

TERRITORIAL ATTRACTIVENESS – A LONG-TERM ISSUE FOR PUBLIC POLICIES

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ABSTRACT: *The present day world crisis characterizes itself by the fact that in spite of the accurate perception of its dimensions and implications, the true solutions fail to surface. Whereas in the recent past only technology and industry focused the attention through their dynamic and the part played in the economic development, time and space – revised in our time's spirit – offer another matrix, where a leading position is given to creativity and knowledge, which are considered to be more important factors than capital, labor and raw materials.*

A delicate issue is that technology, information, markets are global, but people are local! The space of flows (global) is in interaction with the space of places (local) and the cities gain an increasingly dual (local-global) function. Understanding and working in these conditions and in respect to is a real and difficult challenge for all administrative structures.

Strictly applying the enforced regulations, even if it is a mandatory act (like all rules of public law), not everything is limited to it: modeling urban spaces and adapting to the general dynamics requires more than a blind compliance, meaningless to the fine perception of the phenomena that occur in this area; it requires a good understanding of what "urban body" means.

KEYWORDS: *public policies; administrative structures; globalization; urban planning; territorial development.*

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1. Mankind's destiny shapes itself with lots of uncertainties under the circumstances where all the advanced scenarios have many weak points or areas that are to be studied in a more detailed way. Most experts from different fields of research are „marked” by statistics, figures comprised in minutely tables under the pressure generated by the acute need to find resourceful/ingenious solutions, even miraculous ones for mankind's present and future branched issues.

Lest the risks of present-day non-viability that darkens the „planet system's” horizon should increase in a chaotic way, finding appropriate measures on a world scale, both at the level of human society and of the interactions that are sustained by it, is of utmost importance (Griffon & Griffon, 2011).

The matter of radical changes of attitude, behaviors, customs, and responsibility is to be found only in documents, electoral processes, points of debate: the lack of action that defines us – at a planetary scale – made it possible that these statements remain without any significant materialization. The present day world crisis characterizes itself by the fact that „in spite of the accurate perception of its dimensions and implications, the true solutions fail to surface (Șerban, 2013).”

2. One of the „hot” topics of the present moment regards a possible negative outcome which globalization might have concerning the long and much debated on, world crisis. Though, traumatizing – for a significant number of individuals, generating important changes within the society – on nearly all the levels of existence, the crisis, which is far from being overcome, marks a special moment in the mankind’s evolution. It follows a tormented period, the ending of a millennium, which however predicted a more responsible future, with a greater involvement of the world’s citizens, thus, a better future.

The new millennium started under dark auspices (natural disasters, political and even armed conflicts, crisis of different types: economic, moral, ecologic, and all summed up under the generic name of *world crisis*). Globalization, as a dynamic and a continual succession of process, was diversely and generously approached from the perspective of its most accurate definition, without actually attaining this objective.

Undoubtedly, such an attempt is extremely difficult, due to the complexity of the generating factors of the phenomenon, the diversity and the multitude of aspects that should be taken into account, and the complexity of the effects in all fields.

Thought as a way of eliminating the arbitrary barriers (Bran & Ioan, 2009) of developing the world financial markets, increasing the transnational corporations, regarding the increase of their influence on the national economies, regarding the globalization of information and culture, the expanding of communications by means of television and internet (Soros, *fără an*), globalization was associated to the myth of homogeneity of national markets, a tendency that happens on a large scale (Leontiades, 2001). The phenomenon, although mentioned especially within the context of economic processes, associated to the standardization procedure and to the tendency of creating a unique market, has many and significant other valences such as: the efficient and useful information management, cultural, environmental, political, sociological, ideological aspects.

As it follows, we shall discuss some elements that belong to the benefits, respectively the identified shortcomings, caused by globalization on urban territories, inevitably marked by these general transformations.

