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FRENCH CLUSTERS POLICY, NETWORKS OF PRACTICING COMMUNITIES AND TERRITORIAL GOVERNANCE: THE CASE OF ORNAMENTAL HORTICULTURE IN ANJOU

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Abstract: Territorial development in France is based on the “Competitiveness Poles” namely clusters of firms characterized by partnerships that lead to a higher competitiveness within regions. In Angers (West of France) the territorial development is founded on a horticultural cluster that has been in existence for several centuries. Today the attraction of innovation and international is at stake and we observe a mutation of this networking organization, as it evolves from a closed community of firms to an open and innovative one. In this perspective, this article aims to increase understanding of the historical community’s involvement in the territorial governance dynamics of the cluster. This work proposes a refreshed reading in terms of social embeddeness process. The analysis of micro-social relations in the angevine ornamental horticulture brings to light the territorial governance, which has long tended to be conditioned by a network of practicing communities historically constituted in the XVth century. Today, this dynamic is questioned in a deeply economic and law mutations context. The detailed study of embedding or detachment processes shows that territorial governance becomes an inter-community, as it is based on different emerging communities stemming

1 This research received financial support from the PSDR program “For and On Regional Development” Great West.
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from scientific research networks, social historic networks or employees communities networks. This progressive adaptation might explain the capability of angevine horticulture to face new environmental constraints. This example of a French “Competitiveness Pole” brings to light the importance of network social structures in the territorial development and in the success of local-global public policies.

**Key-words:** territorial governance, networks, communities of practice, horticulture

INTRODUCTION

The « Competitiveness Poles» policies mark the come-back of French regional industrial policy. The evaluation made in 2008 updates contrasting development situations which are often evaluated through objective and formal criteria such as the number of patents, the number of companies or the number of employees. The observation of these contrasting situations brings to light the importance of social links and practicing communities in the institutional dynamics of these poles of competitiveness: friendly and family links, entrepreneurs’ clubs (Amisse and Muller, on 2011). These links are supposed to have an impact on the governance of the concerned territories. They are supposed to favor the reactivity of the actors or, on the contrary, to lead to “parochial confinement” (Bowles and Gintis, 2001). The economic literature on territorial governance tends to meet the need for identifying stabilized coordinations at the territorial level (Gilly, Leroux, Wallet, 2004; Leloup, Moyart, Pecqueur, 2005; Leroux, 2006; Chia, Torre and Rey-Valette, 2008).

However this literature does not question the role of the social links into the local institutional dynamics. Nevertheless, these social links and these emergent communities of solidarity can strongly influence the professional links (Amisse and Muller, 2011).

In France, ornamental horticulture on the one hand has been affected for several decades by several different crises namely economic, environmental and even regulation. On the other hand, horticultural activities developed in Anjou tend to survive and are a member of a “Pole of Competitiveness”, articulated around various sectors (horticulture, cultivation, seeds, health plants). The historic embeddedness in professional, friendly, family or social relationships seems to have played an important role in the local dynamics. Starting from this point, our objective is here to understand the role played by these social links and especially the role played by the practicing communities’ networks, in the dynamics of territorial governance.

Do practicing communities’ networks exert an influence on the territorial governance? If yes, can we observe different embedding - detachment process (Grossetti and Bécs, 2003)? Do they condition the nature and dynamics of territorial governance?

The goal of this article is to propose a methodological framework integrating the notion of practicing community into the analysis of the territorial governance. Our objective is to understand the community’s influence in the definition of the coordination rules and in the construction of compromises. Over and above the rules, at the heart of our thinking are two types of relationships between local actors: appropriation and power. This framework leads to a refreshing reading of territorial governance through a dynamic approach focusing
on the social embedding-detachment process (Grossetti and Bčs, 2003). The paper contributes to updating the microsocial mechanisms which determine either favorably or not the socioeconomic coordination.

The analysis of microsocial relations in ornamental horticulture shows that territorial governance tends to be influenced by a practicing community, historically established in the 15th century. This territorial governance was based on a homogeneous practicing community whose purpose was the collective appropriation of the rent generated by horticultural activities and the protection of their local markets. Today, this activity is challenged because of a profound transformation of the economic and statutory environment. The in-depth analysis of the embedding-detachment process shows that the territorial governance becomes an “inter-communities” governance. This progressive adaptation leading to new rules of coordination, may explain how the angevine ornamental horticulture is able to cope with, for the moment, new environmental constraints.

The first part of this article is dedicated to the creation of a methodological framework introducing the territorial governance as a process of “situated” coordinations within which practicing communities can play an important role. Based on this framework, the second part of the article presents a refreshed approach of the territorial governance dynamics within ornamental horticulture in Anjou.

1. THE DYNAMICS OF THE TERRITORIAL GOVERNANCE: SITUATED COORDINATION AND COMMUNITY PRACTICES

The idea of territorial governance creates an epistemic break with the usual economic approaches of governance such as developed by Williamson (1996, 2000) and North (1990). The emergent regularities that produce a singular institutional dynamic in a territory manifest in the form of a territorial governance. The objective of this section is firstly to conceptualize the notion of territorial governance as a “situated” process integrating the notion of a practicing community. Secondly, we go on to show that the characterization of territorial governance, supposes that the practicing communities have been taken into account. Lastly we bring to light the evolution according to embedding-detachment processes (Grossetti and Bčs, 2003) of these practicing communities, which contribute to the territorial dynamics.

1.1. The notion of territorial governance: for a processual analysis of localized dynamics

In France, the notion of “territorial” governance appeared with the substantial evolution of politico-administrative structures (Leloup, Moyart and Pecqueur, 2005): the decentralisation process in the French territorial administration leading to a reorganization of space and power. In this context, strong interferences appeared between the administrative territories and the relevant rules elaboration spaces (Valarié, 2007). The territory is here defined as singular construction based on coordination relations involving a plurality of public, private or associative actors: firms, public local governments, development structures, consular structures, associative structures etc. Territory is viewed
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as a space of resources collective creation. It is a construction based on “situated” coordinations (Gilly and Torre, 2000) between local actors. These coordinations are situated, first of all, because they relate to the project when a local production problem arises and because they are dependent on actors' logics (Gilly and Torre, 2000). Territorial governance refers to stabilized coordinations and to emerging regularities, that can be identified within its trajectory. So the notion of territorial governance is approached under a processual perspective, namely the way local actors establish a compatibility between different modes of coordination (Gilly, Leroux and Wallet, 2004; Chia, Torre, Rey-Valette, 2008). Coopetition between actors determines the collective capability to create and appropriate new resources. The public interventions also influence this compatibility process. The territory with varying amounts of autonomy, with regards to the global economic logics and the choice of local public policies, can also determine the local coordination. This compatibility is then translated in identified regularities that bestow singularity to territorial governance.

In this perspective, territorial governance is a particular economic and social regulation characterization for each territory. It is always built on a singular combination of variables (Leloup, Moyart and Pecqueur, 2005). The territorial governance underlines the idea that no actor can control local decisions. The complexity of power relationships and the problems caused supposes a collective action coordination. This coordination passes by the regulation of interests and power conflicts and by negotiated cooperation (Leroux, 2004, 2006; Berro and Leroux, 2010). Identifying territorial governance means identifying the local socioeconomic regularities appearing from these singular coordinations. Then it is possible to distinguish various types of private, public or mixed governance according to the way the processes of coordination are driven. They can be driven by firms, local governments, research actors, or a combination (Gilly, Leroux and Wallet, 2004; Leroux, 2006):

- **Private governance**: one or several dominant private actors, holders of an authority based on dependence towards resources, driven and pilot coordinations and resources creation according to a purpose of privative appropriation. The appropriation can be either material, immaterial or financial resources. It can involve strategies developed by a dominating actor to capture the collective rents. For example, a private governance emerges when an industrial group tends to structure the local productive space (the other actors are functionally dependent);

- **Public governance**: public actors or public research laboratories pilot the coordination through the production of public or collective services. During negotiations, local governments have an arbitral power which can be biased by the social constraints and the economic stakes. Research laboratories are holders of a negotiation power which depends on the specificity of the produced knowledge.

- **Mixed governance**: associates private and public governance with variable degrees. It tends to be based on a balance of powers and on a compromise between the various privative logics of appropriation.

For each type of governance, it is easy to spot keys-actors such as firms, research laboratories or public actors who play an important role in the determination of the localized relations. They pilot the organization of territorial governance. The identification
of these actors, their logics of coordination and their power balance allows the identification of emergent regularities.

However, the understanding of such coordination mechanisms cannot be complete if we remain attached to these professional actors only: firms, local governments etc. Other organizations, less visible, also seem to play a significant role in the local coordination. Territories have to compose with the presence of formal or informal organizations that influence considerably local coordination. For example, it is the case when a club of company directors attract project leaders to the detriment of the accompanying organizations professionals, whose legitimacy is thus questioned. We can also quote the case of horticultural producers organized in informal groups of solidarity. The group constitutes an entrance barrier which filters new incomers on the local market. Interpersonal relationships and their organization in influential communities of solidarity have to be taken into account for the analysis of territorial governance if we really want to evaluate appropriation and influence mechanism.

The classic approaches of the territorial governance do not take into account the network of the social relationships which form influential communities. Their role in the territorial governance dynamics can be definitive. The approach by these practicing communities can also contribute to a better understanding of identified local regularities. This paper thus questions the trajectory of territorial development in the light of these practicing communities. The paragraph which follows aims to clarify the nature of these links and their role in the territorial governance.

1.2. An approach of the territorial governance focusing on practicing communities

The objective of this paragraph is to bring to light the contribution of the practicing community notion for the territorial governance analysis. Indeed, in numerous socioeconomic coordinations, it is possible to identify groups of individuals, based on mutual values and solidarity, establishing their interactions on information and knowledge sharing: the practicing communities (Wenger, 2000). The multiplication of interactions in these groups gives rise to the emergence of shared rules.

The practicing community is a notion developed by Lave and Wenger (1991, 1998). This is a group of individuals sharing skills and interests, and interacting in a regular way to resolve a common problem. Therefore, this notion is distinguished by a cognitive component such as information knowledge and advice exchanges between members (Orr, on 1996; Brown and Duguid, 2001). The members are able to develop their skills in the considered practice. As Brown and Duguid (2001) underline, sharing a practice means sharing know-how or a common implied know-how. So communities build and share a common repertory of resources which is often informal (Cohendet and al., 2003). The practice shows explicit aspects (common language, symbols, procedures, rules) as well as tacit aspects (conventions, collective representations, affinities). Each community develops a self learning and a collective behavior process (Cohendet and al., 2003). This is based on mutual aid logics and on trust relationships.
A practicing community is characterized by a strong identity. This identity is built on the group membership feeling as it develops its own coordination rules (Kogut, 2000). These two mechanisms have an influence on economic exchanges. This identity dimension plays a definitive part in the creation of coordination rules. Each individual builds an identity through the links between members. Social identity facilitates the stability of these links (Grossetti and Godart, 2007). The group identification can be found through the members’ mutual commitments. Brown and Duguid (1998) refer to war stories to illustrate the idea according to which the members of the community talk about their experiences, which increases the capitalized knowledge. Except in cognitive aspects, these war stories strengthen the cohesion within the community and the identification of members.

The community therefore produces a quasi-rent relationship (Coriat, 2000), seen as an intrinsic advantage generated by shared network effects, cemented together by membership feeling and social identity that lead to new knowledge and collective learning. The community can also exploit a rent monopoly, strengthened and protected by discriminating rules and established relational borders. This capability to create and appropriate value is essential for the understanding of how the rules and the power relationships are built. For that reason a practicing community can be very influential and can play an important role in the territorial governance dynamics. The way of exercising a power within the local coordination depends on the “multiplexity” of the relationships between members involved, within different communities (Ferrary, 2010): professional, family, friendly relations. The social embeddedness in various non exclusive communities brings to light the extra-economic nature of these links. Thus territorial governance is not only a result of coordination combination involving “professional” formal organizations such as firms, local governments etc, but also the combination of involving practicing communities as formal or informal entities (Fig. 1). Indeed, within any territory we can observe groups of individuals involved in mutual aid and cooptation logics that influence the professional formal organizations (informal clubs, crossed cooptation to penetrate territorial consultative structures).

The territorial governance can so be interpreted according to two nested levels (Fig. 1): 1) the exchange and relational partnerships (productive and institutional relations) involving professional organizations (firms, communities); 2) the influence of the practicing communities an organization who coproduces the ground rules at a strategic members representations’ level, who transmit these rules in the professional organizations, in which they are involved.

The practicing community through the co-production of ground rules widely contributes to the definition or the crystallization of relational power within territories. Rule co-production stands out both as a constraint and a permissive framework (Leroux, 2004).

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2 According to Wenger (1998), the characteristics of the common commitment in a community are mutual relations, absence of introductions in conversations, a common language, common stories, a shared sense of humor and a shared language.
In certain cases the community is lead, in order to protect itself, to develop rules that constitute barriers. The objective of these barriers is to filter newcomers entering a market and to create exit barriers to avoid any information and knowledge diffusion out of the community as this could constitute a danger (emergence of a rival community, private information diffusion…). The locking of rules co-production, if it is relayed by the professional actors, can strengthen the community power within the territorial governance. Therefore this power is viewed as a power to: rule, create the rule, and serve the rule (Friedberg, 1997).

However, it is possible that the community closes, to the point of lacking diversity, which generates a “parochial confinement” (Bowles and Gintis, 2001). In the case of an environmental change, a strong cohesion within the community can generate this kind of shortsightedness. The members are no longer able to estimate the environmental risk and the radical strategic changes to be implemented (Gargiulo and Benassi, 2000). Territorial Governance can be determined by this phenomenon, limiting the productive dynamics: collective shortsightedness when faced with the environmental evolution, incapable of innovating and adapting to the changing environment, incapable of capturing new market opportunities.
In other cases, on the contrary, the community contributes to a higher reactivity when faced with unforeseen events. As the community members are used to developing relationships, their ability to coordinate leads to faster and more efficient solutions and rules. The dynamics of the governance is therefore influenced favorably. As we will see in the following paragraph, these various community phenomena are associated with embedding and detachment logics, which is of the utmost importance in the analysis of territorial governance dynamics.

