

THE HUNGARIAN ROUTE TO THE EUROPEAN UNION: A CORPUS-ASSISTED STUDY

UCREL Seminars
8th December 2016

Elena Valvason
University of Pavia



OUTLINE OF THE PRESENTATION

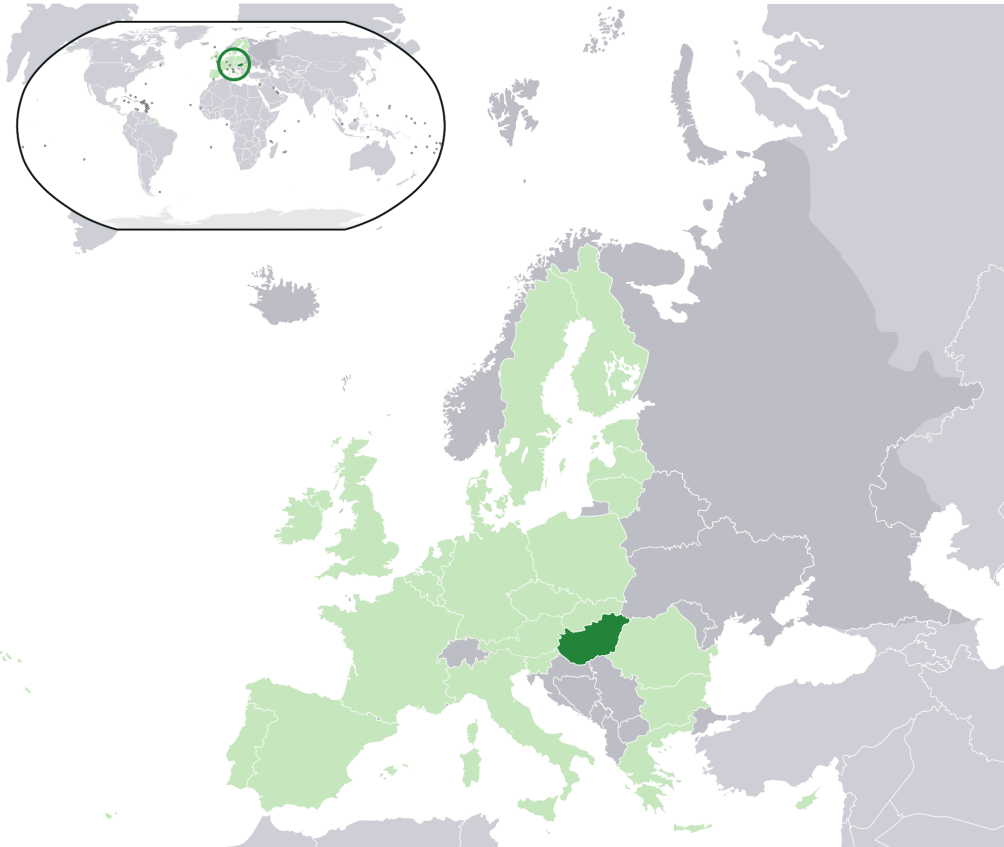
1. The aim: linguistic exploration of Hungarian parliamentary speeches
2. Historical background: the Hungarian route to the European Union
3. Research questions: looking for perceptions and identity construction
4. The HUNPOL corpus: data collection
5. Methodology: collocation analysis
6. Results: semantic categorisation and creation of identity
7. Conclusion

1. AIM OF THE STUDY

Examination of the **Hungarian MPs'** **parliamentary speeches** about the **European Union** between **1998 and 2003**.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

HUNGARY



- Hungary is a **Central European** country bordered by Austria to the northwest, Slovenia to the west, Croatia to the southwest, Serbia to the south, Romania to the east, Ukraine to the northeast and Slovakia to the north.
- The country's official language is **Hungarian**.

The end of an era



End of 1940s

USSR Member State

Hungary turns into a socialist country becoming **satellite state of the Soviet Union**



25th March-8th April 1990

Free elections

Free elections are held to elect the **first Democratic Government** after Second World War

23rd October 1989

Fall of the socialist state

The government **amends the former socialist constitution** and embraces the **rise of the Third Hungarian Republic**



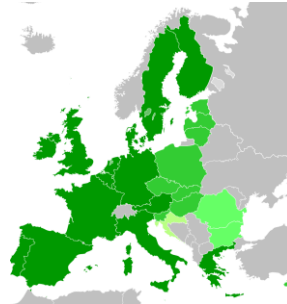
The route to the European Union



1990-1991

CoE and EEC Member State

Hungary joins the **Council of Europe** and the **European Economic Community**



31st March 1998

Beginning of negotiations

EU-membership **negotiations start**



1st May 2004

EU Member State

Hungary becomes a **member of the EU**

31st March 1994

Application for EU-membership

Hungary **formally applies** to join the European Union



12th April 2003

Referendum

Hungarians are asked to approve their joining the European Union in a **referendum**: 83,6% of the voters agrees to support membership



2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A COUNTRY 'IN BETWEEN'

«[...] **two sets of attitudes** have in some shape coexisted in the country, especially in modern times as **reflection on national identity and its embeddedness in more comprehensive structures** became a self-contained intellectual pursuit.» (Kontler 2002: 20)

Hungarianness vs. Europeanness?

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1) What is the Hungarian politicians' **perception** of the European Union?

2) What kind of **identity** do they build for their country in discourses about the EU?

3. TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS...

Semantic preference: «[...] the relation, not between individual words, but between a lemma or word-form and a set of semantically related words» (Stubbs 2001: 65)

Semantic prosody: «[...] a particular collocational phenomenon: some words (e.g. CAUSE) have a predominantly negative prosody, a few (e.g. PROVIDE) have a positive prosody, many words are neutral in this respect» (Stubbs 1996: 176)

4. THE HUNPOL CORPUS

DATA

- 444 Hungarian **parliamentary speeches** (344,748 tokens)
- date: **31st March 1998** and **12th April 2003**
- query term: ***Európai Unió**** ('European Union')