3. Within this approach, it seems interesting to mention one of the definitions given to globalization, namely that one that qualifies it to be “the one that compresses the time and space aspects of the social relationships (Mittelman, 2000)”. The aspects connected to the reassessment of these two elements we daily operate with and which represent the coordinates in which we work are the topics of some sharp arguments among the experts from different fields of activity. Moreover, already established values are questioned, attempts that inevitably require analysis – are put in the different light – that of the surrounding reality.

Whereas in the recent past only technology and industry focused the attention through their dynamic and the part played in the economic development, time and space – revised in our time’s spirit – offer another matrix, where a leading position is given to creativity

and knowledge, which are considered to be more important factors than capital, labor and raw materials (Griffon & Griffon, 2011).

4. The theme of our position comes up more and more often, not only in the relatively well-known environment of the planet, but also in a vaster environment – that of the Universe. The idiom “expanding of the horizon” exceeds the literary sphere and heads towards the exact sciences, acquiring an amazing scientific accuracy.

It seems that only the expansion on other planets¹ could sustain the unprecedented rhythm of the economic and demographic growth that gives serious worrying reasons for the Earth’s future. “Only this way could be kept under control humanity’s self-devouring lusts (Șerban, 2013)”.

As stressed before, the high technology, materialized into a generous offer of jobs, polarized the attention of the world’s citizens and concentrated them in vast urban areas, the changing of the production type, the appearance of super smart communication devices, together with the change in mentality to regard and understand the world (including the humans’ repositioning towards the Universe and the environment). It determined a slow comeback, return to really valuable things, meaning faith, a deeper understanding of some realities (in other special-temporal coordinates than have been used so far and aligned to the new scientific approaches of the role and place of our planet’s inhabitants, within a larger system than the planetary one).

5. Regional studies traditionally considered production being the engine of territorial development. „Since the late 1980s, various territorial innovation models have pointed out how specific regional systems of production are able to compete in a globalized market. The technological perspective was replaced with a different approach, which has underlined the importance of cultural/creative activities in urban or regional innovation, regeneration and growth” (Jennerat, 2013).

The concern for what we call “quality of life” (although it is difficult to be defined per se!) outperforms other desires, options of the individuals. Therefore, aligning with this new set of needs of residents, all over the world governments are obliged to find solutions in order to cover those requirements, this being possible by rethinking, recalibration of the practiced management system by using leverage to maximize the attractiveness of sustainable territorial – urban and suburban – areas.

6. Starting from the assumption that sustainability is not an endpoint, but a process it has been outlined the importance of four cities development objectives that need a smart articulation: 1) healthy environment; 2) social cohesion; 3) economic efficiency; 4) general concern. All these objectives are linked to the urgency to recreate a dynamic harmony between the hardware and the software of the cities, to reconcile the body (forms, colors, odors, sounds) and the soul (culture, history, energy, magnetism) of the cities.

It was stated that the achievement of a better time management is seen as offering an important means towards the sustainable city and „ecology of time” in cities. Our days, time and water are appreciated to be scarce resources in cities!

¹ It has been raised the issue that, in case in which humanity will address new planetary bodies (in the idea of colonizing them) , to try a procedure named terraforming, which consists in a set of physical, chemical and biological processes, designed to generate a biosphere similar to the terrestrial one. (Șerban, 2013)

Due to the conquering of space by technology, the intelligent use of new technologies seems a source of richness and potential for cities.

Teleworking can lead to a disassociation between concentration in time and concentration in space². Infostructure and infrastructure need harmonious linkages to generate a better quality of life.

Teleactivities may allow interaction and the capacity to be in contact with all other places but they are just instruments, conducive either to integration or exclusion depending on the overall policy articulation.

7. With the progressive globalization of economy and the advancing international division of labor, many European metropolitan cities become control and command centers, within which we can identify a shift from goods handling to information handling – essential issue for the future of the European cities. Long-term policy goals versus short-term economic profit are the core element of many urban policies and, of course, each city has its own answers (Mega, 1996).

