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## Comparison of Growth, Maturation, and Physical Fitness of Hungarian Urban and Rural Boys and Girls

O. G. Eiben<sup>1</sup>, A. Barabás<sup>2</sup> and Á. Németh<sup>3</sup>

*1. Churchill College, Cambridge, U.K. (formerly: Department of Biological Anthropology, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary*

*2. Department of Biomechanics, Semmelweis University, Budapest, Hungary*

*3. The Hungarian National Institute of Health, Budapest, Hungary*

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**ABSTRACT** The authors present a comparison between urban and rural boys and girls, based on their Hungarian National Growth and Physical Fitness Study, carried out in the whole territory of Hungary. The sample investigated (N=39.035) contained 1.5% of the 3-18 year-old healthy boys and girls in Hungary. The anthropometric programme included 18 body measurements, the physical fitness investigation used a battery of seven tests. Data were collected also about the family background. Urban boys and girls are taller, more robust, and stronger than their rural counterparts. Pubertal growth spurt in urban boys and girls appears about one-and-a-half year earlier, than in rural ones. In width measurements, urban boys and girls usually have higher means than the rural ones. Based on their skinfolds, however, urban boys and rural girls usually have more subcutaneous fat. These differences are the most pronounced during or at the end of puberty. The authors surveyed the different urban and rural socio-economic environmental factors influencing children's growth and physical fitness and they discuss the possible reasons of these differences.

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[Home](#)

[Back](#)

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