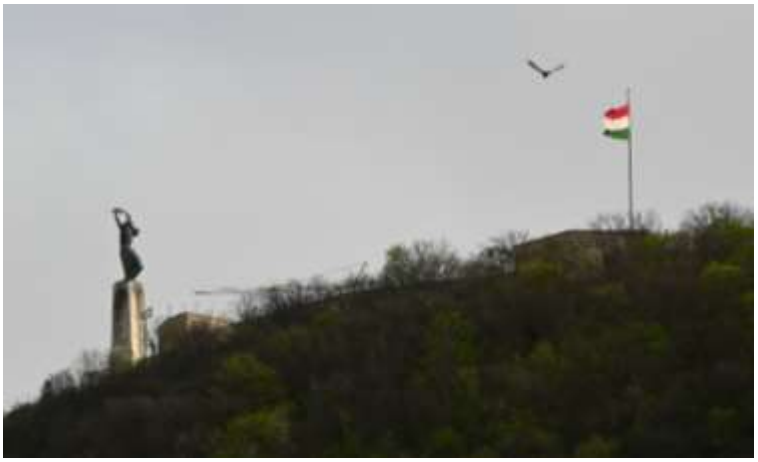
Reportage photo

Budapest
Parliament, Danube riverbank, statue of Liberty (non in honour of the American Dream but in commemoration of soldiers after WW2), Eötvös Collegium.



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Farm, cargo bikes, meetings...

At the farm, there are a few sheep (including two new born!), and a horse, Sari, who helps preparing the soil. We eat lunch together, and often work in small groups on the various tasks. On the other days, we take advantage of the sunshine to hold our meetings outside and do some communication work (for example, for the loan of cargo bikes).

Balaton Lake

How could you not take advantage of a sunny weekend outside the tourist season to improvise a bike ride around the largest lake in Central Europe? 80 km along the shores of Lake Balaton, interspersed with sunbathing naps, swimming, watching the sun go down, a night outside… A great summer weekend! (although a little early for the season…)

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