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In a world of change the new principles that should prevail are: connectedness, listening, sharing and participation. The new model of territorial marketing is marked by a highly cooperative approach based on the needs of users where resources are combined in order to build an effective network model that allows the development and use of land and all the activities to take place thereby creating a new synergy between the economic approach and the territorial approach. From this perspective, the cooperative element is critical to the success of these new forms of coordinated management of business districts that allows the overcoming of the risk that competition leads to the transfer of activity from one region to another, a risk that arises from the possibility of a competition without winners between different territories” (Brunetta & Caldarice, fără an).

8. A way of work to change the image (even "emblem") of the city is targeting urban regeneration, understood as a holistic, comprehensive and integrated approach that involves the three *Es*: economy, equity and environment³. It was also pointed out that urban regeneration aims to change the nature of a place by involving the interests of all stakeholders that might make up a partnership. From this point of view urban regeneration aims to promote economic competitiveness, reduce social inequalities, protects the environment and suggests a new generation of partnerships between the public and the private sectors for the development of urban policies (Brunetta & Caldarice, fără an).

² Reports of the colloquia „Le télétravail: un atout pour l’île de France” (organized by CATRAL in Paris on 4 March 1993), „Living in the City Tomorrow” (Paris, La Villette, March 1994) and „Eurocities/Euroenterprises Conference”(Barcelona, June 1994) cited by (Mega, 1996)

³ M. Gibson, A., Kocabaş, *Sustainable regeneration – Challenge and response, în 1st international urban design meeting, Mimar Sinan University, Istanbul*, citat in (Brunetta & Caldarice).

9. „Two frequently discussed types of social network are sometimes identified: bonding and bridging networks⁴. Bonding networks exist between family, friends and neighbors and assist the process of „getting by” on a daily basis. Bridging networks allow people to „get ahead” by accessing resources and opportunities through more distant contacts. The growth of bridging networks could have multiple and varied positive influences on bonding networks. A right access to the resources would facilitate the creation of new jobs in traditional fields of activity. Family associations would be a good solution in order to valorize the natural and human capital of an area, without costs due to transportation and supplies. There should be a constant preoccupation for the use of “green” energies in production processes an increased interest to sustain this bridge for the purpose of selling the products and to facilitate the exchanges of know-how. Another advantage would be the revigoration and maintenance of social cohesion, the encouragement of charity for the disfavored members of the community. The tradition being so varied, the mark of “authenticity” can be called upon as a possible emblem of cities. The valorization of the resources in the area shouldn’t be a very old practice, „the notion of originality does not stay unchanged over time. It relates to the perpetual quest for an original essence that underlies technological as well as non-technological forms of innovation” (Jeannerat, fără an). We can state that „innovation occurs through the development of parallel activities. This implies, for instance, the editing of dedicated publications (historical books, special issues and dedicated publications), the production of multi-media supports (online editing, blogs or web television) the creation of stages (architecture of headquarters, museums, exhibitions) and the organization of events”⁵. The members of a community „don’t have to be „producers” of authenticity but funders of an initial and coherent socio-technical setting) goods, services, discourses, repertoires or artifacts. Authenticity comes into existence and to market value only through the individual and collective interpretation developed by an audience which qualifies this setting as “real” or “fake”⁶.

10. In what our country is concerned, a series of opportunities haven’t been taken into account which led to a state of “helpless”, a complacency in a situation characterized by inactivity, lack of initiative and courage in order to set basis of a business without tradition. Although the “d  j   vu” seems to be the easiest way to follow in an attempt, there is no guarantee that we might have successful chances on a concurrent market. Any new type of activity is very interesting at the beginning, but the success depends on the perseverance of its provider. In this respect can be evoked achievements connected with the valorizing of the historical assets, of some traditions and folk customs, emphasizing some special geographical areas. Unfortunately innovation was delayed in what concerns the more attractive presentation of these values, the adjustment of some elements to

⁴ W., Stone, M., Gray, J., Hughes, *Social capital at work: how family, friends and civic ties relate to labour market outcomes*, Research Paper no. 31, Australian institute of family Studies, Melbourne, 2003, cited by (Stanley, et al.).