1.3. Embedding - detachment process and dynamics of the territorial governance: fora characterization method of the territorial governance and its dynamics

Stemming from the practicing communities approach, this paragraph brings to light the evolution of these communities according to various movements of embedding and detachment. These movements define the communities in both time and space. They play an important role in the dynamics of the territorial governance. In this perspective, we present here a method of characterization of the governance and its dynamics.

The community advantages lies within in the collective’s ability to benefit from the various links developed by members. When a member develops links with other communities, he creates a potentially mobile social capital. The capability of the community to redeploy links and to be renewed is therefore a function of the members’ embeddedness in several communities (Granovetter, 1985). The territorial governance is thus defined by these configuration or reconfiguration movements leading to changes both in the co-production of rules and in the way of appropriating resources or rents. In the White perspective, the social embeddedness is a result of the relational networks built with other individuals who obtain the ability to detach themselves from existing networks in order to make possible new links (Grossetti and Godart, 2007). Each process of embedding can thus be possible on the basis of a preliminary detachment (Grossetti and Bécs, 2003).

Any detachment process always produces a disturbance, sometimes even a rupture, in the rules co-production dynamics and in the whole practicing community regulation. The embedding dynamics is based on the interactions between members. These interactions lead to the emergence of micro-regulations and shared practices. Any process of detachment marks an autonomy of the member towards their community and thus towards the collective rules elaboration process. A new social order emerges and the mediation of interpersonal relations takes a new form. This behavior change leads to new regulation at the community level that needs to be identified. If embedding dynamic is the most important factor, territorial governance can be defined by a network of communities. On the contrary, if the detachment dynamic is the most important factor, we can then observe autonomy of territorial governance towards practicing communities.

In this perspective, creating a characterization of both the territorial governance and its dynamics is presented in four steps:

**Step 1: Identification of practicing communities.** This step aims to identify practicing communities at stake and if they exist, to qualify them into two groups: formal or informal groups of individuals characterized by specific exchange methods (intense
cooperation, shared language, collective representations, sharing and collective knowledge production, creation of new joint activities); social identity factors, circles and discrimination logics, ownership and power strategies, specific rules.

Step 2: Identification of both professional key-actors and socio-economic relationships. This step aims to identify the exchange, ownerships and partnerships established between professional organizations (companies, local authorities, consular structures): resources exchange, resources dependencies, ownership logics, rules and power relationships at stake.

Step 3: Characterization of territorial governance. This step aims to analyze how much if at all practicing communities influence the co-produced rules at the territorial level as it is expressed within the general rules (international and national regulations, market rules, etc.). This step allows the impact of practicing communities’ networks on territorial governance to be tested. It is then possible to characterize the form of governance: public, private or mixed based on the roll played by the evaluation of the community networks in the power and owner relationships.

Step 4: Identification of embedding - detachment movements and governance dynamics. The objective is to analyze how the embedding and detachment processes can explain the territorial governance dynamics. According to the movements observed longitudinally, communities emerge, evolve, or disappear leading to new relationships, new power relationships and new rules. Their influence on co-production of rules mechanisms produces differentiated forms of territorial governance. The next section shows how this theoretical and methodological framework leads to a renewed reading of the territorial governance dynamics in the ornamental horticulture in Angers.

2. RECOMPOSITION OF PRACTICING COMMUNITIES AND DYNAMICS OF TERRITORIAL GOVERNANCE: THE ORNAMENTAL HORTICULTURE MUTATIONS IN ANJOU

With over 740 firms and farms and 5000 direct jobs (vegeloire.com), the angevine ornamental horticulture since 2005 was included in a French labeled cluster, VEGEPOLYS. This labeled cluster covers all activities focusing on high added value plants and seeds that are not taken into account in Common Agricultural Policy: horticulture, seeds, cultivation, mushroom, arboriculture, viticulture, medicinal plants, cider and tobacco. Local specialties especially potted plants such as (hydrangea, chrysanthemum, and cyclamen), young ornamental bedding plants, bulbs, tree nurseries. This second part of the communication shows how the nature and dynamics of territorial governance are conditioned by practicing communities that are characterized by embedding and detachment logics. The following longitudinal case study highlights the succession of two major governing methods in which practicing communities play a fundamental role through their bursts and their reconstructions.

2.1 - Methodology

Our study is based on the case method. 52% of registered establishments in the Region Pays de la Loire under the NAF Code 2007 "01.1D (Horticulture, Tree Nursery)"
are located in the department of Maine-et-Loire. Our research focuses on the twenty largest horticultural companies. They are located in a radius of forty kilometers around Angers. The data collection is multi-dimensional (see Rispail Hlady, 2002). It combines documentary research and interviews. The documentary research is based on official documents and scientific journals. We conducted an extensive literature research on the economy and the general organization of the sectors concerned (see Widehem and Cadic, 2006). We conducted research on the history of ornamental plants in Anjou. We also relied on the technical knowledge of an agro-engineer to acquire a thorough knowledge of technical constraints in the horticultural business model. We interviewed each firm manager and institutional structure director during a period from 2008 to 2010 using the semidirective interview technique. This case study is based on forty interviews. Moreover, the interviews’ contents were designed to allow a longitudinal analysis: each actor is invited to describe his strategy and the strategy of his predecessors.

Each period corresponding to the identification of a particular governing method is analyzed according to three stages: 1) International economic and regulatory context (general rules); 2) Economic and local socio-political context; 3) Characterization method of governance and governance dynamics. This text has also been submitted to managers for validation. For confidentiality reasons, we name neither the structures nor the individuals concerned.

2.2. Ornamental horticulture in Anjou, a historical construction based on a homogeneous community of practice

The origins of horticulture in Anjou date from the fifteenth century, with the introduction of Mediterranean plant species by King René I of Anjou who was an amateur gardener. The first angevine horticulturists were descendants of the Oisan hawkers who had settled in Anjou, the foremen of local tree nurseries and the castles gardeners (Portron, 2000). These horticulturists constituted, through time a practicing community, linked by common values and common representations demonstrating the importance of horticultural traditions and the exchange expertise. This community leads to the construction of a local collective knowledge. The angevine producers developed botanical skills since the eighteenth century. These skills emerge were especially developed in botanical gardens that had a real unifying and training role. A real community was born, characterized by the emergence of a shared botanical culture, based on the exchange of expertise and competitiveness favored by local horticultural competitions.

The common local history and the multiplicity of interactions between members favored the emergence of common idiosyncratic botanical resources. The evolution from amateur to professional horticulturist thus gave rise to a local horticultural production based on these specific resources (Portron, 2000; Pineau-Laplanche, 2003). In the nineteenth century this horticultural amelioration willingness was institutionalized as horticultural societies. These societies are created by amateurs, practitioners, chemists and botanists (Portron, 2000), which marked the appearance of a learning organization structured around a high density of links, aiming at capitalizing collective experience thanks to exchanges of tacit knowledge.
This botanical competence locally leads to a “horticultural rent”. This rent is due to the exceptional ground and climatic conditions (sandy and clay grounds, alluvial valleys, relief facilitating sunshine and oceanic climate) in Anjou, it is also due to the collective learning as a specific resource, as well as to discriminating rules that design entry barriers reducing the intensity of competition among members. So this rent is dual: it has a relational and an economic “monopolistic” component. It is reinforced by the co-location of the community members in the same geographic area in the city of Angers (Pineau-Laplanche, 2003; Amisse and Muller, 2011). Territorial embedding of activities is joined with circle logic. This circle logic is the way members develop discriminating rules, which aim to reduce the capability of outside actors to capture the collective rent. Co-location and circle logic are a way to regulate competition between members and to reduce the probability of ownership conflict occurrence.

Thus producers that go to another city for work experience share their new knowledge with the community members when they come back (Amisse and Muller, 2011). A sharing rule hence prevails as a sign of collective belonging and recognition. The method of relating war stories generates an authority for the story teller and participates in the creation of a common identity uniting the community (Ferrary, 2010). New entrants tend to be embedded in the local community through marriage that constitutes an entry barrier. Families establish matrimonial alliances between them. Today it is ever possible to find these matrimonial links in family trees. They reveal that many horticultural families have blood links (Portron, 2000). Hence a code, norm and local rules system crystallizes into a practicing community whose links are characterized by an embeddedness and a strong homogeneity of behaviors. Homogeneity of behaviors does not mean homogeneity of strategic choices. The 1929 crisis, the difficulties in the horticulture sector during this period, the phylloxera crisis and a succession of freezing winters led producers to specialize their production. Some of them choose to specialize in grafted plants as an alternative to replacing destroyed vines. Others specialized in the tree nursery, in the production of cutting flowers or bulbs (Portron, 2000). Different specialization trajectories emerged, leading to a reduced competition between producers. Each producer specialized in one field of expertise without excluding other products (in smaller quantities) that were requested by customers. In this way, the local economic structure was characterized by coopetition relationships.

The local ornamental industry is a result of these micro-homogeneous behaviors. These behaviors lead to the structuring of a practicing community characterized by a strong and homogeneous embeddedness dynamic. Over time, this social embeddedness becomes a legacy that is passed down from generation to generation, which allows individuals to claim the horticultural rent without conflicts. The uniqueness of this community is due to the “multiplexity” of social ties that can be from professional, family and friendly backgrounds. This community is the support of a major economic development based on specialized plants.

2.3. The years 1980 - 2000: A private territorial governance based on a historical community of practice
The eighties were marked by a strong expansion of ornamental horticulture. This expansion was due to the growth of procurements in landscape and the development of individual homes. The rise of new technologies and communication networks opens up new market opportunities, enhanced by a market deregulation in Europe and the end of heavy export arrangements. Progressively, the cut flower production moves to Africa and many companies are forced to reorient towards the production of potted plants.

Other companies take advantage of these relocations and develop production, namely the multiplication or propagation of young plants. At the same time, a concentration of the supply at the European level is observed, with the arrival of garden retail chains as they structure their own distribution networks and gain a strong negotiating power. Competitiveness is increasingly based on technological innovation and logistics. Soil quality, which was previously a key factor of differentiation, is much less now.

In Maine-et-Loire, production tends to be characterized by a fragmentation of the local horticultural activity and a wide range of product positioning. In this context, it becomes difficult to rationalize the market introduction phase. This unfortunately opens the way to products imported from Northern Europe. Upstream, there is no noticeable pooling of markets and services. However, the practicing community in Anjou continues and builds on dense a relational and family network. The existence of entry barriers, including barriers to the installation of new entrants, still contributes to the horticultural rent, and the reduction of local competition. The horticultural community is still organized in a social network giving rise to a strong embedding, dominated by charismatic leaders. For example, the SAPHO bases its existence on a system of rules co-optation among members, knowing that the challenge is the diffusion and control of plant licenses.

The exchanges of practices within the community are still numerous and every manager can freely visit their competitor production site to gain inspiration by its practices. The incentive to initiate a process of upstream scientific research and protect innovations is rather low because it doesn’t create "cash value", excepted for a minority of actors such as the members of SAPHO who are involved in a new varieties promotion process. Producers prefer to highlight a social collective learning based on plant conformation research, efficient production cycles, cultivation techniques and production tools: "one of the major objectives is that the plant acquires high potential for multiplication, while neither generating lack of sales nor being unmarketable", comments one of the producers. Collective social community identification is very strong. Horticulturists often come from wealthy backgrounds in the department, related by intermarriage, and living off their own property portfolio rent. In this context, the arrival of Terrena, agricultural cooperative group, in the capital of a local business, is cautiously observed.

This homogeneous community greatly influences the territorial governance. The co-production of rules by the community has a direct effect on the rules in formal professional organizations. The creation of the OHR (Office of Regional Horticulture), to offset the effects of the crisis in the seventies, will mark the institutionalization of these links. This union provides advices and services to the horticulturists involving producers, marketing structures and local authorities (Amisse and Muller, 2011). The links with INRA are also

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3 The SAPHO is a consortium of the top twenty tree nurseries. It aims to finance joint research projects carried out with INRA and diffuse new varieties.
present and rely on ad hoc informal research projects. These professional actors become key players at the instigation of the community.

Governance can be characterized as "private" as conditioned by the horticultural practicing community and by informal links (codes, rules of exclusion) that federate actors at the territorial level. The power to "make" the rule is in the hands of horticulturists who are also represented in the professional organizations, they have themselves created. This private governance is also a heritage character. It relies on enterprise household transmission and on the creation of a property portfolio thanks to the acquisition of the horticultural rent. Although this mode of governance is shaken up by the new changes in the environment, inertia rules govern these practices. This inertia is explained firstly by the density of links within the community, which reflects a strong structural and relational embeddedness of its members (Uzzi, 1997) and secondly by the entry barriers namely the systematic screening of new entrants. This tends to generate a “parochial confinement” (Bowles and Gintis, 2001) which can be found in the behavior within professional organizations. External input of information and knowledge become too limited to allow members to adapt and anticipate changes in the technological and competitive environment. The following paragraph shows the embedding dynamic slowdowns in the early 2000s, then go on to put into question the nature and the dynamics of territorial governance.

2.4. The years 2000-2010, detachment and transition towards mixed territorial governance based on an inter-community embeddedness

The early 2000’s marks a break of the market expansion phase with horticultural market problems such as: production atomicity, inadequate retail network adaptation when faced with the highly organized national and international retail... At the same time, companies have to face transmission and succession problems. This period is characterized by the loss of charismatic leaders (retirement, death) leading to a detachment process. Also, the arrival of salaried managers modifies the relationships between leaders whose relationships and codes were previously determined by interpersonal links. Territorial governance experiences a period of uncertainty during which power balance and relationships are transformed. The social network model encounters limits: relational uncertainty, new scale for the market protection strategy, sociability that needs to be directed to more lucrative objectives such as value creating. In this context, the emergence of a clusters national policy gives a new direction to the territorial governance while allowing the entry of political actors in the local game.