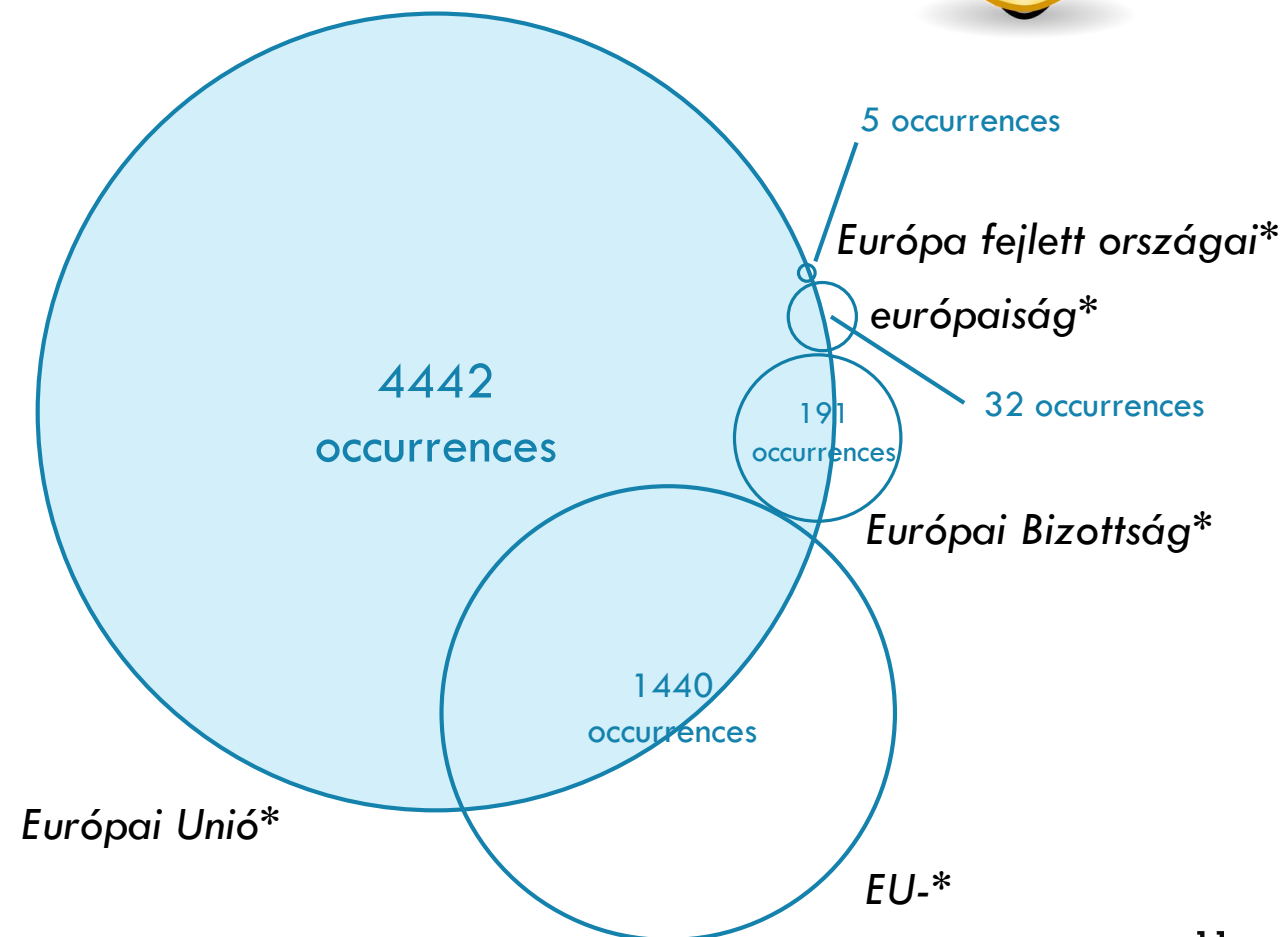
4. THE HUNPOL CORPUS: *EURÓPAI UNIÓ**

A SEARCH TERM



Other possible search terms:

- ***EU-****
- *Európai Bizottság**
‘European Commission’
- *Európa fejlett országai**
‘European developed countries’
- *európaiság**
‘Europeanness’



4. THE HUNPOL CORPUS: *EURÓPAI UNIÓ**

A 'ROOT ITEM'



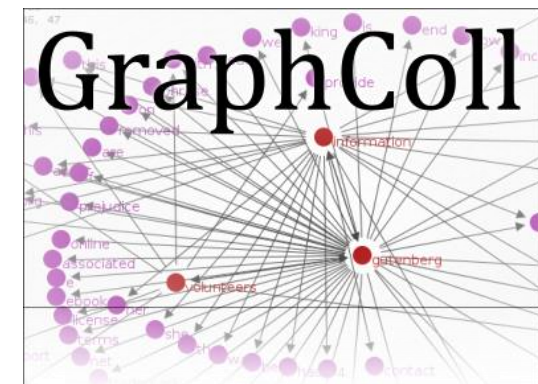
For instance:

- *Európai Unió* 'European Union'
- *európai uniós* 'of (the) European Union'
- *Európai Unióban* 'in (the) European Union'
- *Európai Unióval* 'with the European Union'

5. METHODOLOGY

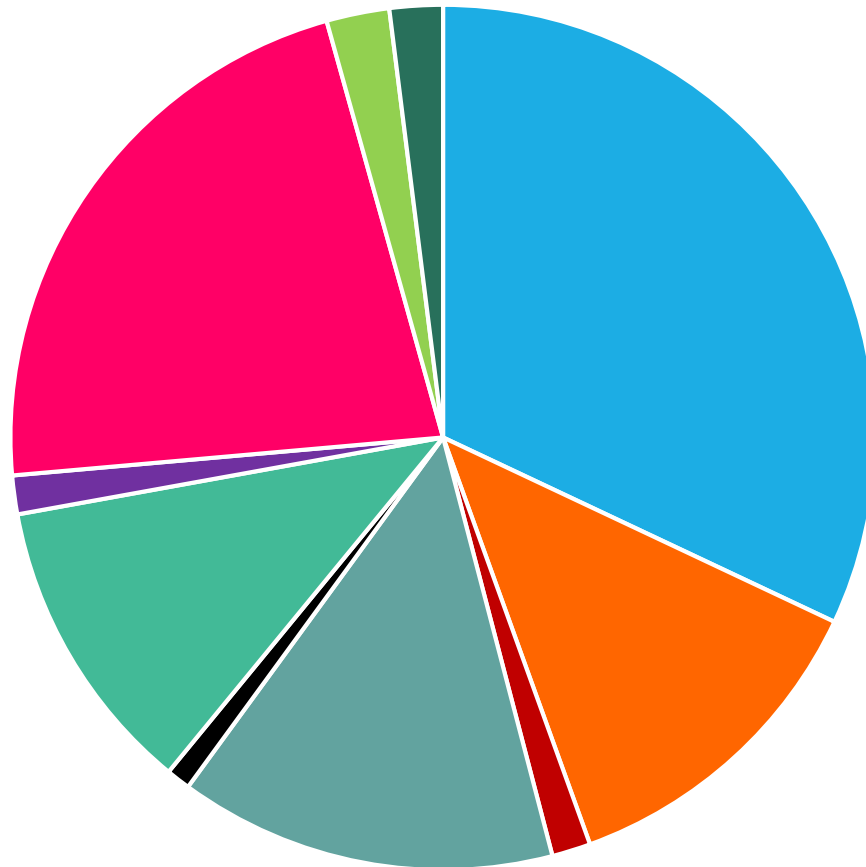
COLLOCATION ANALYSIS

- First-order collocates of the *európai unió** multi-word expression
- Second-order collocates
- Concordance lines