⁵ H., Jeannerat, O., Crevoisier, *Non-technological innovation and multi-local territorial knowledge dynamics in the Swiss watch industry*, International Journal of Innovation and Regional Development, 3, 2011, pag. 26-44, cited by *supra*.

⁶ N., Beck, F.-C., Wezel, *Whose side are you on? The impact of firm location and customers’ expectations on organizational succes*, in DIME workshop on „Evolutionary Economic Geography”, Utrecht University, Utrecht, 4-6 September, cited by (Jeannerat).

modern times, correlating the offers with the requirements of the market, refinements of some goods and services, up-dating the show-rooms etc.

11. We expect the enlargement of the variety referring to all types of natural and human potential to be valorized. We have to take advantage of the general tendency of returning to nature, finding the harmony, and sharing to a more numerous public our national assets.

Counseling committees should be instituted, comprising persons who know these areas, and the existing resources and who can estimate how these resources could be valorized. Of course we should also identify funds and also skilled people able to write the appropriate documentation in order to attract these funds. Such an attempt would put together inhabitants, but also famous experts, well-known practitioners leading to an efficient and beneficial connection between the theory and the practice of both categories.

At the time when territories are faced with the ever-growing phenomenon of globalization, territorial managers are increase prone to organize events with „a high added- value and a high image boosting potential, designed to build up the profile of the cities and give them more soul and media impact”⁷.

Actions should be designed in an integrated manner, in economic, social and, very important, cultural terms. Perhaps more than ever, knowledge through culture (not just by means of science) could play an important role in cultivating human feelings of solidarity, of generosity, of "humanity" that are of a great need. This trend is highlighted by the stronger integration of the cultural policies and activities in strategies designed to cultivate, promote and support sustainable attractiveness of territories. The cultural activities such festivals (theater, film, music), concerts, thematic competitions, exhibitions can contribute significantly to visibility of the cities or their surrounding areas.

12. Maybe it's interesting to refer to the definition of „cultural” understood as an industry. The cultural event is finally characterized by a dual problem of territorial development and the local anchoring of the action. It confirms the role of culture in terms of sustainable development (externalities of culture) while mobilizing it as a medium to give meaning to the territory set it apart from others (Soldo, et al., 2013).

The development and the implementation of a cultural event is part of so called *cultural engineering*, understood like „the ability to provide optimal solutions in terms of quality, cost and time, to demands expressed by the partners of cultural life in the definition of objectives, the implementation of programmers, mobilizing of finance and the technical rollout of projects” (Mollard, 2009). Culture should be, everywhere in the world, a part of public property because it is a source of multiple positive externalities for individuals, business and territories as a whole⁸.

There is also accepted that this activity should be supported, ensured or controlled by the government (state, devolved and decentralized authorities). This control should be a complex one, keeping in attention the characteristics of the cultural field. The majority of cultural production is the result of the private sector (companies or non-profit

⁷ M., Gravari-Barbas, S., Jaquot, L'événement, outil de légitimation de projets urbains: l'instrumentalisation des espaces et de temporalités à Lille et Gènes. *Géocarrefour* 82(3):16pp, cited by (Soldo, et al., 2013).

⁸ J., Heilbrun, C.M., Gray, *THE ECONOMICS OF ART AND CULTURE*, 2nd Ed., Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001, cited by (Soldo, et al., 2013).

associations). The high level of subsidies, involving precise specifications, makes it possible to steer the direction of the industry's activity to some degree. A public service is said to be under direct control when a public person is in charge of its management with due consideration for all the risks associated with such an operation (financial, human, logistic, etc. Under direct control, the public authority itself is in charge of the management of the public service, with its own technical, human and financial means.