Indeed, from 2005 new logics of embedding emerge and lead to a renewed governance development. The international horticultural activity, which began its transformation since several decades, is dominated by industrial groups whose strategy is based on the rent acquisition due to plant breeding. In 2008, the group Plan SAS creates an alliance with the Japanese group Sakata Ornamentals to ensure leadership on the new bedding plants market. The same year is marked by the arrival of Syngenta on the outside plant market, with the acquisition of Yoder's Chrisanthenum. The market becomes oligopolistic and worldwide. In Maine-et-Loire, we observe changes in the groups’ strategies. The Conte group (Jardiland) continues the sector integration with the acquisition of a local company specializing in young plants transferring all the decision-making power
of the local company to the group. The cooperative Terrena abandons the nursery of ornamental trees, questioning the participation in one of the oldest companies in the region. The rent production and acquisition is now at stake in both local production and access to potential heterogeneity rent contexts. Local businesses whose markets are international think they do not have the critical size enabling them to capture large markets (chrysanthemum, geranium). Indeed these markets are dominated by Sakata and Syngenta international groups. Moreover, strategic opportunities in the houseplant market are limited and there are no opportunities in the cut flowers market. The only possibility actors have, is to maintain niche markets if they are able to protect them.

Some firms are opening up to the idea of technological innovation. However, they are not in identical situations to apply innovation and capture rents. It is usual to grow plants who earn royalties in horticulture, but the situation is different for the nursery tree activity. Within the nursery tree activity, managers encounter resistance from customers when trying to promote their new products on the basis of a royalties system. Customers are not interested by innovation that increases prices. Moreover, the protection of new horticultural varieties is difficult to do. In this way some companies are driven to develop an active networking strategy and research for rent acquisition, when others are in a less favorable position.

From the heterogeneous situations emerge two new categories of practicing communities: practicing communities based on innovation and research, some of which are driven by the cluster VEGEPOLYS, and practicing communities resulting from the individual strategies of firms. In the first case, the 2005 creation of VEGEPOLYS competitiveness pole policy (cluster policy) contributes to the collective structuring of research links. The cluster initiates progressively a new collective identity around research. Research projects are developed or supported in the perspective of controlling the hybridizing phase. If we take the plant genus gardenia as an example, research on creation and breeding are carried out under the project BRIO (Breeding, Research and Innovation on Ornamentals). This will determine the operating rules. In this context, actors become aware of the need to protect their innovations if they want to generate a rent. A new practicing community emerges from this movement. In the second case, firms develop individual strategies for acquiring the innovation rent in connection with extra-territorial partners, particularly in northern Europe or the United States. For example, a local business, which aims to develop young plants and finished products to Europe, bought a logistics

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4 A company that reproduces plants by cuttings takes an individual and multiplies it in thousands of copies, without using seedlings. Therefore, once the clone is created, if a competitor knows how to do the cutting, he can reproduce exactly the same plant, which is a significant threat. On the contrary, if the creation of varieties is created using the sexual reproduction cycle of the plant, the company that produces a seed is the owner of the seed’s “parents.” In this second case, they have all rights of ownership of the genetic line and therefore control the market.

5 Hybridization phase means a genetic cross. This genetic cross gives birth to a new population in which a selection will be made. In this selection, we identify the varieties that have a good potential and are then reproduced by vegetative multiplication. The multiplication can be done by dividing cells in vitro, by cuttings or laying or grafting.

6 The challenge of such a program involving companies and public research lies in the pooling of research resources (access to research infrastructures ...) on the one hand and in the implementation of a joint team of scientists that work on different objects (hydrangea, hibiscus ...) on the other hand.
platform in the Netherlands. It is, according to this actor, a prerequisite for the development of exports in Europe. In this way, the company benefits from the commercial network of the Dutch structure, who has precious social networks in veiling.\(^7\) Another company decides to specialize in license trading in the United States. So these individual strategies based on international social networks constitute a second category of influential communities.

Thus we observe a reconstruction of the community landscape with new forms of inter-community embeddedness. The cluster generates the arrival of a new generation of managers with as example the entry of agricultural cooperation and local suppliers. The discrimination rules are gradually disappearing in favor of expanded cooperation rules. Managers are involved in one or several communities, leading so to a new embedding dynamic: 1) the historical community of practice whose family and friends links are still existing, 2) communities of practice related to research purposes networking supported by the cluster VEGEPOLYS. A community emerges as an example with BRIO project. Participants are aware of the necessity for innovating across all the value chain, from selection to retail. Representation systems evolve progressively and a by project regulation emerges. Two other communities also exist around the GIE EUROGENI\(^8\) and the SAPHO\(^9\).

We observe pooling involving tree nurseries, multipliers and the public research laboratory INRA. These communities are not isolated and there is a mutual embeddedness between them.

Territorial governance is strongly marked by this double movement: the VEGEPOLYS creation and the emergence of different practicing communities. The actor’s embeddedness tends to become institutionalized and takes an inter-community form which is linked to the diversity of individual situations and opportunities of rent acquisition. The social link is ultimately less "inherited" than intentionally “built” according to the specific goal of creating value. Territorial governance becomes “mixed” as it is marked by the important role of the public actor VEGEPOLYS. However, we observe exogeneity of power balance, as the rules, defined at the international scale, determine the creation of local rules. New varieties and rent acquisition logics are driven by international groups organized in oligopolies and locally relayed only by managers who have a strategic opportunity to do so. Locally, power balances are more diffused and shared with the public actor because of the communities’ multiplication and manipulation.

**CONCLUSION**

The aim of this paper is to present a new interpretation of the territorial governance dynamics according to its micro-social components, more particularly through the concept of practicing community. Our theoretical discussion brings a refreshed look at the socio-economic foundations of local institutional dynamics. This paper highlights the decompartmentalized nature of economic coordination and the impact of interactions on the sphere of economic exchanges. Practicing communities are interpreted as vectors of strategic opportunity and social norms influencing local economic regulation. They generate

\(^7\) Auctions
\(^8\) EUROGENI: Research and development on ornamental vegetal varieties.
\(^9\) SAPHO: Vegetal varieties edition society.
strategic opportunities because they allow agents to build a social capital and to be
structured in a group that favors an efficient acquisition of strategic resources. This
efficiency is due to social norms co-produced by the group and prefiguring constraints that
reduce opportunistic or deviant behaviors. Thus, practicing communities determine
considerably territorial governance, by both its nature and dynamics. Its nature because the co-
produced rules can be discriminating and can lead to community groups characterized by more or
less variety. The angevine cluster case shows that social structures that were limited to a group of
entrepreneurs and technical support structures are today largely in favor of a higher variety:
public actors, private actors, agricultural cooperation... The governance evolves from a
"private" nature towards a "mixed" one.

Territorial governance dynamics is then influenced. Intentional embedding -
detachment strategies aim at ensuring the power to: rule, create the rule, and serve the rule
(Friedberg, 1997) with the objective of environmental and strategic market control. Thus,
the transition dynamics from private to mixed governance is based on micro-social
movements operating strong links. We perceive however that if the intentional aspect of
territorial governance is high, the non-intentional aspect is high as well: international
environment changing and entry of new actors, new European regulations and countries
positioning themselves competitively on the same market. One avenue of research on the
impact of practicing communities on economic dynamics is opened here. Initial research is
directed in France at the articulation between economic sociology and industrial
economics (see Ferrary, 2010).

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French clusters policy, networks of practicing communities and territorial governance: the case of ornamental horticulture in Anjou


PUBLIC SPACE DEVELOPMENTS IN SZEGED

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Abstract: Within urban renewal, public space developments have got a high-priority, have generated high interest and have often resulted conflicts. I examined who are the main actors, what is the relationship like between them, and what are their interests. The study focuses on two public spaces and their (re)developments in Szeged. From the research, it emerged that one of the main reasons behind the conflicts is that the developments are mainly physical in nature, and the public opinions, protests are less considered. The possible users of the squares would take part in the implementation, and this could be the key element of the success.

Keywords: urban development, square, stakeholder, conflict, participation, planning

1. INTRODUCTION

It is prominently important to develop places in the city space that open the door to something, that have real functions as ideally working community places and that conduce social groups to hook up, relax. The city structure is basically made up of public and private spaces. “The city space was the place that belonged to nobody, therefore to everybody”\(^2\). The phrasing of Dezső Ekdler Hungarian architect illustrates well, how difficult is to decide who’s is the given space, who is accountable for it, and how much can the public sector own the decisions related to it, and how much do the citizens have the right to have a voice in their development.

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\(^2\) The citation is from an article on website www.artportal.hu: Public space: The birth of a notion in the physical space and in the virtual world II.
In many Western European and North American countries a development concept is practised successfully, that particularly aimed to public spaces and based on the participation of the local social groups and the civic, political and private sector also have a voice. In the last few years such processes took place in Hungary too, but they aspired mainly to the physical renewal of public spaces to produce a more representative place. They took into account the aspect of use and social functions less, so primarily the business or other (e.g. aesthetic) interests predominated to enhance the place’s business attractiveness (Boros, L. et al., 2010, Nagy, E. – Boros L., 2010) The successful external experiences that emphasized the local communities and their ideas were adapted in relatively slight cases. Related to this, one aim of this paper is to introduce how much are the local social groups’ opinions are considered in the analysed developments, and if social protests emerged, how were these handled and how did these affected the developments.

In Hungary, development plans and the implementations might be influenced by factors like actual political situation, the accessible funding and application sources. Urban developments are allocated by European Union fundings and in a public space development it may happen, that the project focuses on the criterias and to spend the obtained money instead of the communities’ needs and expectations – thus a top-down strategy is implemented. Another problem is that communities don’t have a delegate and public spaces don’t have the party at fault. Accordingly Hungarian urban development is characterized by the building oriented and top-down strategy. In addition the weak or extinct communication channels also make the works more difficult (Madden, K., 2005). In this context the paper’s aim was to analyse the relationship and communication between the possible different actors, if there is any kind of.

Certain public space developments had a big response in Szeged lately that made the research particularly reasonable. Representatives of the city society groups and non-governmental organisations sounded off in connection with more parts of the reconstructions. Reconstructing the happenings it was necessary to analyse what public and non-governmental actors allocate the developments, who are the main actors who initiate and carry out the developments and how much are the European Union allocation affect the decisions of the city government.

2. METHODOLOGY

In the theoretical part of the study I lean on the external and domestic literature. With the content analysis of these I present the notion of public space and the good practices in public space developments. The case studies from Szeged partially based on the analysis of printed and electronic press and on the forum comments related to certain articles. In the research I did a keyword search in the data bank of daily paper Délmagyarország and other papers of Szeged. In the course of the search I primarily focused on the words “development”, “city development”, “public space” and the names of the analysed places. The analysed period was the term between 2004 and 2010.

Moreover, I adopted the method of questionnaires, interviews and participant observation in the fields of the case studies as well. In different times of the day I made field notes about the circulation of the public spaces, the typical ways of the use of space and the everyday life of the squares. Besides all these I made 100-100 questionnaires with the users.
of the squares in the two analysed public spaces. Choosing the respondents happened with a simple random sampling and the available subjects were the basic population. In fine I made interviews with people who know the squares and their pasts well and I focused on the problems that the other methods highlighted.

3. DEFINITIONS AND DETERMINATIONS RELATED TO THE TOPIC

Public spaces are – similarly to all spaces – socially constructed (Lefebvre, H., 1991). As geographical micro-spaces have been presenting since people concentrated into settlements, however they have been tried to define in many ways. In casual expressing it is defined in general with the term of “anybody”, “anything”, “anytime” and “freely”. Public space constitutes the base of the democracy that strengthens the inherence of the society, so anybody should have a right to take part of the planning, not just the using of the square. According to David Harvey (2000), public space is an utopia and an ideal type of spatial form. Usually the Anglo-Saxon literature handles the notion and meaning of public space in a wider context than Hungarian literature. Public space is the token of the democracy, the space of the social justice, “theatre”, place of representation that is everybody’s and nobody’s at the same time. They analyse more questions in connection with public spaces, like problems of homeless and spatial exclusion (Boros, L., 2007), or who has the right to the spaces, how these problems appear in the urban planning and how do the policy handle them. As Don Mitchell takes it, public space is a product, as such, the token of the social control and property, extremely problematic and disputed entity. Here, the interests of the business and politics incorporate while public spaces remain democratic places (leastwise by right) (Mitchell, D., 2003).

In capitalism, public spaces are more and more commodified and homogenized – it is the part of the process which is often called “disneyfication” (Zukin, S., 1991). As a result of disneyfication the stimulation of consumption, the spectacle became ones of the dominant features these places. In this sense the market replaces the public in the statae interventions and compromises social justice (Harvey, D., 2000).

Based on a Hungarian adaptation of the term “Public space means the compartments of precise, opened and located in the open air that anybody can use anytime without paying for it” (Studio Metropolitana Urban Researching Public Company: Using and adjudication of public spaces in Budapest, 2004).

4. THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNITIES IN THE URBAN DEVELOPMENTS

In the United States of America an initiative named Project for Public Spaces has been going on for more than 30 years. Its aim to develop such urban and community building places that enhance communities’ identity and help social integration. The organization takes part of the process of researching, training, planning and designing. The team analysed more than 1000 squares in the world and they saw the success principally in the easiness of approach, the attractive appearance, the convenience and community spirit (Madden, K., 2005).
In Hungary, effective urban steps first happened after the transition and the first opportunity for community participation was that time. In thought this term (community participation) is easily conjugated with protests of the community activists and non-governmental organizations, though this is lot more. Necessity of this method is heard more and more often from politicians and civil servants recently (Lukovich, T., 2002). The experiences of the Hungarian and American institutes were alloyed and the project named Public Space Program was started in Budapest. The aim of the organization is to enliven public spaces, give them functions and transvalue them in physical and in contents as well. In the course of the work, they figure out with the local square users what is the most needed and the process is characterized by interrelationship all along. Mátyás Square in 8th district of Budapest was renewed this way (Kovács, Z. – Alföldi, Gy., 2008, Madden, K., 2005).

However some contradiction is noticeable in connection with all these attempts because while the point of view that community planning is necessary is more and more accepted, the implementation of developments may come off through the bureaucratic public sphere and in a capital-oriented way. In the course of such an implementation often diverse conflict of interests, each stakeholder has different motivation, ideology so the public sector, the politician and the entrepreneur has different aims (Boros, L., 2010).

It is also worth to take into account that community participation is not a panacea, besides the evident advantages there might be some disadvantages and tumbler too. Involving the local community may effect a more democratic sphere, in course of the process regular and high-standard communication may emerge between the parties concerned, which can mean an approbatory scratch in other urban development questions too. In course of the collective work other problems might surface to be resolved. Furthermore, it can be an effective tool to integrate minorities, beget or remould their own spaces (Lukovich, T., 2002, Kovács, Z. – Szirmai, V., 2006). Slowing down of the planning can be put down as a disadvantage of community participation, so at times the democratic community planning is out of accord with the efficiency. The expenses raise, but it is worth to take into account that such a square into which is invested more energy, money and time, can function much farther without additional costs like actuating or developing it. Social groups (in case they get too big say) might be a risk for the government, because a sort of power weakening can occur. This can affect against involving the communities (Lukovich, T., 2002).

At the same time I put a premium on highlighting that city is a big community itself, its development is also the community’s interest, and this is true to the smaller places too. That is to say it is not a good decision to separate the square that we want to develop and its users.

5. POSSIBLE ACTORS AND THEIR MOTIVATIONS IN PUBLIC SPACES

More participants hereby more kind of interest and aim may arise, completely reviewing them is impossible. Hence without limitation I attempt to present the most important ones. The state and administrative sphere play the biggest role, but beside the governmental contributory the private sphere and the entrepreneurs are also important
The local community and the non-governmental initiatives are slightly a different group.

One of the most important actor of the urban development is local authority. This term doesn’t only cover the city governance but also the relationship between them and the local society, the common works, and the agreement based management. For quite a long time planning and managing the city was the charge of the politicians and boffins but today roping the local society in the works is crucial (Becsei, J., 1998, Kozma, G., 2002). The municipalities’ roles are really significant in public spaces. There are notable legal tools in their hands thus they can achieve their aims relatively easily through the support system by dint of laws, politics and institutional system. Thus they may overshadow the other stakeholders. Their aims are mainly to preserve and revise the competitiveness of the city or region and to achieve the political stability – and to keep their position of course. The municipalities’ accentuated interest to call down the allocations and to strengthen the local economy (László, M., – Pap, N., 2007).

The private sphere’s characteristic that it possesses expertise and means, so its aim is to achieve the higher profit and to get solvent principals. They are usually called “technocrats” because mainly boffins work on the development activities (Bartke, I., 1995, László, M. – Pap, N., 2007, Süli-Zakar, I., 1998, 2003).

In most cases the motivations of the public sphere (social groups and resident population) are their own ideologies and ideas. To achieve these, their tools are the voluntary work, promotion tools (Boros, L. – Garamhegyi, Á., 2009). Non-governmental institutions try to prevail in similar ways and with similar tools, but in their case the motivation is to work out their support and donations. They need to detect and handle conflict in time (László, M. – Pap, N., 2007).

6. THE CHANGING ROLE OF PUBLIC SPACES IN HUNGARY

Public spaces, public parks have always been important in urban structure, but at the same time the force and aspect of their roles have been different in various eras and places. Typically not just one function defined them because functions like sport, recreation, tourism or nature were determinative also in the past and today (Csapó, T., 2007).

The changing roles of public spaces are basically in connection with the changing of the settlement structure, the effects of globalization and the political changes (Boros, L. et al., 2006). In the middle ages public spaces gave place mainly to the barter and religious activities, so they were essential parts of the everyday life of urban society. In the period of enlightenment public space gave the most adequate place for the sciences and arts. At war, many public spaces were ruined and in the post-war period the reconstruction was the most important task instead of rebuilding the social life related to the squares, streets, parks, etc. In Hungary in the state-socialist period public spaces lost their former community functions because of the formal and informal rules made by the system (Erdei, F., 1971).

Public spaces are important because they can make the settlements unique, give place to the community life – that is to say to the society’s everyday life that related to the publicity. This explains that all over the world there is an increasing demand for usable, pretty, fitted with functions, nice and sparkling spaces. One reason is that well-functioning, successful places integrate in the resident population’s acquaint, identity and strengthen the
community feeling. The successfully renewed places can not only actuate directly the society but the city’s economy can also been strengthened. Saint Stephen Square’s renewal is a good example due to the appreciation of the surrounding properties. In Hungary, smaller city development questions came into view after the transition in 1989, but mainly after joining the European Union, because it is important to concern the budget of the municipalities, to get the allocations. Related to this, a problem can emerge: municipalities compete by thinking in a supply-driven way. This means that they know about a call for proposal, and if they are up to the mark, they find a problematic area apt for the tender that they can develop and they do the project.

In Szeged there isn’t any precedent like ones in abroad and Budapest, temporarily mainly physical developments come true. For the municipality it is often a problem that they don’t have a social and economic program related to the city developments and renewal projects. In case they still have, they rarely associate with the physical renewals so the lack of the complex approach may be a problem (Egedy, T., 2007, Kovács, Z. – Szirmai, V., 2006).

7. INTRODUCTION OF PUBLIC SPACE DEVELOPMENTS THROUGH EXAMPLES OF SZEGED

In the following section I present two cases from Szeged in which heated debates and conflicts emerged during the planning and implementation phase. The presented developments also illustrate the problems related to the supply-driven interventions.

7.1. „Lófara”

The square called “Lófara” (Lófara is a word that refers to the bottom of a horse, in this case the bottom of the horse statue) by the colloquial speech, is a triangle, interstratified by the Tisza Lajos Boulevard, Kölcsey Street and Fekete Sas Street (Fig. 1.). The main characteristics of the square are the third military cavalry regiments equestrian statue, the building of the faculty of law and the palace Reök (Somorjai, F., 2002). The citizens of Szeged called the palace Lófara house from the statue set up in 1943, because the bottom of the horse statue was towards the onetime pub, later bank, today a coffee house (Blazovich, L., 2005). As a matter of curiosity, the square does not have an official name yet, it is only referred to as its surname. This is strange because it is a centrally located place, well known by most of the citizens of Szeged and is an important part of the mental maps of the city.

The “Lófara affair” has begun in 2008. European Union invited entries for a competition to develop the historical city centres. In this framework, the local authority decided about the rehabilitation of the square in front of the Reök palace in December of 2008. As one momentum of this, they initiated to relocate the statue. As many people considered the opening of a new coffee house as the main reason, this plan generated protests. The so renewed Kölcsey street links the square to the Kárász Street (Fig. 1.), which is the main promenade street of Szeged.
Fig. 1. Downtown of Szeged and the analysed public spaces.
Legend: 1- Saint Stephen Square, 2- Kárász Street, 3- “Lófara”, 4- Gutenberg Street
Source: edited by Gábor Dudás based on Google maps

The main aim of the city was the improvement and strengthening of the tourism potential, to make a more aesthetic square and to extend the pedestrian zone of the city centre. The Reök palace has been changed to the house of arts, so the number of programs increased in there and the circulation and cultural role of the square increased too. This also explains the renewal (Boros, L., 2010).

However more problems emerged related to the renewal of the square. On the one part the originally triangle shaped square (Fig. 2.) that fitted in the city’s avenue-boulevard structure has transformed so the geometrically and architecturally structure of the city has disrupted (Fig. 3.).
Nevertheless the most vehement protests were against the removal of the statue. The statue bears many memorandums, like it is a piety place for the bereaved of the heroic victims of the First World War, in addition it is a memorial so traditions, feelings, and memories bind to it. The red roses around the statue symbolised the killed hussar’s blood. In the course of the renewal instead of the grassland around the statue a concrete area was developed and the grassland got place at a small corner of the square, what is a problem in
the urban climatology aspect because this square is one of the hottest places of the city and the grassland could slightly compensate this (Gulyás, Á. – Unger, J., 2010). First sculptors, architects and non-governmental organisations spoke out against the planned changes but later the citizens of Szeged joined, too. A part of the chamber of architects, the ones who protect the city and non-governmental organizations were protesting particularly against the removal of the statue. According to them, the development could have come true even if the statue stayed. The main explanation was the opening of the new coffee house in the ground floor of the Reök palace, because the place needed to the terrace in order to set up the more tables (which would enhance the Mediterranean milieu of the city as well). The protesters pushed a compromise: the statue could stay and the terrace could open too.\(^3\) Notwithstanding the protests, the municipality decided to move the statue in 2009 February. As an answer the Szögedi Védegylet (a non-governmental organization of the city) organised a protest and fifty people created a human-chain around the square, in which one faction’s advocacy took part too. From this point the political debates become sharper and sharper (often in harsh tone of voice). In the teeth of the debates and agreements finally the original plans were accepted. The decoupling works started in July 2009 and the new square was ready in April 2010. After the transmission the traditionalists initiated to give name to the square, but this is not decided yet. The Traditionalist and Cityscape Protector Association of Szeged advocated the „Hussar Hero’s Square” name\(^4\).

As a matter of course, more articles came out in the local media related to the affair that piqued the citizens. As the conflict sharpened to the political sides, observably this aspect became decisive at the panel discussions in the internet. Many people complained about decreasing of the green area, eliminating of the parking places and keeping out of the car traffic, others favoured the car free downtown. The following citations from the forums related to the articles illustrate the debates: “The grass area hardly diminishes; 203 m\(^2\) remains from the present 290 m\(^2\) → According to Tünde Dombai the author of the article, if something reduced by third, that is slightly diminishing??”‘‘, ‘‘Of course the planning was first again, than the complaints... Couldn’t it be prevented? Of course it could...Let it be a little green area, fence, event area to the REÖK, terrace, benches, but also place to the cyclists...’’; ‘‘Stone field with an equestrian. What happened to the nice wrought iron fence and the flowers? Why is it good to make such bleak, empty, featureless places? Shouldn’t we ask the planners what was their intention, or they just had to spend the tender money to something, with a meaningless explanation?’’.

These comments may illustrate well, that the readers of the articles are quit interested about the development of the spaces. This indicates that many good ideas could derive from them and they would be happy to participate in a common planning action.

When composing the questionnaire of Lófara, I aimed to formulate questions that may help me to illustrate the standpoint of the users about the square itself and its development. Due to the more kind of shade of meanings it was relevant to examine what the “Lófara” means to the users, what they associate with when they hear this word. Based on the answers it came clear that the majority link the square to the statue and this shows

\(^3\) Source: An article titled Lófara-ügy: Csak a jéghegy csúcsa from www.szegedma.hu (Downloaded: 2009. February 13)

\(^4\) Source: www.szegedma.hu (Downloaded: 2009. February 13)
well the statue’s importance and justifies the debates because the memorial is important to the people. One of the main groups of the users is the students. They primarily think about the square as a meeting place and this refers to their behavioural patterns and the more active free time activities. The interpretation of the square as a meeting place should be essential during the rehabilitation because meeting (the activity itself) is a media of creating new relationships, living the public space, facing new things.

As the square is in the city centre it is also a junction of public transport and education. Thus it is not surprising that most people just crossover it but besides this they use it for other activities too. As we know the square is a meeting junction, based on the survey relatively few people use it for relaxing, chatting or reading. Despite the university building and the free time habits of the students these activities are less typical to the redeveloped “Lófara”. The reason of this might be the noisy environment, uncomfortable benches, small green area and the shadow free places which all make the square less attractive. Most of the users use the place daytime and targeted. They rated the square as a 4 (on a chart 1 to 5 where 5 was the best mark and 1 was the worst), so overall they consider it as an aesthetic place but this consideration may refer only to the appearance.

The new appearance of the square is better than before but the debates refer to the fact that the agreements of the details would be important during the planning in order to fill the attractive places with social content. In regard to the debates, the respondents’ point of view is the same.

The biggest positive aspect of the development is the nicer appearance of the area. The atmosphere of the place is great what is due to the buildings and coffees around the area. The most negative aspect is the lack of the green area and the lack of trees. This is a general problem in urban public spaces though the demand is increasing. The new concrete surface makes the square bare, grey and boring. One more problem emerged, in connection with the bicycle traffic. The signals are not clear, and there is no storage for the bicycles.

All together, the respondents characterised the square with the following words: bare, noisy, boring, stern, depressed, and bleak. Though some differences emerged in the opinions about the square, a picture evolved about the deficiencies. Based on the criticisms it seems to clear that more trees are needed mostly. This would solve the problem of the shade-free places, and also would be great from the environmental and aesthetical aspect. Bigger green area, some fountains and different programs are much needed too. Organising events would make the square more popular.

Based on the survey it can be stated that before the changes, a survey by the developers would have been necessary to get answers what is important to the square users, what they need. Considering the real needs, successful developments and places could be made.