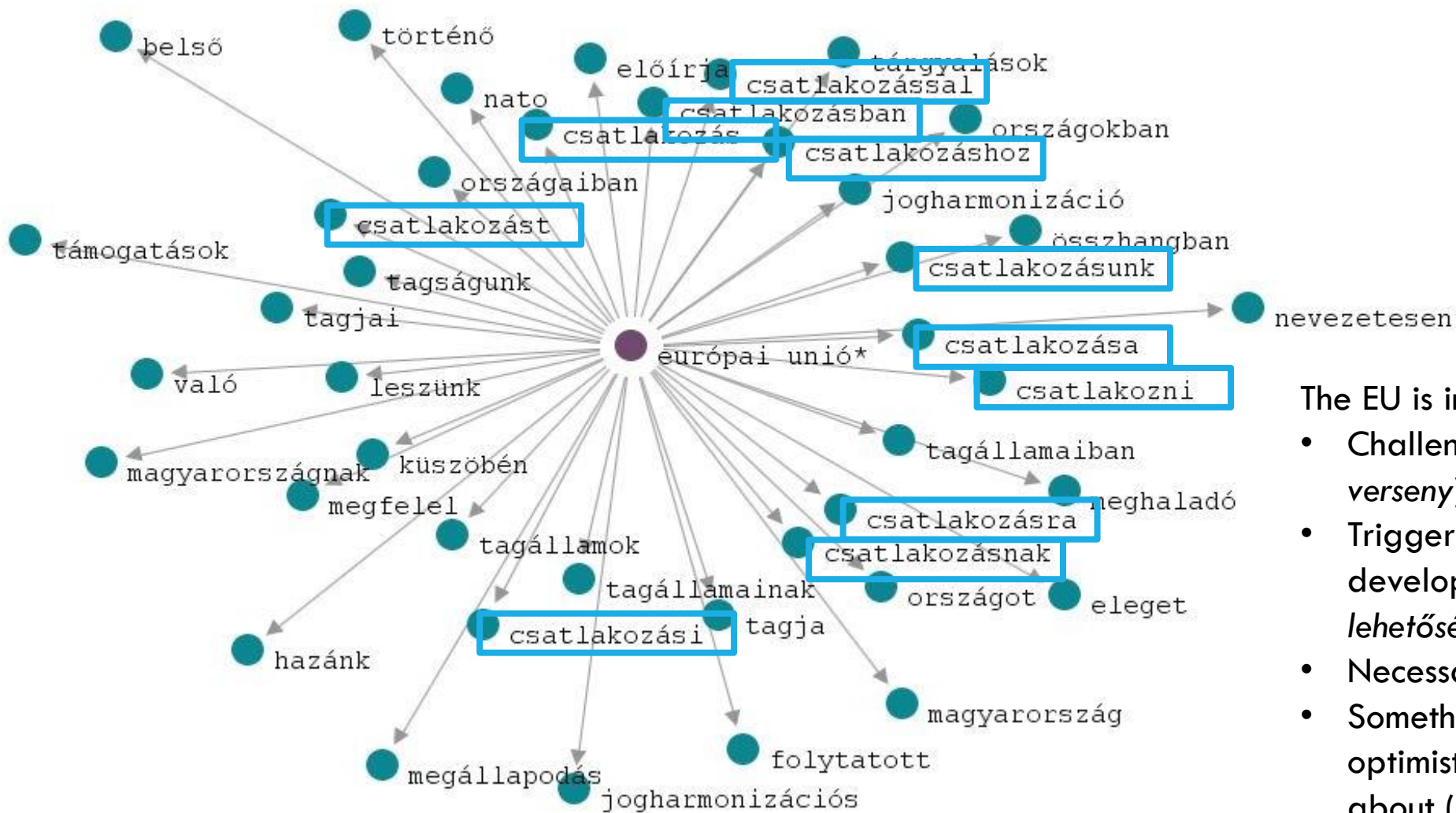
Brezina et al. 2015

6. SEMANTIC CATEGORISATION



- Joining
- Membership
- Advantages of EU-membership
- Requirements for EU-membership
- (Self-)improvement
- Hungarianness
- Being
- Happening
- Proximity
- Other organisations