The features of these events and their cultural nature raise questions about the method of management of the everyday operations of a public authority and call for the renewal of managerial practices and procedures (Koenig, fără an).

13. Urban renewal is one of the best examples of change, not only for the image of a city but also for its existence and functionality: the rehabilitation of the old buildings, the reconstruction of the ancient demolished buildings – according to drawings and plans – the revival of some rituals, old habits, during events like themed shows; bringing crafts current, are just some of the efficient and cheap means that local government can implement by the help and in with and in the benefit of the citizens. In a hectic period in which children and the youth try to identify "unusual", new ways for leisure and fun, their involvement in such projects would successfully and efficiently replace the period of practical work in schools. They could also take part in some workshops or courses during summer schools; during this time they could learn old crafts and, in the future, they would have the chance to build their own business based on these acquired skills.

The advantages of such an action would reside in: development of practical skills of young people, increasing their preoccupation for useful activities, their increased responsibility, teamwork, their motivation to create and grow a business in the area, especially using local resources and contribute to the promotion of place and community. Certainly, such a "laboratory" would have success, would be considered an example of good practice and should receive a particular tourist interest.

14. Another possible intervention could address urban business parks, which more recently – in our country – are located in the central areas of big cities. A more suitable solution would be their relocation in smaller towns situated close to them, which has been abandoned for lack of activities. By using this means it soon could be provided more jobs. Such an initiative would contribute to a better use of land, to increase the landscape potential, to decongest big cities, to contribute to their decompression by moving a part of the labor force. Small communities could be revitalized this way. It is important to underline that the majority of these areas are already serviced by infrastructure and water/sewer network (which are major tenants of smart growth). Industrial, technological and business parks are mushrooming throughout Europe and provide some interesting examples of public-private partnerships for turning areas of blight into healthy spaces and areas of positive environmental profit. Such parks can also become important poles for urban development and ecological renewal, attractive locations for industries and services, providing jobs. Interesting partnerships can be created between developers, local authorities and universities in order to build these parks (students from different specialties may do their theoretical research activities and work on their thesis simultaneously with practical research and work).

15. Some avant-garde cities are estimated to be exclusively designated for scientific and research activities, where scientists, researchers, people with concerns and good results in various fields could work (and also live). In order to attract them and then keep

them in these places there were 3 factors picked up that were considered making cities sticky for scientists: freedom to work, funding (understood in terms of tools and infrastructure to do so) and an attractive lifestyle (provided by smart urban planning). Great scientific centers not only require eminent universities or research centers; they also require a broader environment of meritocracy and openness to diversity that can attract top talent from across the world. By now most research activities were concentrated around metropolitan areas in such known „science cities” or „innovation clusters”; it was stated that is unlikely that world’s leading science cities will change significantly in coming decades, but we appreciate that a scenario in which new such cities will be erected, taking in account the new communication technology, the new building patterns alongside all the mentioned criteria that have to be fulfilled, would be – successfully, possible. Science is now more closely connected to economic growth than ever before; many research universities function as hubs of knowledge economy. The presence of major scientific centers has itself become a key source of innovation and economic development in the future. It’s true that large cities were and are considered best location for practical research, but smaller cities are not out of running. New industries emerge in large cities, but once standardized, they can move to a location with cheaper rents and labor costs. For towns seeking wealth through science, the anchoring presence of a large private and development laboratory can inject huge benefits (Anon., fără an).

Addressing such realities of an unequal world (full of “opposites”!) will become an even greater challenge for policy-makers across the world in the decade to come.