7.2. Saint Stephen Square
Saint Stephen Square is out of the Tisza Lajos Boulevard, which goes around the city centre (Fig 1.), its determining element is the oldest ferro-concrete building of Hungary, the water-tower (Fig. 4.).
The build-up, which is more than hundred years old, was renewed only once in 1959. Since then, the sand was running out it and the tower obtused statically, so the reconstruction was necessary. Beside the water-tower, the late market’s remains, the new stalls determine the area’s character (Becsei, J., 2004, Blazovich, L., 2005, Bajmócy, P., 2009). The main conflict in connection with the development was the diminishing of the former expansive market function. The square is notable also because of the small-scale gentrification that is going on since the renewal. At the same time the Saint Stephen square is slightly different from “Lófara”, because there were no harsh debates and protests on the part of the vendors or the citizens.

The recovery started in August 2005 initiated by the municipality and the Waterworks of Szeged, by the end of May in 2006 the elevation and the area around the water-tower has been renewed. The tower got more new functions, it operates as a gazebo, sometimes concerts are held due to its acoustics and it periodically gives a home to exhibitions. The execution of the square development was together with the tower’s renewal, in the framework of the same project. The square was enriched with fountains, benches, works of art, promenades. The earlier much bigger market got place in the South-West corner of the area (Fig. 5.). The crossover traffic has been partly closed off, only the trolley buses can run. This decreases the noise pollution and air pollution and increases the security.
In favour of the public safety some surveillance cameras has been equipped. This arrangement usually has a good impact on the adjudication of a square, people feel the given place safer and they visit it more often. In the case of Saint Stephen square, this had a different effect: in spite of the surveillance cameras, people don’t like to use the square, and they don’t feel it safe mainly because of the homeless.

Thereupon the renewal works not all the vendors could stay on the square: The owners got compensation but the renters went empty away. One of them declared in Tünde Dombai’s article this way⁵: „Since then I’m looking for, a job, but I don’t find anything. I was an entrepreneur, I cannot be unemployed.”; „The trade is usually flat in wintertime every year, but here the demand decreased already in fall time. It was promised, that the new stalls will be ready in spring. The livelihood of the family ceases by closing the buffet.”; „We don’t let the market go! It is not possible to always do a job on the small people. We expand the 20-22 thousand Forints (~60 €) pension – churning the second hand book vendor.”; „Every metropolis protects the flea markets, why can’t Szeged do the same?“.

Greengrocers and flower-shops supposed to install in the new stalls. By this purview, decision-makers wanted to strengthen the touristic attractiveness of the square and the city and the earlier flea market and scone stalls did not fit in this picture, so they did not let them to open out again.

Saint Stephen square has become an adornment of Szeged, it carried of a prize in October 2010. On the surface, it is renewed nicely, but the earlier well-functioning market’s remains are near its end. The decision makers’ aim was to keep the original function of the square, that is why they didn’t eliminate completely the tourist attractive stalls, but they

increased the rental fees too high so not many vendors can afford it. The size of the market has substantially put down, the earlier bustle disappeared and the everyday life of the area changed. The essential community element of the square disappeared so the successful rehabilitation of the area could just partly come true.

According to the survey the respondents are more satisfied with this square then with Lófara but still the majority just cross over the square and not many use it to relax or to sit down and read a book. Not many potential square users are willing to use it and one of the reasons is that there are many homeless and beggars and they discolour the square. Thus if people don’t have a business in the square or in the neighbourhood, so there isn’t any reason to go there, then they keep off of it. However if they still use it, then they do it in broad day, though in the evening the tower’s lights are very nice, in spite of the surveillance cameras people keep off the square because of the beggars. It refers to the fact, that without solving the local social problems the development is only a half-resolution because the poorest people aim to pick up a living in the most proper places.

Like at the first case study, most people prefer the new square, but many of them were not sure about the answer. Same as in the case of “Lófara”, people didn’t take objection to the physical changes but the changing functions of the square. The most attractive element of the square is clearly the water-tower and the big green area. At the same time they don’t like the new stalls, they think that these stalls don’t fit in the aesthetical picture of the square. They mentioned many times that the neighbourhood is defunct, recess, “not really useful”, drafty, there is nothing to do there, and though it is nice, it’s sad that tourists don’t know about it and can’t visit it. These statements confirm the fact that a place can’t be attractive, can’t have a role or meaning without functions and programs, how nice so ever it may be, it just hides in the heart of the city. In other words, it can’t become a real public space, at least not in the sense that I presented before.

The results of the interviews I made with the vendors of the market were corresponding with the content analysis and the conclusions of the survey. The interviewees have been selling for three years in the square and they are content with the conditions needed for merchandising. They didn’t work on the market before the development, but from the chats with the earlier vendors they could adjudicate some facts. The turnover was much bigger before and the earlier square was much busier and sparkling. Some tourists loaf in the summer time, but in the other seasons they lose even this source of revenue. The costumers miss the old market, the old offer and atmosphere. As the flower shop’s owner said: “we are slowly running out of costumers”. The square doesn’t have any advertisement so only a few people know about it so its touristic function is nearly missing.

“The square would need a bigger advertisement; maybe more people would come to visit.”

The participant observation of the square attested that people really don’t like to sit down there; they can’t do any activity there. It is only busy in the morning, lunch time and in the afternoon. Between these times, just a few people visit the square, they crossover it without looking around, shopping or promenading. Children get bored soon, there isn’t any toy or playground for them. It is slightly capable for dog-walking though there isn’t any dog running place so the other visitor don’t like if a dog slubbers the square. The bicycle traffic

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6 Based on one of the interviews I made with the vendors.
is quite big due to the bicycle road. There are really a many homeless and beggars in the square in spite of the surveillance cameras.

The market function was given before and the city government planned to keep it but they transformed it in form and content too. More groups’ interest compromised mainly the vendors’ and the square users (the earlier costumers) evaluate it negatively. The new stalls don’t fit that much in the new square and less vendor rent them since the renewal (during the observations more of the stalls were empty). The water-tower is very nice and it could be a touristic value of the city but tourists don’t get any information about its presence. The top-down method in this case was not successful because the lost functions had not been replaced with new ones. Such a square came true that lost its spirit and content. Based on the foreign and domestic experiences, the mutual communication with the square users and vendors could result a more useful, richer, more attractive place.

8. CONCLUSIONS

After evaluating the survey it came evident that most people think about public spaces as the places of community life, relaxing, places where they can meet and participate events. They like to take pleasure and goggle in them, they need attractive, fascinating places that they can use. They think public spaces are for colouring cities, these are special spots of the city that bring people together and provide diversity. Of course the touristic attractiveness and tourist destination function is important too. In the case of Saint Stephen Square the city government’s primary aim was to create this kind of function but this didn’t come true (or just partly) so the city didn’t reach the required results. Obviously can’t be every activity settled in one place but settling the claims in would be necessary.

This aspect would be essential also because the respondents are squarely opened to it: the majority would be happy to participate an event where they can have a voice in shaping the place and can help in the development works. Many people would be attentive in connection with activities like planting trees or flowers but we can rarely hear tell of organising events like this. Men would be happy to paint benches and nearly everybody was eager when I mentioned the possibility, that they could compose the square with scale-models. In Budapest before the development of certain squares (Hunyadi Square, Mátyás Square) the resident population had a chance to enrich the plans with their own ideas and to attend forums where they could tell their thoughts. This is an exemplary practice what could be effective in Szeged too.

Rehabilitation of public spaces is of high priority in urban development. In the framework of such projects beyond renewal activities the change of functions and creating new ones is also happening. Within these it’s indispensable to appraise the earlier merits and keep them. The most important element of public space is the community itself so it’s most important function to create and strengthen their cohesion and create community life. To make the elements above the active residential participation is indispensable and the condition that the participants feel the place as theirs and feel responsibility for its destiny.

In the case of both squares the decisions of the municipality stirred up a storm. Within this, people were not only (and not primarily) against the concrete modifications but they also disallowed the arrangements that ignored the Non-Governmental Organizations and acted without any residential participation. Many criticisms think that the decision
makers of the city compensated the residential collation with eye-services. As it emerges from the second case study, in the case of Saint Stephen Square the debates were not that sharp but the oppugnance was clear in here too.

The processes are determined by the fact that the municipalities are the main decision makers and a very important aspect is the distribution of the sources and the deadlines. Mostly the projects are in late and the participation would make the processes slower.

These two case studies are exemplifying too that the so called successful public spaces are not necessary matterful and attractive enough to be part of the local society’s everyday life. These are not the most appropriate to consummate community life though give a nice visual experience. In the background of this there are complicated processes. There are too many interests, demands, aims and actors related to these places and these don’t harmonize with each other though they are connected much and the governance handles them abortively for the present. To harmonize them, the residential collaboration could give the best tools. The good practices from abroad and Hungary shows that this method works well. There are undeveloped sources in these groups and if the governance could use them, they could create really successful public spaces, and in a longer view more successful city and society.

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Public space development in Szeged

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ACCESSIBILITY TO GENERAL AMENITIES; DETERMINING THE ATRACTIVITY OF METROPOLITAN AREA OF IAŞI CITY

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Abstract: The expansion of city beyond its limits, even if it is a widely researched theme, represents a barrier for the geospatial analysis due to the process’s complexity and the factors that generate it. On the other hand, accessibility - as the main concept on which this paper focuses on - is the main parameter for highlighting the different levels of development. In the same time facilities and their distribution explain the relationships (seen as flows of information, ideas, finances, people) between the elements of the analyzed system, bonds that in this case induce a core-periphery functionality. The outputs (classification of the localities by different levels of accessibility) offer a complex image upon the study area and could be considered also an important instrument for the policy makers’ multiscalar analyses.

Keywords: time-distance travel, urban fringe, facilities, suburbanisation, network analyst.

1. INTRODUCTION

The existing research and literature concerning urban growth is voluminous and presents it as a multidimensional phenomenon emphasising on its spatial configuration and dynamics. In this general context, one of the most important features of modern urban areas is the decentralisation of people and employment from central cities towards their inner and outer suburbs (Gaschet, 2002, p. 63), in other words the process of suburbanisation.

The theoretical approach of this process includes two groups of concepts, which are interdependently connected, namely one that tackles the issue of urban growth (metropolitan area, suburbanisation and periurbanization) and the other one which explains some of the principles concerning the organization and functionality of space (attractiveness, accessibility and least effort principle).

Metropolitan area is a general term for large urban settlements. According to Romanian Urbanism Law (351/2001) a metropolitan area represents an area established by
a volunteer partnership that joins together the biggest cities in the country (the capital and those included in the first rank category), urban centres and rural settlements located within no more than 30 kilometers distance to each other, which also cooperate at different levels.

Suburbanisation is a process whereby people, housing, industry, commerce, and retailing spread out beyond traditional urban areas, forming dispersed landscapes that are still connected to cities by commuting (Gregory, Johnston, Pratt, Watts, & Whatmore, 2009, pp. 731-732).

Even if the literature does not offer a concrete distinction between suburbanization and perirurbanisation and, in addition, some researchers consider they define the same reality the only difference being their origin, we will analyze them as two processes.

The concept of periurban emerged due to limitations in the dichotomy between rural and urban. Much research has identified the inadequacy of this simplistic dichotomy, some authors even suggesting its analytical relevance is long past. Others have argued more specifically that only the dichotomous construct has outlived its usefulness not the underlying distinction between degrees of ruralness and urbanness (Rambaud 1973). A key feature of periurban environments is their dynamic nature, wherein social forms and arrangements are created, modified and discarded. They are areas of social compression or intensification where the density of social forms, types and meanings increases, fomenting conflict and social evolution (Iaquinta & Drescher, p. 4).

The concepts that explain the functionality of a metropolitan area are accessibility, attractiveness and the principle of least effort.

The standard definition of accessibility is the ease with which people can reach desired activity sites, such as those offering employment, shopping, medical care or recreation. Because many geographers and planners believe that access to essential goods and services is an important indicator of quality of life, measures of access are used to compare the accessibility levels of different groups of individuals and households, or of different places or locations. Most measures of accessibility entail counting the number of opportunities or activity sites available within certain travel times or distances of a specified origin (Gregory, Johnston, Pratt, Watts, & Whatmore, 2009, pp. 2-3). Accessibility is the main "product" of a transport system. It determines the locational advantage of an area (i.e. a region, a city or a corridor) relative to all areas, including itself. Indicators of accessibility measure the benefits that the households and firms in an area enjoy from the existence and use of the transport infrastructure relevant for their area (Spiekermann & Neubauer, 2002, p. 7).

The more central a place is regarding the existing services (stable), the more attractive (which mean he has a diversified and important offer) and accessible to other places becomes (Groza, 2005).

The least effort principle is considered to be the main principle that controls the daily activity of humans – if an activity can be accomplished through many ways, the person who is doing it will choose the way that implies the least effort concerning money, energy or time. For a geographer, minimizing the effort usually means minimizing the distance and motion (Groza, 2005).

The definitions presented above (which stand out the idea of expanding beyond the traditional limits of the city) offer a background for highlighting the main goal of this paper – creating clusters of localities according to their general accessibility to a set of facilities, aspect that can provide an idea of their level of development.
Thus, the paper is structured according to the following objectives:

a. identifying all types of facilities by grouping them into eight main categories
b. geolocating all facilities within the study area
c. analyzing the distribution of facilities observing their spatial behavior
d. creating clusters using as criterion accessibility to amenities.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Our research design methodology has been accomplished due to a combination of several quantitative methods. Collecting data fields from different sources and assembling them into one analyses provided sufficient background for highlighting the attractiveness of the localities induced by facilities located within metropolitan area of Iași city.

2.1 Study Area

Our analyses take into consideration the metropolitan area of Iași city, composed of 13 communes and the city of Iași, summarizing a total of 76 localities. Iași Metropolitan Area is the first entity of its kind in Romania, established in 2004 (Clipa, 2012) and represent a densely populated region, (400,323 people – 47,81% of county population) on a relative small area (808 km² – 14,74% of county surface) (Cîmpianu & Corodescu, 2013).