Joining

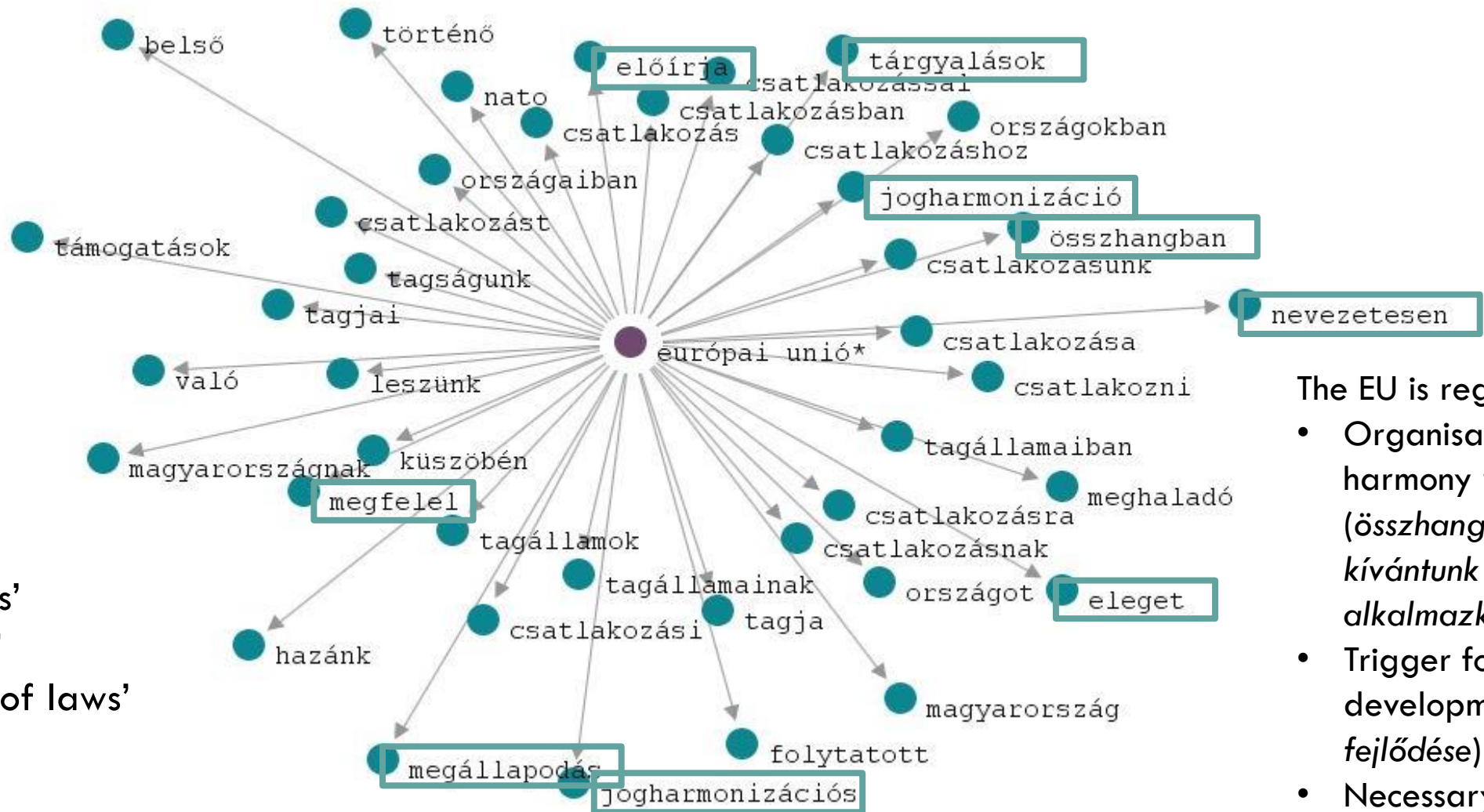


'joining'
'to join'

The EU is interpreted as:

- Challenge (*kihívás, verseny*)
- Trigger for development (*jobb lehetőségeket kínál*)
- Necessary (*szükséges*)
- Something to be optimistic and trusting about (*optimisták, bizatóak*)

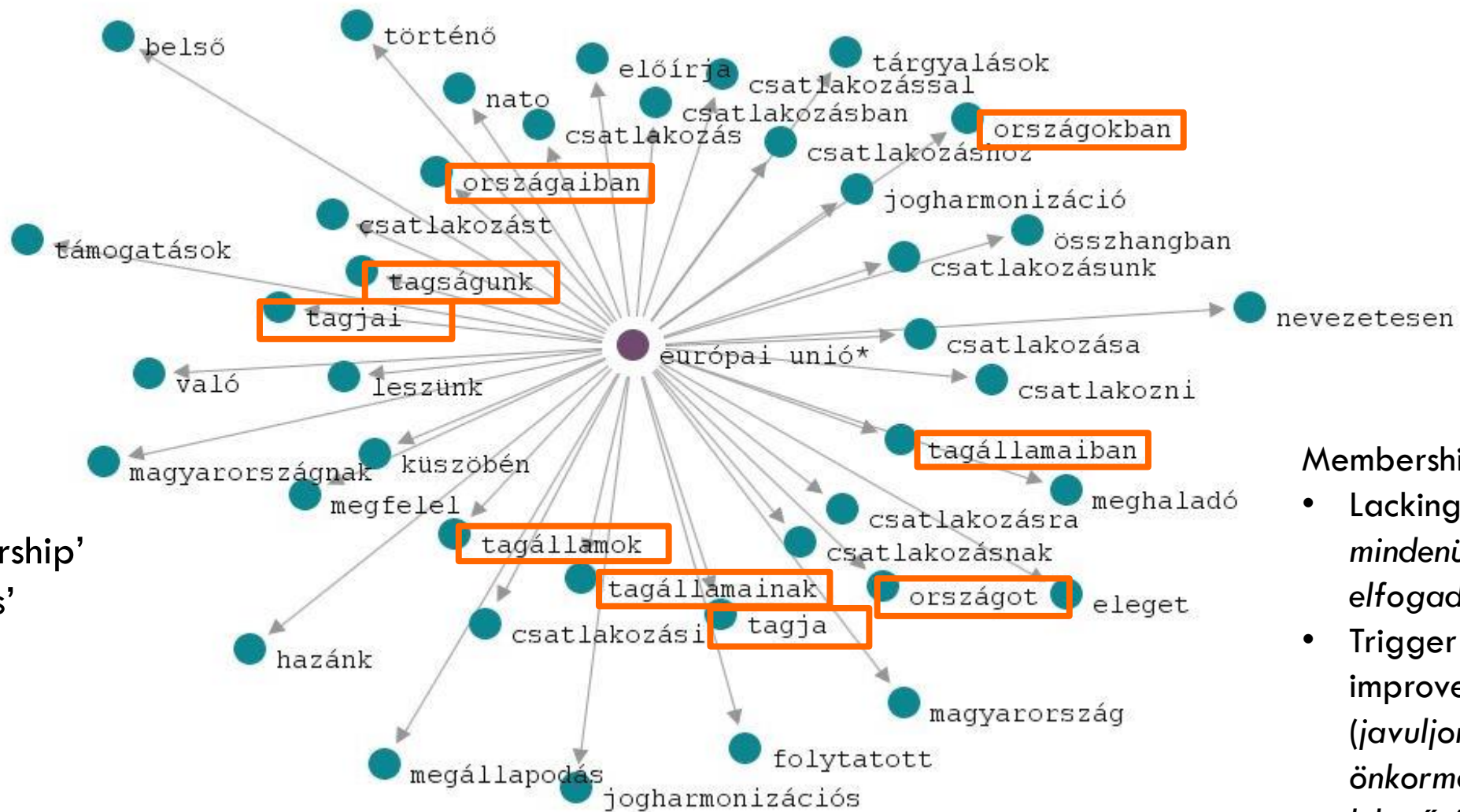
Requirements for EU-membership



'prescribe'
 'negotiations'
 'in harmony'
 'adjustment of laws'
 'enough'
 'satisfy'
 'treaty'

- The EU is regarded as:
- Organisation to be in harmony with (*összhangolja, kívántunk alkalmazkodni*)
 - Trigger for development (*ország fejlődése*)
 - Necessary (*szükséges*)
 - Success for Hungary (*sikerünk*)