16. Another intervention area for achieving territorial attractiveness at city level consists in pursuing „smart growth” principles. Smart growth is often presented as a multifaceted policy approach to accommodate development while also addressing transportation, housing, urban redevelopment and environmental management issues (Hawkins, fără an). In this literature were identified 6 key dimensions of smart growth: natural resource preservation, community development, housing, economic development, transportation choice and planning initiatives⁹. Most scholars consider smart growth as local efforts to limit sprawl by directing land development away from areas that are likely to experience accelerated growth and reinvesting resources to urban neighborhoods¹⁰. The characteristics of sprawl that smart growth is intended to address are: 1) low density, scattered, and/or dispersed development; 2) separation of where people live from where they work; and 3) a lack of functional open space¹¹.

17. In the context of above-mentioned issues it seems to be clear that we have to rethink the whole approach and planning system regarding areas designated for new constructions or remodeling existing ones. Most European countries have recently started the process of "cleaning" and revision of territorial and urban planning, eliminating the drawbacks of earlier periods, trying to correct the mistakes and then to adapt the patterns to the current reality projects, taking into account the citizens’ preferences. As for us, we left tributary to the way of thinking and action that characterized the old regime, dedicating only "in theory" new patterns of development, planning and construction.

⁹ L., Ye, S., Mandpe, P., Meyer, *What is smart growth – Really?*, *Journal of Planning Literature* 19(3):301-315, 2005, cited by (Hawkins).

¹⁰ American Planning Association, 2002, cited by (Hawkins).

¹¹ R., Ewing, *Characteristics, causes, and effects of sprawl: A literature review*, *Environmental and Urban Studies* 21(2):1-15, cited by (Hawkins).

"Modern" is meant only to mask old patterns and rules for minimum common sense, harmony and aesthetics are ignored nonchalantly, leaving way open to kitsch, garish colors, amateurism and lack of architectural coherence. About pleasant climate, nice landscape, health infrastructure, dynamics of the re-urbanization process, evaluation of local labor market (Buch, et al., 2013), labor migration flows etc. we are reading in journals and specialized literature, with no obligation of taking any commitment in properly acting.

18. We think that is useful and interesting to mention Le Corbusier's opinion – according to which “cities are biological phenomena”; from his perspective urban forms of manifestation are just like biological ones, both in their existence and composition and reflecting a biological being of their inhabitants, as well as of other living forms that cohabitate with them. Beyond the elements that define and characterize it, the city stores also an inner energy that by complex phenomena becomes and generates a continuous metabolic change; this process is very similar to which occurs at the level of living organisms¹².

19. Some severe things can be noticed concerning conflicting issues that may be addressed in our country: on the one hand the relevant legislation – in the spatial planning field - is quite expositive; it doesn't provide a very concrete and coherent expression of the state' position regarding territorial organization. On the other hand, decentralization had as “mission” to give local governments many degrees of freedom: they have “green light” for local initiatives and actions. Their success or failure is the result of management practices.

Considering that the current trend values the clever use of local resources - natural and human - it is clear that the communities' future essentially depends on the solidarity of its members, and is strongly linked to their leaders' managerial qualities. Unfortunately the concerns targeting quality of life issues are minimal in our country and occupy places of little importance on policymakers' agenda. The “saving” solution must come from the bottom: creativity and innovation - based on local potential - must defeat, and the efficient, modern high-tech has to serve all the human actions.

It is very important to take in a serious account the fact that major changes are required in the field of special structures' composition, which is directly responsible for urban planning activities. Strictly applying the enforced regulations, even if it is a mandatory act (like all rules of public law), not everything is limited to it: modeling urban spaces and adapting to the general dynamics requires more than a blind compliance, meaningless to the fine perception of the phenomena that occur in this area; it requires a good understanding of what “urban body” means (Minea, 2011), of what space and time mean our days.

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¹² C., Crăciun, *METABOLISMUL URBAN. O ABORDARE NECONVENȚIONALĂ A ORGANISMULUI URBAN*, Edit. Universitară “Ion Mincu”, București, 2008, pag. 15-17 cited by (Minea, 2012).

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