Fig. 1. Metropolitan Area of Iași and surroundings
2.2 Data collection

Geospatial analysis methods that were used to classify different scales of attractiveness for the localities which were taken into consideration needed the following spatial data:

a. Roads network classified by type (E - European Road, DN - National Road, DJ -Regional Roads, DC - Communal Roads), Length, Speed and Time-Distance length. The network was extracted from Open Street Map and corrected according to field observations.

b. Built-up areas (extracted from Corine Land Cover 2006), administrative limits of communes and the localities (Cuguat-TIGRIS).

c. General amenities were collected as following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of amenities</th>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Data Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Transportation</strong></td>
<td>Urban bus stations</td>
<td>126</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ratp-iasi.ro">www.ratp-iasi.ro</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taxi stations</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>OSM, Field observations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Train stations</td>
<td>10</td>
<td><a href="http://www.cfr.ro">www.cfr.ro</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Metropolitan bus stations</td>
<td>60</td>
<td><a href="http://www.autobuze.ro">www.autobuze.ro</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economical services</strong></td>
<td>Enterprises &gt; 500 employees</td>
<td>31</td>
<td><a href="http://www.doingbusiness.ro">www.doingbusiness.ro</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Religious sites</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>54</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Primary school</td>
<td>56</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Secondary school</td>
<td>59</td>
<td><a href="http://www.edu.ro">www.edu.ro</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High school</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>OSM</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hospitals</td>
<td>24</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ms.gov.ro">www.ms.gov.ro</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Cultural services</strong></td>
<td>Cultural attractions(^1)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Field observations</td>
</tr>
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<td>OSM</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restaurants</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>OSM</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sport Facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hall Centers</td>
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<td>Picnic Areas</td>
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<td>Field observations</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Commercial Facilities</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clothing centers</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Field observations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) Theatres, Museums, Libraries, Arts-Centers, Other Attractions

2.3 Data analyses

The data were analyzed to mark out different levels of attractiveness. Using ArcGIS - Network Analyst extension (Closest Facility and OD cost-matrix tools), each locality obtained a value (time-distance measure) for each type of facility. For each group of
amenities a distinct cost-distance (rate) was calculated by summing up the values derived from the first step. The final index represents an average of the values for each group of amenities.

The final index was calculated by giving a weight to each time-distance from each incident to facilities according to the formula presented below:

$$Final\ index = a \times 0.3 + b \times 0.2 + c \times 0.2 + d \times 0.13 + e \times 0.08 + f \times 0.08 + g \times 0.02 + h \times 0.01,$$

where

- $a =$ transportation
- $b =$ economical services
- $c =$ educational services
- $d =$ religious sites
- $e =$ commercial facilities
- $f =$ recreation services
- $g =$ medical services
- $h =$ cultural services

The weight factor for each amenity is an inverse ratio with the occurrence and importance of those amenities, being taken into consideration that the highest occurrence and least frequency is the one less explanatory for the degree of accessibility (Tudora, 2010).

In order to calculate the time-distance between Facilities (the services provided to population) and Incidents (road junctions inside the built-up area of municipalities), the road network was divided into three categories (within Iasi city, in villages’ built-up areas and outside localities) and then new attributes were added (type, rank, quality, speed); each of the three categories were also classified according to their type and rank: 3 for European Roads, 4 for National Roads, 5 - Regional Roads, 6 - Regional Roads that need improvements, 7 for Communal Roads, 8 – Communal Roads of low quality. The quality was established considering the previous two attributes namely 1 for roads with rank 3 and 4, 2 for roads with rank 5 and 3 for those with rank 6 and 7, and 4 for the last category of roads. The next attribute was the speed limit which takes into consideration the regulation speeds and the other attributes mentioned above; the data used are drawn in the table below (table 2). All these features were used to calculate the time-distance and the cost-distance. The first parameter uses the length and speed and the second one the speed and quality, being an estimation based on the fuel efficiency (liters per 100 kilometers) and car maintenance costs. The time-distance was determined using the following expression: \(\left(\frac{60 \times \text{Length}}{\text{Speed}}\right) \times 1000\).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Observations</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality [1]</td>
<td>70 km/h – outside localities and the city of Iasi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality [1]</td>
<td>50 km/h – villages’ built-up area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality [1]</td>
<td>40 km/h – inside the city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality [2]</td>
<td>65 km/h – outside localities and the city of Iasi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality [2]</td>
<td>45 km/h – villages’ built-up area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality [2]</td>
<td>35 km/h – inside the city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality [3]</td>
<td>50 km/h – outside localities and the city of Iasi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality [3]</td>
<td>30 km/h – villages’ built-up area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality [3]</td>
<td>25 km/h – inside the city</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality [4]</td>
<td>40 km/h – outside localities and the city of Iasi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality [4]</td>
<td>20 km/h – villages’ built-up area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The OD cost matrix finds and measures the least-cost paths along the network from multiple origins to multiple destinations. When configuring an OD cost matrix analysis, you can specify the number of destinations to find and a maximum distance to search (ArcGIS Resource Center, 2012). Using HAC (Hierarchical Ascendant Classification), the localities were clustered into three major categories (high, medium and low accessible), providing a better focus on accessibility to each type of facility. Based on these analyses, localities were classified according to accessibility. The entire database was processed using several specialized software (ArcGIS 9.3, Xphil, PhilCarto 5.6, Office 2010, Adobe Illustrator).

3. RESULTS

This section presents the main output which was obtained after all the methods presented above were applied, highlighting the attractiveness of the settlements included in the Metropolitan Area of Iași. In order to identify different stages of development for each locality which is being taken into consideration in this paper the following methods were used: facilities’ density, weighted time distance to facilities and Hierarchical Ascendant Classification. Altogether, the methods create a general image upon the importance played by the accessibility in the individual development of the settlements that shape the analyzed study area.

3.1 Spatial distribution of facilities in 2’30” range

As a preliminary step of the analysis the amenities were grouped into eight categories based on the services they provide to the inhabitants – transport, economic, religious, educational, medical, cultural, recreational and commercial services (the facilities included in these groups are listed in table 1); these were selected so that they could draw an image on the degree of dependence or independence of each locality on the city; thus they could provide information about the stage of suburbanization and periurbanization processes in the study area.

Analyzing figure 2, it becomes rather self-explanatory that the study area functions according to center-periphery model, aspect sustained by the clustering of facilities, customers and highly skilled workers mainly in the city. This model shows how economic integration may lead to a
dramatic increase in the geographic concentration of facilities via self-reinforcing agglomeration process (Rikard & Gianmarco, 2003), leading to a continuous process of urban sprawl. The theoretical model of locating the facilities, which implies a homogenous and isotropic land, assumes that the catchment area of those would be represented as concentrically circles; in reality the analysis is biased by different factors: landscape architecture, historical evolution of the city, real estate prices, transportation system. The main factor that reshapes the study area is represented by transportation network (roads of high quality compress the distances mainly in the western and southern side).

The higher the distance to city center is the lower the number of facilities becomes. Thus, the highest densities are located in the inner center of the city (41-8 facilities/sq.km), aspect that demonstrates the important role played by the city in the region – it polarized the hole localities from its vicinity (existence of all types of facilities). On the other hand, there are some facilities that are grouped together outside of the city limits, aspect that reveals the relative independence of some settlements. This is the case of Tomești and Holboca villages - even if they are well connected to the city’s transportation system, they have developed their own facilities, due to a highly densification of population. Other examples are Valea Lupului, Miroslava, Lunca Cetățuii, villages that are mainly occupied by commuters. Beside basic amenities (transportation, schools, medical) these villages are provided with other facilities (recreational areas, commercial facilities) which offer a higher degree of quality of life. At a distance higher than 15’, localities have only basic facilities – the most frequent are the religious facilities.

The density of incidents (which represents the intersection of the road network within built-up areas of localities) was grouped in service areas of 2’30”. This value represents the minimum average time distance to all facilities and it is located in Valea Lupului, which is the closest incident to all facilities. In the same time, the minimum 2’30” represents the optimal break value for having a more accurate image upon the degree of accessibility to general amenities and implicitly upon the degree of suburban development. A larger service area (5’ for example) would concentrate most of facilities in the first ring buffer, creating a larger gap between the city and outskirts.

3.2 Weighted time-distance to facilities

According to the index presented in the methodology section, a classification of the localities has been realized, the results being displayed in figure 3. The statistical units (settlements) were divided into 3 groups (the limits of the classes were considered the breaks observed in the scatter plot distribution) according to the weighted time distance to facilities:
a. Municipalities located within 9’30” to facilities - these are also the statistical units that have a better connection with high speed roads (Miroslava, Voinești, Ciurea, Lețcani) or developed some real estate projects due to favorable landscape (Braeuzu).

b. Municipalities with values from 9’30” to 15’ - The result points out that from each incident it takes on average 15’ to reach any closest facility. These incidents have a diffuse distribution in the territory; in some cases the landscape presents features of the periurbanisation (Păun, Bărnova, Rediu) or suburbanization process (Tomești).

c. Municipalities situated beyond 15’ limit, in most of the cases being considered peripheral areas (Victoria, Ungheni, Schitu-Duca). As a result, the interaction with facilities has a low intensity, aspect that corresponds with the level of the economic development, even if they are part of the Metropolitan Area of Iași.

### 3.3 Hierarchical Ascendant Classification

The Hierarchical Ascendant Classification (HAC) provides a much refined result than the output presented in figure 3. The changes induced by this method are visible in the accessibility to each facility, grouping all localities according to a pattern model, keeping in the same time the classes provided by the above mentioned results.

The dendogram reveals the position of each statistical unit to each group of amenities highlighting two main results:

a. The ease of reaching each facility, correlated with the frequency of their distribution. There are some facilities that have a high recurrence (churches, educational and transport facilities), being a proof of basic needs. On the other hand, medical and cultural facilities are the most difficult to reach.
b. Localities that have the same characteristics regarding the accessibility to amenities are grouped into three classes:

- Highly accessible localities are positioned very close to all facilities (and in the same time to the city). They offer the best image of what researchers call urban sprawl through their different morphological structures (suburbanization-Dancu, Tomești, Holboca, periurbanisation-Miroslava, Uricani, Valea Lupului, Rediu).

- Settlements with medium accessibility - Even though accessibility to facilities is not a major force for their development, some of them managed to gather some characteristics necessary for the emergence of urban sprawl process (Sorogari, Poieni), but most of them remained at a rural development level (Cogeasca, Cucuteni, Popricani). Urban behavior is scattered at this scale, being represented by few individuals that have passed through the distance barrier.

- Settlements with low accessibility – there is clear evidence that the distance has a major role in localities’ development, because most of them are presenting rural features (Pocreaca, Slobozia, Ungheni, Bosia). The only amenities that are easy to reach are the religious and the educational ones; in some cases (Schitu Duca, Poiana, Cotu Morii – located along major roads) the transportation facilities are also accessible, offering more possibilities for a future development.

4. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Measuring attractiveness of Metropolitan Area of Iași is an approach that should take into consideration factors such as commuters, real estate price, and evolution of built-up area, households and enterprises. Using the ease of reaching facilities instead of the factors mentioned above is an alternative method that provides an image of the degree of the attractiveness of each statistical unit taken into consideration. This method has both advantages (the databases are easy to build, edit and process, the analysis can be multiscalar and the results are readable for the policy makers) and some disadvantages (limited to only a few parameters - distance, number of facilities).

The analyzed study area functions according to core-periphery model. Still along the transport axes the time-distance diminishes and offers a visible advantage to localities located near them. In the same time, localities positioned between axes have a lower degree of development caused by higher values of time-distances. Therefore, these areas are considered peripheral and rural (even if they are at 10 km away from the core), presenting typical characteristics and behaviors.

The relative attractiveness of facilities on suburban fringe highlights the major role that city (core) plays in modeling the interactions between core and periphery, transferring different urban features (suburban and periurban) and behaviors.

Attractiveness of the urban fringe is not necessary explained by proximity to core (facilities), but rather other factors (landscape view, policy makers decisions) could have a local influence, changing urban-rural interactions.

There is a direct relation between the attractiveness to urban fringe and the distribution of amenities within Metropolitan Area of Iași (most of them are concentrated in the core area); in this way decision makers can draw development direction for a balanced evolution of the entire territory.
REFERENCES


TOURISM AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT – THE CASE OF MÓRAHALOM¹

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Abstract. Nowadays tourism is often a key element of urban and regional competitiveness. The aim of this study is to present how can become a less-known town also a tourist attraction with taking into consideration the local characteristics during the planning and development processes. The paper presents the case of Mórahalom, which is a small town in Southern Hungary. Few decades ago agriculture was the main economic sector in the settlement but since then massive investments have been put into the spa industry. These investments have accelerated the development of Mórahalom and quickly restructured its local economy and society, too. The paper is based on the content analysis of the local media and development documents, survey and local statistical data analysis. According to the results the cumulative inter-dependent developments in the spa industry of Mórahalom have produced a multiplier effect which has led to a strong increase in tourist arrivals or income tax. The visitors are satisfied with the spa and the services offered in Mórahalom. Therefore, the town has all the assets to be competitive in the tourism market which is a key factor of the local development.

Keywords: spa tourism, competitiveness, urban success, integrated development, tourist attractions

1. INTRODUCTION

The role of tourism is becoming more and more important in the lives of modern societies, as it is the primary form of spending leisure time. Therefore, it is vital in Hungary as well to build upon this continuously growing sector as the positive effect of tourism can prevail not only at national or regional level, but also at local level, too.

In the last decades more and more institutions are encouraged to take advantage of tourism also in Hungary. In Mórahalom, which was a traditional agricultural town, has been

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recognized that it is necessary to develop other sectors too, if the settlement would like to keep its success in the future. Exploiting the thermal conditions, spa developments began and a health centre was built in the last ten years. Thanks to these investments, the health tourism has started to boom in the settlement and it has become one of the most dynamically developing town in the region of Csongrád.