Membership

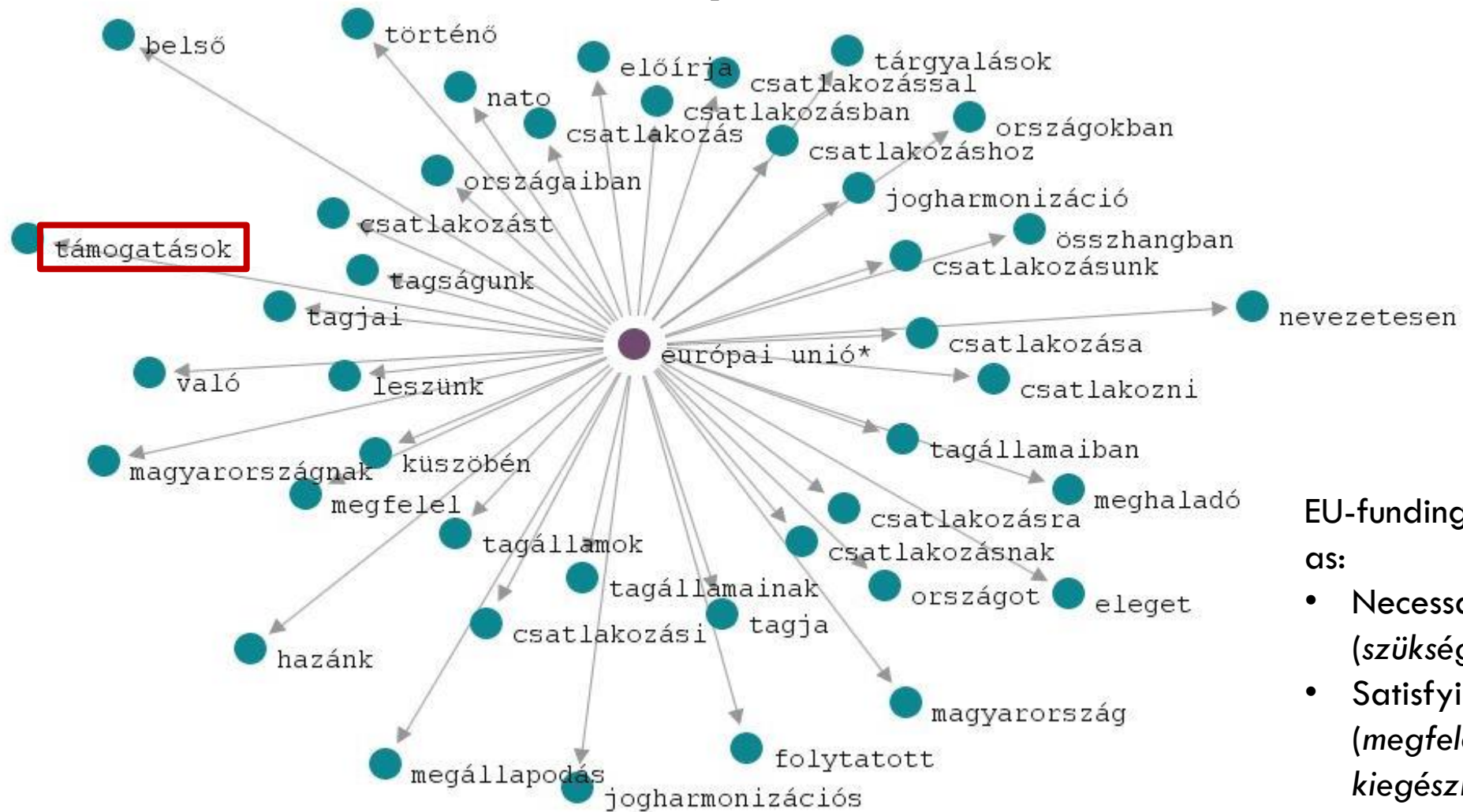


'our membership'
'its members'
'its states'
'the states'

Membership seen as:

- Lacking unity (*nincs mindenütt egységesen elfogadott sztenderd*)
- Trigger for improvement (*javuljon, kibővíti az önkormányzatiság lehetőségei*)

Advantages of EU-membership

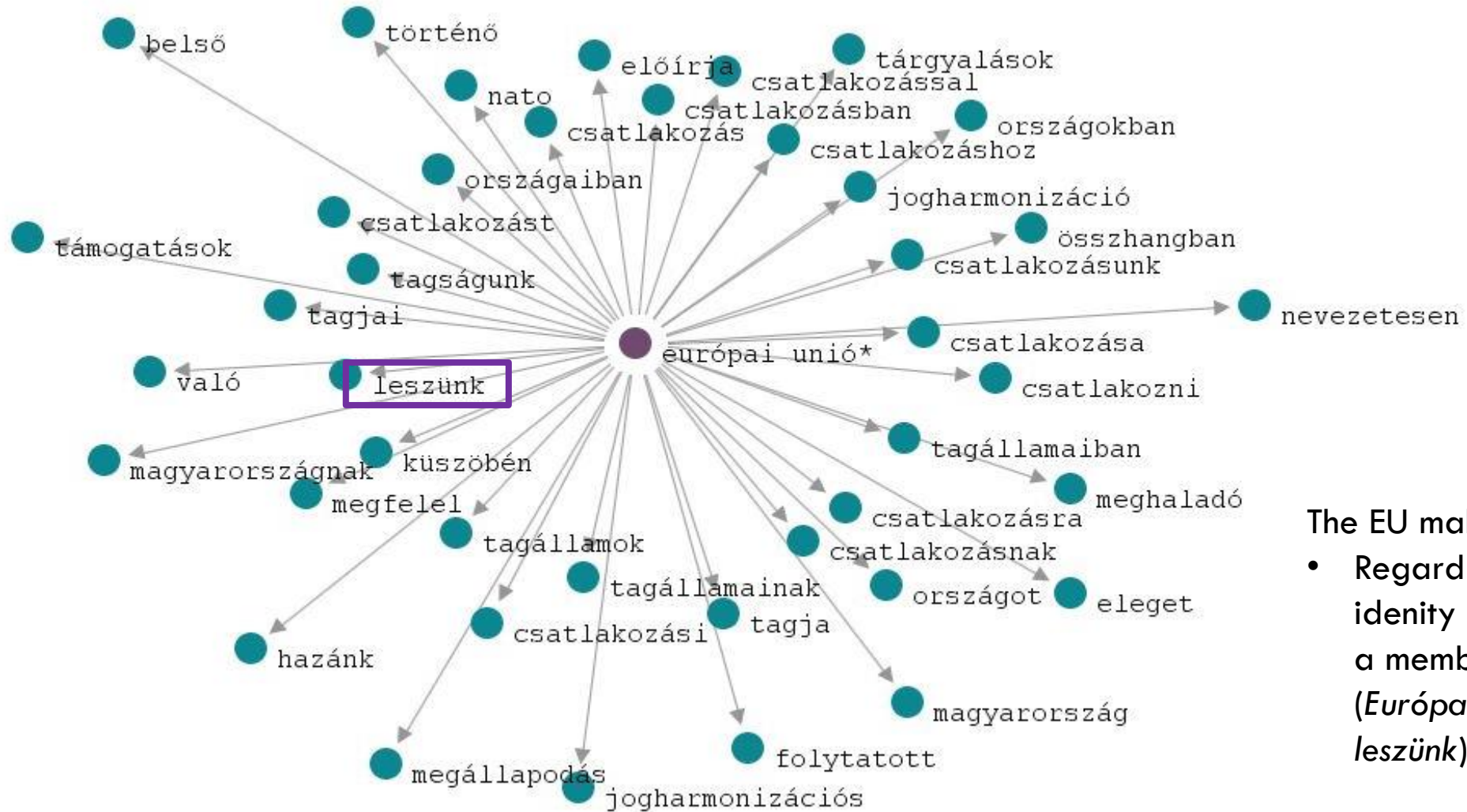


'funding'

EU-funding is perceived as:

- Necessary (szükséges)
- Satisfying (megfelelő, kiegészítéséről)

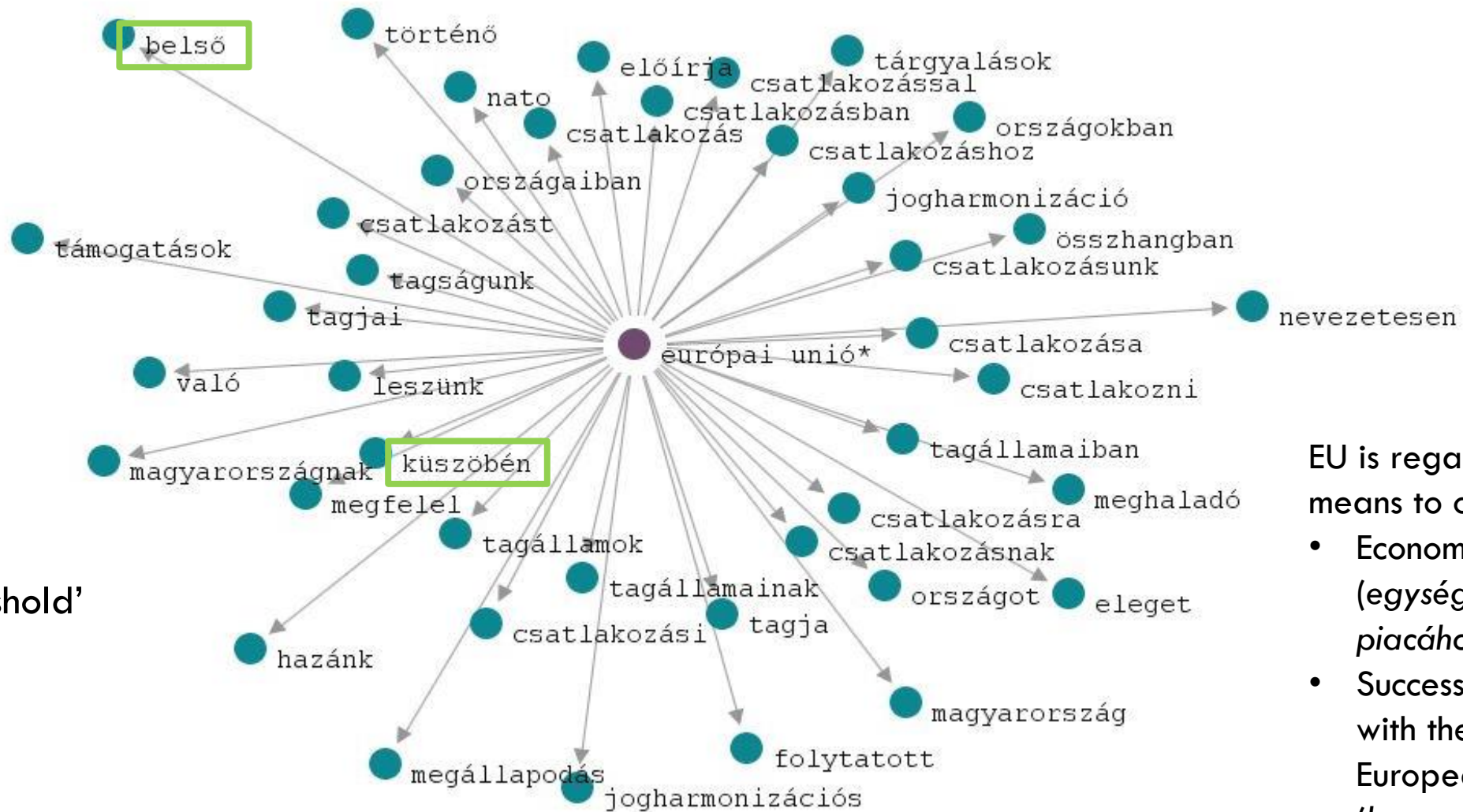
Being



'we will be'

- The EU makes Hungary:
- Regard ist own identity exclusively as a member state (*Európai Unió tagjai leszünk*)