The aim of this study is to present that how can a less-known town become a tourist attraction with adequate planning and improvement strategies. The main question was that what kind of possibilities are available in a tourism-based local development? What are the results of the spa development in Mórahalom? What other developments connected to tourism or thanks to its incomes? Mórahalom is a good example of how tourism can thrive even in a small town with continuous and conscious development.

2. METHODOLOGY

Scientific literature has been overviewed in order to be able to answer particular questions related to the effects of tourism. The data collection had two main objectives: the analysis of the offer and of the demand. To analyse the offer development of Mórahalom I prepared a content analysis of the local media and processed the statistics gathered from the Hungarian Central Statistical Office and from the Local Government. There is only one guesthouse in the town, which has a database since 2007 and where – besides other things – the guests’ addresses are registered. With using the database of the guesthouse, as one of the most important accommodation of the town, my aim was to define the main catchment areas. In order to analyse the demand for a more detailed assessment a questionnaire survey was made among the spa guests. This survey lasted 5 days in the summer 2010, and 255 people were asked about – among other questions – their satisfaction with the services and quality of the spa. The survey was filled out by interviewers and the response was voluntary and anonymous. The interviewers tried to choose the respondents nearly equal proportion in age and gender (finally the women were overrepresented). During the analysis the completed questionnaires were also used to compare with an earlier survey made in 2008.

3. THE ROLE OF TOURISM IN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

3.1. The main processes of tourism

Tourism is one of the most dynamic sectors of the world economy (Ramukumba, T. et al. 2012). According to the data of the UNWTO (World Tourism Organization) in 1950 the international tourist arrivals were 25.3 million\(^2\), while in 2010 grew up to 939 million\(^3\) and the international tourism receipts reached the 710 billion euro\(^4\). The role of Europe in the world tourism is traditionally important, even today it gives more than the half of the global revenues.

An important element of the global demand trends that the participation of elder people in the tourism industry is growing rapidly. In this context, the demand for comfort

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\(4\) http://www.e-unwto.org/content/q868px1207550118/fulltext.pdf?page=1
and safety is increasing as well as the demand for convenient forms of transport (García-Altés, A., 2005). There is a stronger pretension for calmer relaxation and increasing the demand for the specific, individual products (Aubert, A. – Berki, M., 2007, Boros, L. – Pál, V., 2010). Since elder people prefer travelling in the off season, because they do not like crowds, and leisure is at their disposal any time, thus increasing the participation of elder people in the tourism industry has also the potential to reduce seasonality (Mester, T., 2003). The health awareness also appears in Hungary more and more widely. Although the free time of people has decreased, their purchasing power has increased in recent decades, so they are willing (and able) to spend large amounts to improve their state of health (Smith, M. – Puczkó, L., 2010, Cohen, M. – Bodeker, G. 2008).

About the supply trends it is said that embracing the traditions has a remarkable tourist attraction meaning for visitors, at the same time it is also increasing the welfare of local residents, and linking the community closer (Hanusz, Á. – Pristyák, E., 2007). The growth of consumer power forces enterprises to become consumer-orientated, as a result the quality and diversity of tourism supply is improving (Puczkó, L. – Rátz, T., 2000).

### 3.2. The economic effect of tourism

The economic impact of tourism can be examined by the tourists’ expenditure mainly. Based on the data of the Hungarian National Bank in 1998 the foreign exchange revenues from tourism in Hungary were 1.9 billion euro, while in 2008 they reached 4.1 billion euro. According to the statistics, the spending per capita is increasing in proportion with the length of stay, and with the quality and quantity of the available services. Therefore, tourism with conscious planning can have several positive effects in a particular locality (Wall, G. – Mathieson, A., 2006). One example is the multiplier effect, which shows the secondary effect of tourism, like increasing tourism revenues start a chain reaction that generates more activity (and revenues) than the original increase. Also a positive economic impact is the higher price level: in the tourist season the prices are growing to produce the annual income for the service providers. The wider tourist season is, the less need to increase prices, which is more favourable for the visitors. Hence, it is worth to establish deseasonalization services which can be used during the whole year. The other positive effect that has to be mentioned is that tourism can create new jobs. It is also important that tourism encourages enterprises and restructures the economy. Thanks to all of these mentioned above tourism helps to improve the quality of life of the local residents (Dávid, L. et al., 2003, Puczkó, L. – Rátz, T., 2005). Therefore, in the Hungarian economic development tourism is considered as a potentially successful sector, because it serves to achieve more targets at the same time: for example, creating new jobs, improving the balance of payments or regional development (Michalkó, G., 2001, Budai, Z., 2002).

The appropriate tourism development can cause a radical change in the life of a settlement. Mórahalom is a good example of this, because twenty years ago nobody considered it a tourist destination, but in 2009 more than 35 thousand guest nights were spent in the town, which was the second best result in ‘Csongrád’ County (only the county seat, Szeged, had better results) (Délmagyarország, 03.3.2010, 1). But naturally the development path of Mórahalom is not unique in the country. A similar example is Vásárosnamény (located in North-Eastern Hungary), which was an agricultural area for a

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5 This is the name of the county (NUTS 3 level in Hungary) where Mórahalom is located.
long time, but nowadays succeed in tourism, while the traditional agriculture has been declining (Hanusz, Á. – Pristyák E., 2007). Another good example is Kehidakustány (located in Western Hungary, near Lake Balaton), which almost went bankrupt in the mid-1990s, but thanks to the spa development the negative trends were managed to be reversed (Dávid, L. et al., 2003).

3.3. The relationship between tourism and regional development

In the literature there are different views about the relationship between tourism and regional development (especially about the directions, nature and significance of the relationship). According to Aubert, A. (2001) in the services-focused economies the regional development and tourism development is strongly connected. The need for integrated development is confirmed by the earlier mentioned multiplier effect, as the tourism impacts on the whole socio-economic system. Péteri, L.’s (2003) opinion is that tourism is a “typical intersectoral, interdepartmental and international activity”, which is closely linked to regional development and to spatial planning. Michalkó, G. (2001) also points out to the intersectoral character, which means that tourism is not only the resource of regional development, but also benefits from it. In the research of Hanusz, Á. – Pristyák, E. (2007) it has also concluded that tourism has a significant impact on spatial development, which can be widely observed. Csordás, L. (2003) has also agreed – according to his researches in the Hungarian Great Plain - that tourism can be a key element of the regional and urban development and of the rural renewal. In my opinion, the regional development can be not only the result of tourism development, but also the reason of it, because the existence of the attraction alone is not sufficient to tourism. It means that there is a strong interaction between the two areas, and it is impossible to establish a priority ranking. Beside tourism development, regional development is also necessary, because the advanced infra- and superstructure, the appropriate public safety, hygiene conditions and institutions are the basic assumptions of the motivation for tourism. That is why in development programmes in Hungary tourism has priority from the regional development point of view.

4. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF MÓRAHALOM

Mórahalom is located in the South-East of Hungary, in the South-West of Csongrád County (Figure 1), and it is 20 kilometres far from Szeged (which is the county seat).
The town did not enjoy the positive effects of tourism for a long time, because the conformation of the sector is a result of a long and specific development path. This development path is remarkable, because 120 years ago Mórahalom did not exist as an independent settlement and now it is a sub-regional centre with its own catchment area. It has become one of the most attractive tourist destinations of Csongrád County (Csordás, L., 2009).

According to the census in 1960 the population of Mórahalom was 6142 people and from this the inner area population was 1799 people (Szécsy, Gy., 1967). Thereafter, the population did not change significantly, but the proportion was reversed. In 2008, from the 5948 residents 4417 live in the inner area and only 1531 live in the marge of the town. This is caused on one hand by the increasing of the inner area. On the other hand, the developing central area has attracted more and more people to settle down there. According to the latest data (01/01/2011), the current population is 6090 people.

In 1960s from the 6142 residents 4895 worked as a famer, which shows the strong agricultural character of the town in that time. Nowadays the employment structure is much more differentiated thanks to the important role of tourism in creating jobs and altering the economic structure. The vocational school used to trained agricultural unskilled labour, but now provides education for the tourism sector (training village hosts and masseurs) which shows clearly the settlement changing from agriculture-oriented to tourism-oriented. The development is also linked with administrative changes: Mórahalom in 1970 became a large village, in 1984 a large village with town rights, then in 1989, on the first day of March it was declared a town (Mészáros, R., 1997, Boros, L. et al., 2006, Boros, L. et al., 2007).

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*http://portal.ksh.hu/pls/portal/ICP.hnt2.telep?nn=04349*
5. TOURISM DEVELOPMENTS IN MÓRAHALOM

5.1. Institutional background

To begin a planned and organized tourism development in a settlement, it is necessary to establish proper institutional framework (Hanusz, Á. – Prístyák, E., 2007). The Tourism Association of Mórahalom was founded in 1996, whose aim was to activate Mórahalom as a tourist destination in the tourism market. In the following year – as a third in Csongrád County – a Tourist Information Office was established. Since 1999, the town is represented in the travel exhibition to inform the potential visitors about the available services. During a few years the institutions were established which have key role in the tourism organization and in the presentation of attractions.

5.2. Natural attractions of Mórahalom

Naturally, Mórahalom’s largest tourist attraction is the central located spa, but this is not the only worthwhile attraction. The area is also attractive for its natural values, which could play an important role to offer a complex tourism product for the visitors of Mórahalom. At the periphery of Mórahalom the flora is extremely rich; the meadows are filled with nationally rare plants, like orchids, or some species of the gladioluses, gentians. From the botanical point of view, the surrounding of Mórahalom is the most researched area in Csongrád County (Juhász, A., 1992). The most valuable areas from the ecotourism aspects are the protected ‘Csipaki’, ‘Csoda’ and ‘Tanaszi’ meadow, over and above the ‘Madarász’ and ‘Nagyszéksős’ Lake. In and around Mórahalom seven types tour routes were established and three educational paths were created. The so-called ‘Bölömbika’ educational path should be emphasized, because besides the observation of birds, the visit of the unique buffalo reservation is also included. The buffalo reservation was established in 2008 with the aim to meliorate naturally the dried up ‘Nagyszéksős’ lake, because these animals gnaw off the reed which contribute to recultivate the area.

5.3. The development path of the spa

The first thermal well in Mórahalom – which is also operating now – was drilled in 1960. Based on this, the bath (operating in the whole year) was opened in 1964. The expansion of the bath in 1986 was launched by a local resident with a donation of 2 million forint (about 6900 euro), thanks to this the 33.3x21 meters, 2 meters deep swimming pool was built7.

However, the planned and larger-scale developments only started in 1999. In that year next to the old building a new part was built with an indoor teaching pool and a spa pool. Thanks to the successful tenders further improvements were possible in 2001 (Table 1).

Table 1: Financial aids for spa development at Mórahalom in 2001

| Source: www.morahalom.hu |

7 http://www.erzsebetfurdo.morahalom.hu/partnerinfo/afurdorol/furdotortenet/
In 2002 the facility has received spa certification – as 41st nationally. A new three-storey building was completed in 2003, increasing again the number of pools, and the quantity and quality of the available services. The development has still not been stopped, or even on May in 2004, the largest pool expansion occurred: the family pool with slide, a baby and child pool, and the experience and teaching pool were inaugurated. Due to the image change on July in 2004 the facility got also a new name: Elizabeth Spa of Mórahalom. According to the decision of DARFT (Southern Great Plain Regional Development Council) Mórahalom won 37 million forint (about 128 000 euro) as a grant, which allowed to open a new pool again in 2005. Due to the mentioned developments the total water surface in the spa reached the 2200 square meters and the capacity increased to 4700 people. According to the Quality Control System of the Hungarian Baths Association, in spa category Mórahalom got the highest (four-star) qualification in 2006.

The smaller scale improvements continued in 2007. Next to the Finnish sauna on the ground floor a new splash pool and a rest room was built and then a new connecting building was constructed. On the outside of the connecting building a new pool was built, which is possible to be used by the guests in the whole year. In September 2007 the Health Center was completed, which is also largely supported by tenders. In the same year the water of the new thermal well (drilled in 2004) was classified as medicinal water, the 67.5 °C water is heating the entire complex, in addition also provide heating for the public buildings (Mórahalmi Körkép 2007).

In 2008, another large-scale, 880 million forint (~3.8 million euro) development of the spa began in the town, the half of the amount was supported by the New Hungary Development Plan, Southern Great Plain Operational Programme. The new regional unique indoor part of the spa was finished in 2010, which makes the spa water surface 400 m² and the total area 3000 m² bigger. Thanks to the several new pools and saunas not only the turnover increased but also reduced the seasonality in the settlement. In parallel with this development a three-level, sub-regional outpatient care centre have also been developed.

Due to the developments the number of the guests in the spa increased significantly. Among the spa visitors a sharp increase can be observed between 2004 and 2005. The reasons of this phenomenon are the opening of the new pools in 2004, the several available massage-services and the opening of the guesthouse which allowed for the guests to stay for a longer period in the town, close to the spa. While in 2004 only approx. 121 thousand visitors were in the spa, in 2009 it already has exceeded 312 thousand, i.e. during 5 years nearly tripled the number of the guests (Figure 2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tender name</th>
<th>Obtained amount</th>
<th>Own source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Széchenyi Tourism Development Plan</td>
<td>82.5 million HUF (~ 284 000 EUR)</td>
<td>80 million HUF (~ 276 000 EUR)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHARE</td>
<td>150 million HUF (~ 517 000 EUR)</td>
<td>50 million HUF (~ 172 000 EUR)</td>
</tr>
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</table>
In accordance with the international processes in the revenues it caused bigger changes: during 5 years the revenues increased fivefold: from 64 million forint (~221 thousand euro) to 308 million forint (~1.1 million euro).