Proximity

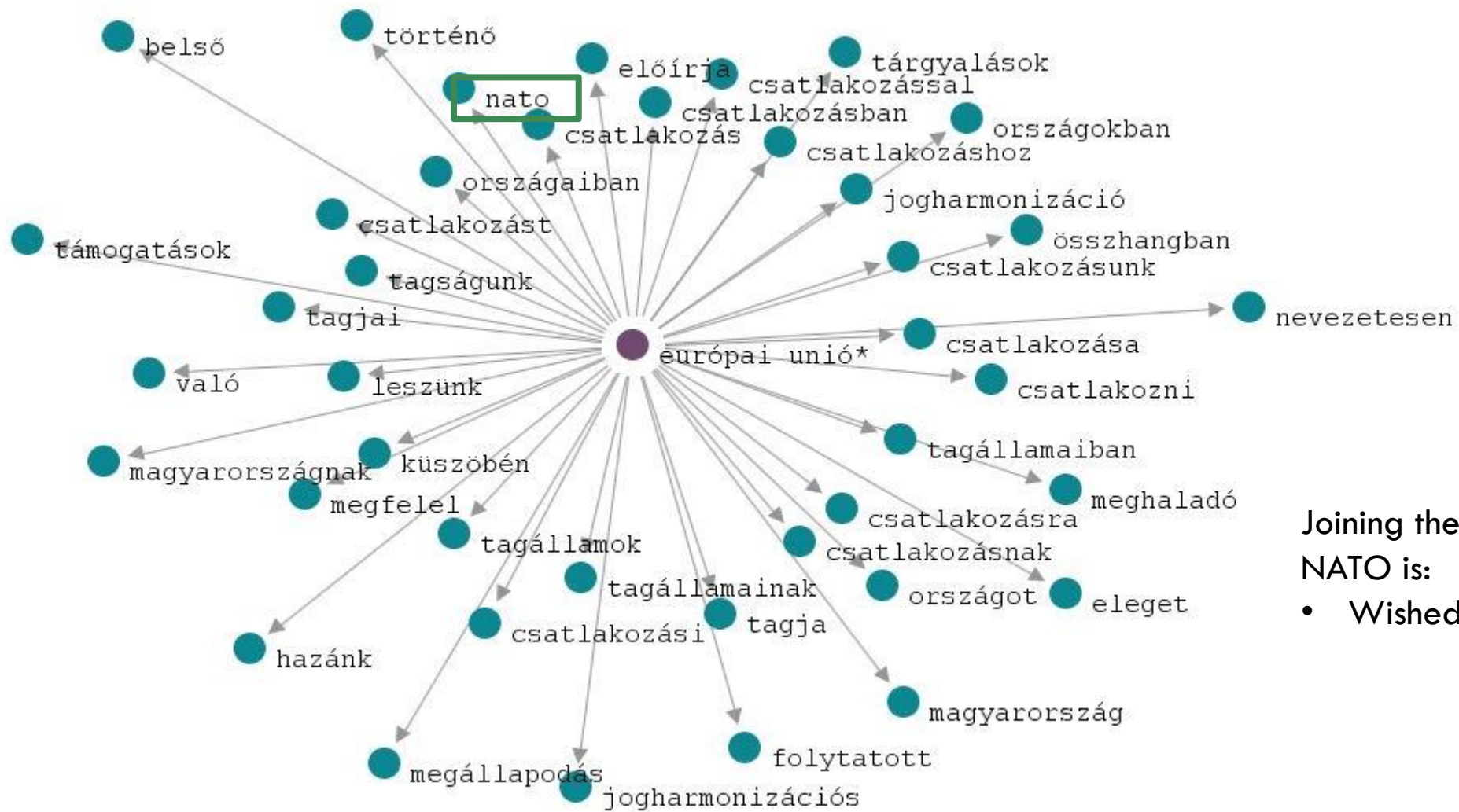


'internal'
'on the threshold'

EU is regarded as the means to obtain:

- Economical success (*egységes belső piacához*)
- Successful exchanges with the other European states (*harmonizált*)

Other organisations



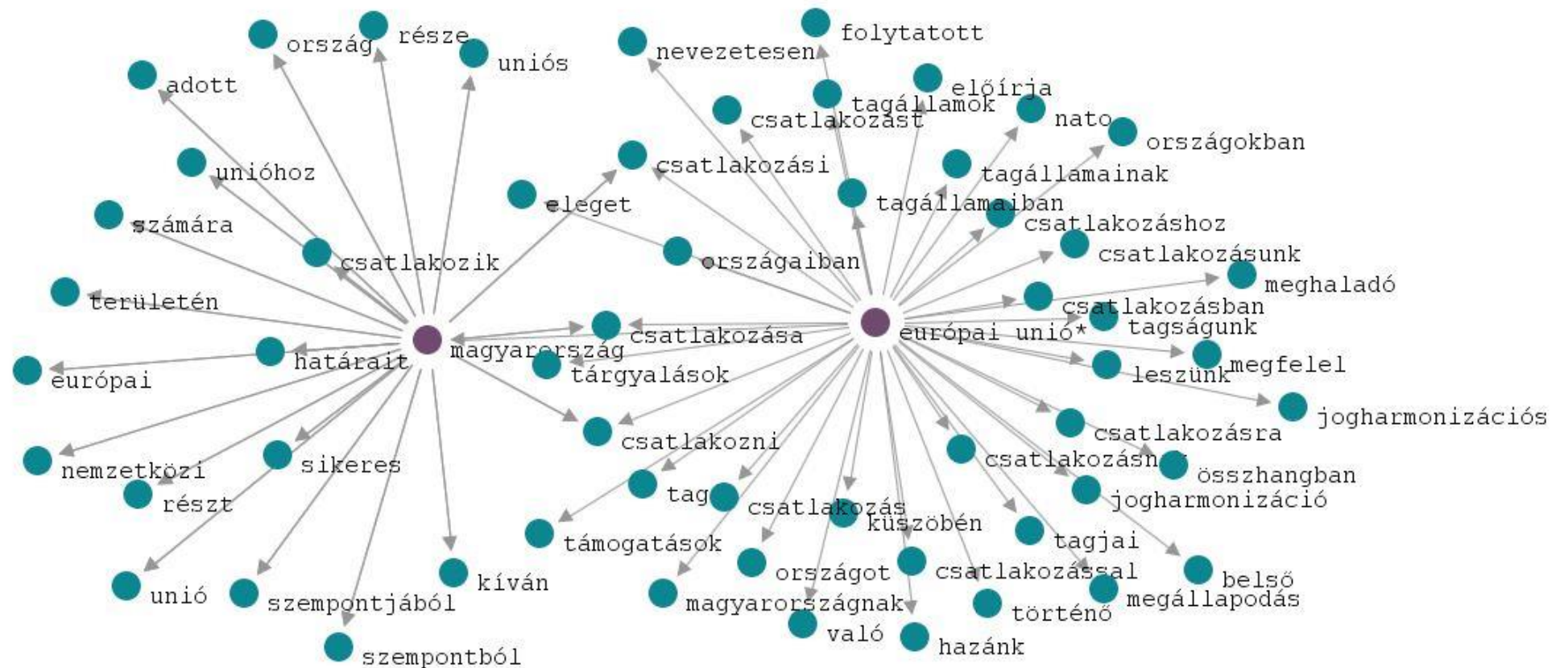
'NATO'

Joining the EU and NATO is:

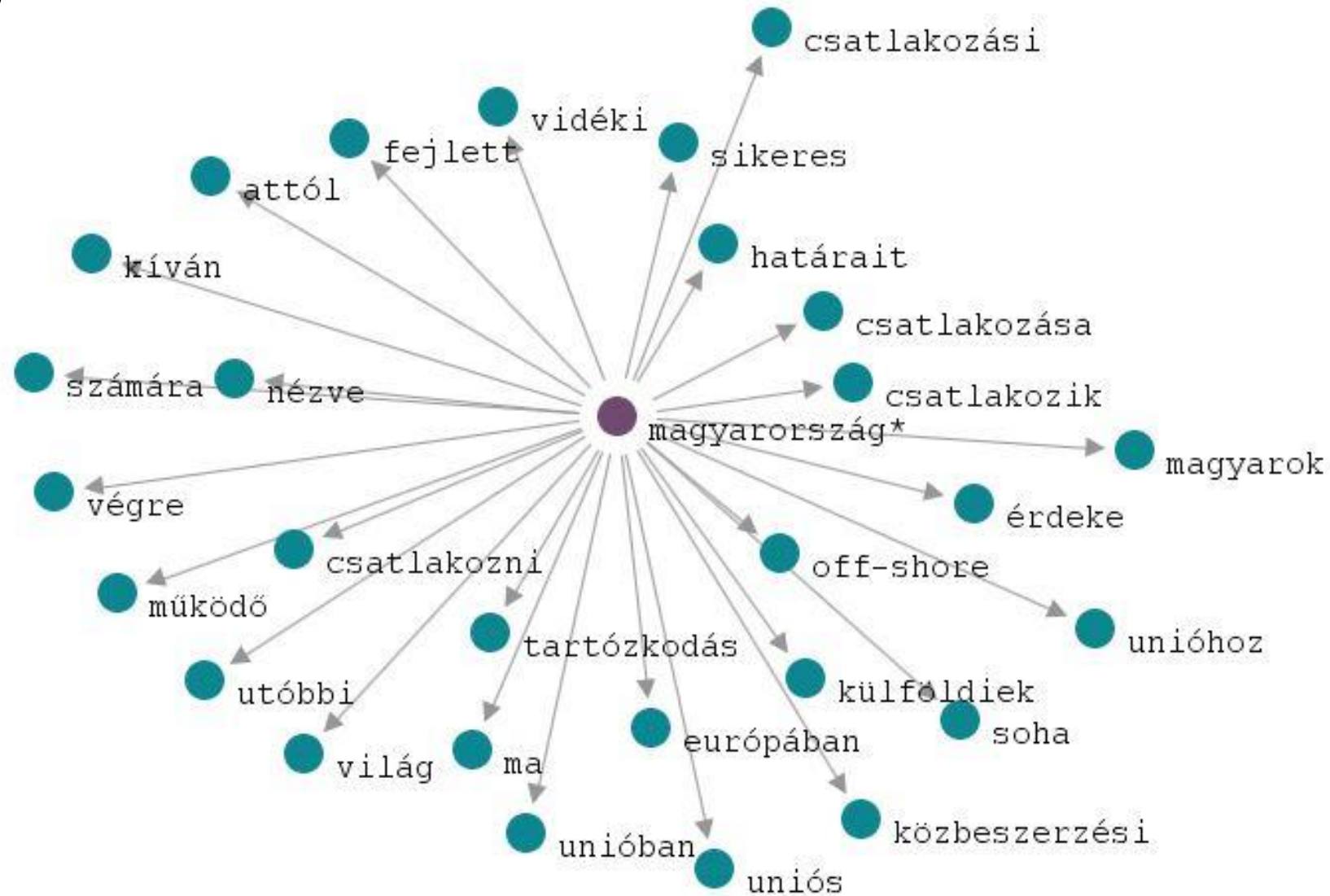
- Wished (*kíván*)

6. RESULTS

BUILDING IDENTITY

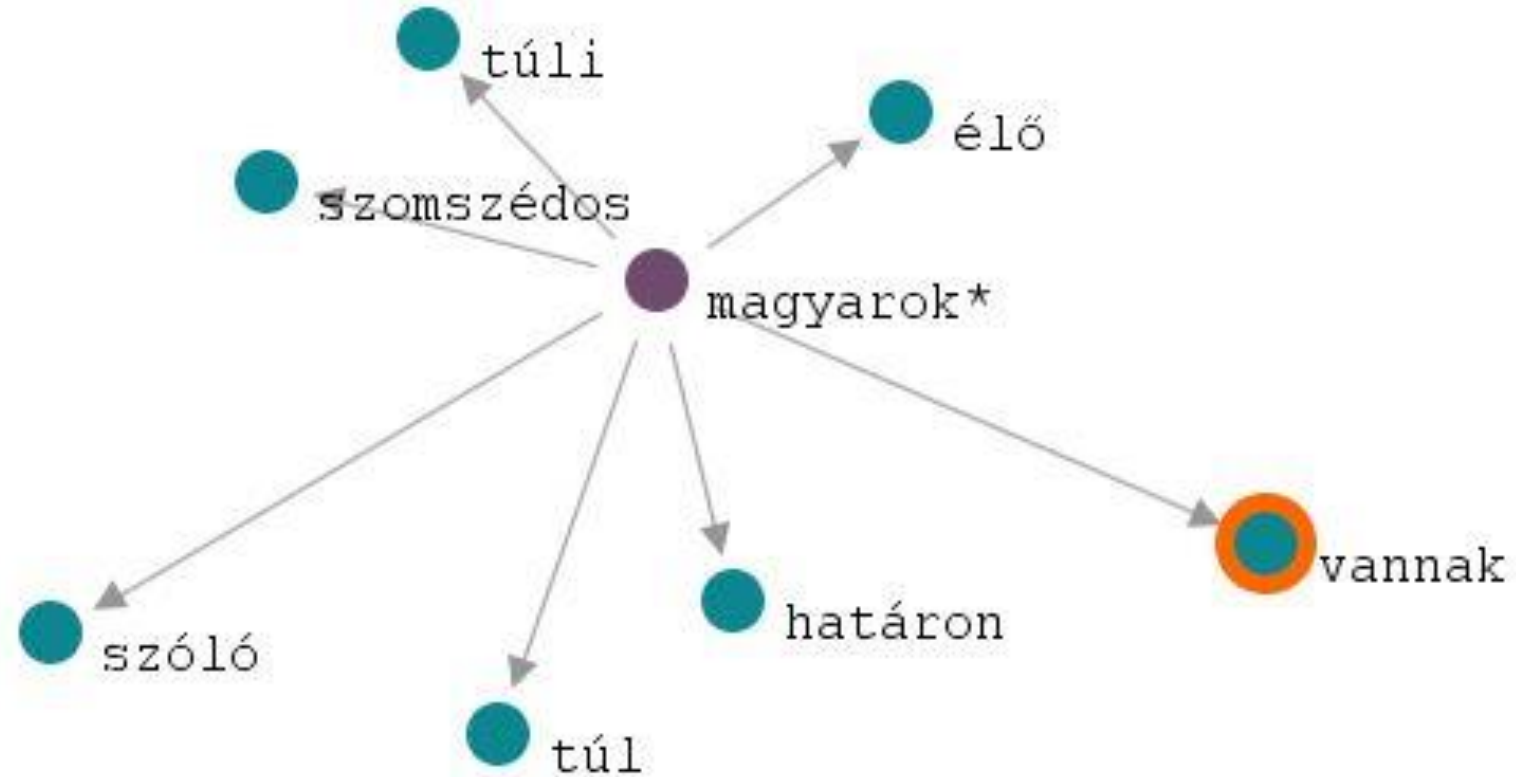


Hungary



GraphColl – First-order collocates of *magyarország**: MI(5.0), L5-R5, C5-NC5

Hungarians



GraphColl – First-order collocates of *magyarok**: MI(5.0), L5-R5, C5-NC5

7. CONCLUSION

Hungarian MPs **view their joining the European Union** as a challenge (*kihívás* ‘challenge’, *verseny* ‘competition’) **worth taking, aiming at a better future** for their country and their people, with a particular focus on their technical and economical development.

They **build their own identity** in terms of **need (and will) to improve**, starting out from a disadvantaged condition (describing the others as *fejlett* ‘developed’) and trying to adjust to the Western world. They also depict themselves as people divided by the country’s boundaries (*határon túli magyarok* ‘the Hungarians living outside the country’s borders’).

REFERENCES

Brezina, V., McEnery, T. and Wattam, S. 2015. Collocations in context: A new perspective on collocation networks. In: *International Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 20(2): 139-173

Kontler, László. 2002. *A History of Hungary*. Basingstoke/New York: Palgrave Macmillan

Stubbs, Michael. 1996. *Text and Corpus Analysis*. London: Blackwell

Stubbs, Michael. 2001. *Words and phrases*. London: Blackwell