Despite the price increases over the years, the spa of Mórahalom has been still one of the cheaper spas, especially if we consider the available services compared with its competitors. It is difficult, of course, to compare the rivals, since each spa offer different services, but for example the Elisabeth Spa of Mórahalom offers more services than the Spa of Cserkeszőlő or Dávod but in spite of this its prices are cheaper than the others’. The Aquapolis Szeged represents a much higher level than Mórahalom, but even if there are fewer services, the Elisabeth Spa definitely more affordable, which could be a significant motivation for tourists nearby.

The presence of the primary superstructure, which includes the accommodation and catering facilities, is essential for the booming tourism. The supply of accommodation was very poor in Mórahalom but it also has changed significantly. In 2000 only three families offered private accommodation while in 2009 nearly eighty. The number of accommodations between 2001 and 2009 rose more than tenfold, and the capacity rose from 38 to 682. The significant expansion of capacity seems to be necessity because in 2008, 35734 guest nights were spent in the town, which is the second best result in the county (after the biggest town: Szeged). Increasing the guest nights, the tourism tax revenues also increased significantly (Figure 3). It is remarkable that between 2001 and 2008 the tourism tax revenues increased more than 5000-fold. However, the year 2009 shows a slight decrease which is attributed to the negative effects of the global economic crisis. It can be observed that there is a significant increase in guest arrivals but in the same time the tax revenue has decreased. This shows that despite the crisis has not decreased the attendance of the spa, but fewer people could afford to spend a guest night in the town, so the tax revenue has decreased.

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revenues decreased. From 2003 a sharp increase can be observed in the revenues, due to the Thermal Pension (opened in 2002).

![Figure 3: Tourism tax revenues in Mórahalom (2001-2009)](source: own construction based on the data from the Municipality of Mórahalom)

5.4. The tourist catchment area of Mórahalom based on data from the Thermal Pension

Before the opening of the Colosseum Hotel in 2011, Mórahalom had only one commercial (but several private) accommodation: this is the 3-star Thermal Pension which was opened in October 2002. It shows the dynamic development of the local tourism that while in 2003 only 580 thousand forint tourism tax revenue thanks to this pension, in 2008 more than 4 million 700 thousand forint. Using the database of the pension my aim was to assess the main catchment areas of the town (or rather of the spa as the most important motivation to visit this town). The available data are from the end of 2008, but it is important to note that the pension has had this database only since May in 2007. Based on the data, during the mentioned period, 6744 new guests were registered (returning guests were only registered once in the database) from 603 different settlements. The most important tourist sending place is Budapest with 1263 new registered guests.

After Budapest, in the second place is Szeged with 220 registered new guests, but Csongrád County hierarchically is only the fifth. The reason of this on one hand, that there are few settlements in this county, so there are few sending places. On the other hand, the transport between Szeged and Mórahalom is well-developed, so the dense bus links allow to reach half an hour from one to another, however, from further settlements of Csongrád County it is not worth to travel to Mórahalom, as many settlements nearby (more accessible) have its own spa (for example Makó, Hódmezővásárhely, Szentes). The other two most new guests sending settlements are in Baranya County: Pécs (214) and Mohács (210), while Baranya County hierarchically is the third between the most tourists sending counties. Bács-
Kiskun County leading the list of counties, but its biggest sending settlement, Baja (196) is only in the fifth place between the tourist sending settlements (Table 2).

Table 2: The 20 most important tourist sending places according to the guesthouse’s database

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the settlement</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Number of the guests</th>
<th>Name of the settlement</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Number of the guests</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Budapest</td>
<td>Pest</td>
<td>1263</td>
<td>11. Érd</td>
<td>Pest</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Szeged</td>
<td>Csongrád</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>12. Százhalombatta</td>
<td>Pest</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Szekszárd</td>
<td>Tolna</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>15. Harta</td>
<td>Bács-Kiskun</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Székesfehérvár</td>
<td>Fejér</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>18. Dunakeszi</td>
<td>Pest</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysing the number of the new guests at county level, in the first three places are: Bács-Kiskun, Pest and Baranya counties (Figure 4). This is partly due to the fact that from these counties Mórahalom is easily accessible; however, all three counties have similar spas to Mórahalom so the good traffic conditions cannot be the only reason. Pest County included data except of Budapest, because the capital city would have greatly distorted the ranking. From Bács-Kiskun County, 1203 new tourists arrived at the guesthouse, significantly ahead of the second Pest County. Tolna County is also a major sending area with 520 new guests. It is remarkable that few people come from the adjacent eastern counties and from the above mentioned Csongrád County. This of course reflects the fact that who lives close, only visits the spa for one day, and do not spend nights in the pension. The economic situation in the eastern counties are less favourable, and its inhabitants can easily find an accessible and affordable spa in their own county. The least tourists come from Vas, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén and Zala County.
5.5 Other tourism-related developments

To make this town attractive not only the spa and the accommodations need constant development but almost all the facilities in the town. Nowadays the built environment contributes to the beauty of the landscape with more and more growing emphasis (Szalai, K. – Szilágyi, Zs., 2007), so it is important to develop these elements to provide a positive impression and comfortable feeling to the arriving tourists. As part of the integrated tourism development, Mórahalom takes into consideration this, which is well illustrated by the following examples.

The school development, expansion and image change finished in 2000. A high school section was also added in 2005, providing for students to stay in the town for longer period and the professions also serve the tourism of the town: the education of masseurs, physiotherapists, rural hosts.

The ‘Aranyszöm’ Cultural Centre was opened in September 2003, constructed a well-equipped, professional, 300 seats theatre and a conference hall in the town centre. In the courtyard of the Cultural Centre the ‘Homokháti Crowd’ event was organized eighth in 2011, offering different programs and concerts for almost two weeks. The event attracts an increasing number of tourists from the surrounding villages, many tourists have deliberately chosen this period for their vacation time9.

In addition, the flower planting, and park maintaining are conducted continuously in the town. In 2004 and 2007 got a special award for the “For Floral Hungary” program (Mórahalmi Körképek 2004, 2007). In order to maintain the attractive environment, since

9 http://www.rendezvenyhaz.morahalom.hu/?menuid=24
2000, selective waste collection has been in the town and since 2009, it is forbidden in public places to smoke and drink alcohol.

In connection with health tourism, a Health Centre was developed with several specific surgeries, so the residents, as well as the arriving guests do not have to travel to Szeged or other cities for any of these services.

6. THE SPA OF MÓRAHALOM ACCORDING TO THE OPINIONS

In the questionnaire survey I was primarily interested in how the visitors think about the spa services, about the quality and price or how they were informed about the spa of Mórahalom.

According to the survey it seems that the visitors especially feel comfortable in the spa. Over 63% of the respondents completely enjoyed themselves, 35% felt rather well and only 4 people responded that rather did not feel well themselves. No one was among the respondents who totally did not feel well himself in the spa. Those who were not satisfied (2) have complained about the noise of the construction (because the construction of the hotel was during the survey), one guest was dissatisfied with the long queue at the entrance and one was dissatisfied with the doctors who did not give referral to the medicinal water for her. It was also analysed that which way the guests can be informed most about the spa, which forms of advertising convince people the best (Figure 5).

![Figure 5: How the visitors heard about the Spa](source: own construction based on the survey)

The result is not surprising - a number of studies found the same conclusion - that the most effective marketing tool, when you get recommendations from your own friends. This
influenced the visitors’ decision in 53%. All surveyed people but two would recommend the spa to their friends in the future. Many respondents got to mark the other category, where primarily they answered that they have known the spa since they were children, they are local or nearby residents. Or many people mentioned the advertisements placed on buses and the various flyers as well. 10% of the respondents were informed about the spa on the Internet, 6% from the newspapers and from the radio only 5% was informed. 34 respondents were informed from not only one source. The result is similar to the survey in 2008, when also the friends’ recommendation was the most important information source, and there was also a high number of respondents in the other category (some of the typical response in this category: known since childhood, medical referral received, came with Senior Club, etc.). The friend recommendation is not a conscious marketing trick but in the future according to the results should be emphasized.

For the question ‘Why did they choose the spa of Mórahalom’ (Figure 6) the most people (79) answered that the proximity had the major role in their decision. Accordingly, most of the respondents came from Szeged (82), Mórahalom, Szabadka, Domaszék, Baja, Rózske and Ásotthalom. Among the first 10 tourists sending settlements, only Budapest is not in the vicinity.

![Figure 6: The most important reasons choosing the Spa of Mórahalom](image)

Many respondents chose Mórahalom because of the previous positive personal experience (20%) - this was a significant motivation in 2008, too (16%). Many of them came here because of the curiosity (had heard a lot about the new spa of this small town and wanted to try out), and because of the favourable price compared to the high quality. In 2008 most of the respondents came to the spa because of the new pools, this reason in summer 2010 cannot be possible because the new pools were opened only in October (while the earlier developments have become accustomed to the guests, so they did not expect
The proportion of the respondents, who were convinced by their friends to come to Mórahalom, is not negligible either: 20% in 2008 and 5% in 2010. According to the answers the friendly, familiar milieu was very important for the visitors. Many of the visitors came to the spa because of their free tickets which they got during the voluntary blood donation, but of course there were some visitors who were attracted by the medical services.

It is not coincidence that the previous personal experience has attracted so many visitors to return again, as almost half of respondents (119 people) have already been more than 10 times in the spa. Only 46 people were in the spa for the first time and among them 43 people were planning to visit this place again. It seems that the spa makes a good impression to the visitors because almost all the respondents plan to visit it again. The most returning guests are living around, and for the others the distance is not a problem to return again. Those who do not plan to come here once more, they complained about the overcrowding, and the lack of shadow. According to the answers the major advantages of the spa is the wide variety of pools, the cleanliness, the curative thermal water and the flower-filled, friendly milieu. Among the pools the cocktail pool and the slide pool were the respondents’ favourites. The satisfaction shown by the fact that 82 respondents think, there is nothing bad or be needed to improve. However, many complaints were received that there are few green areas and the temperature of the waters are too hot.

49 respondents were not at any other spa in the last three years. Most of the others were in Szeged, Kiskunmajsa, Gyopárosfűrđő and Gyula in recent years. Szeged outstanding popularity is not surprising, since the most respondents came from Szeged – as it has been previously mentioned –, and even Szeged is the most easily accessible, well-known tourist centre. Based on the results, the respondents considered the price realistic, the majority (84%) considered it entirely appropriate in relation to the provided services. 12% of the respondents said that it is cheaper than the provided services and only 4% said it is more expensive. One respondent said that it is expressly expensive.

Only 25 respondents took accommodation, 23 at Mórahalom and 2 at Szeged. Most of the spent nights were between 2 and 5 (13 people), 4 respondents spent more than 10 nights. In Mórahalom 14 guests rested in private accommodation and 9 at the guesthouse. 68% of them are doing other programs around, particularly visiting Szeged or Ópusztaszer.

It is noteworthy that 180 respondents could not know anything else besides bathing, what could be done at Mórahalom. Therefore, it would be worthwhile to emphasize also the other attractions of the town, for example nature trips and recreation (hiking, horse riding, agro-tourism). Those who could mention other options, highlighted especially the riding, visiting the buffaloes, the ‘Homokháti’ Crowd event and fairs.

Overall, the tourists were satisfied with the quality of the offered services, considered the value for money appropriate and most of them are satisfied, returning guests, which all contribute to improve the standard of living of the local residents.

7. SUMMARY

After reviewing this development path, the conclusion is that Mórahalom a good example of tourism-based local development, during the development period the
improvements have been integrated, and reinforce each other's effects. The statistical data (for example tax revenues) confirm that tourism contributed to the economic prosperity of the town. The revenue was not only spent on the continuous development of the spa, but on the embellishment and modernization of the entire town, enhancing the attractiveness and expanding the services, increasing the quality – namely the tourism development was integrated into the whole local development. Mórahalom considered the existing conditions and the tourism trends and took advantage of its possibilities, laying the emphasis on health tourism. This can be an example for settlements with similar conditions because always will be people who want to relax and heal. For the settlements may be instructive to realize that even after reaching some goals, should not get stuck on a certain level. It is not enough to get involved tourism, after it has done, the settlement should improve, innovate, and expand its supply continuously to be strong permanently on the tourism market.

The developments described above provide a chance to (survive the economic crisis) Mórahalom be even more competitive, because its development is not a spontaneous process, but it is a result of a conscious planning.

According to the survey people like to visit this small town, they are satisfied with the quality of the services, the variety of the pools, the organized environment and with the value for money. It is not coincidence that most of the respondents already have been more than 10 times in the spa. However, besides health tourism, the better use of natural conditions would be worthwhile, because thanks to this a more complex tourism package could be offered to tourists; this would provide a wider possibility, especially for families and young people, in order to further increase the attractiveness and competitiveness of the town.

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Tourism and local development – the case of Mórahalom


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Mórahalmi Körképek (1999-2009)
THE ROLE OF THE HOTEL INDUSTRY IN THE ECONOMIC AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF VOJVODINA

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Abstract: Up to now, the development of tourism both in Serbia and Vojvodina has confirmed that its effects are multiple and substantially interwoven into the overall economic and regional development. Therefore, the assessment of expected effects of future tourism development in Vojvodina has to commence from the qualitative base. If the situation in the hotel industry in 1990s is compared to the present one in Vojvodina, it can be seen that there has been qualitative and quantitative progress in the industry regarding both the number of hotels and their quality (category). The aim of the paper is to point out inadequate territorial distribution of hotels in Vojvodina and the absence of so called tourism destination development, that would induce balanced development of all territorial units: Banat, Srem and Backa.

Keywords: hotel industry, territorial distribution, economic and regional development, territorial units, Vojvodina

1. INTRODUCTION

There is obviously abundance of explanations for such regional disproportion which sometimes may last for centuries. This surplus of views points out inadequate understanding of this phenomenon and leads to confusion in taking further steps. Yet, it is apparent that successful development strategies in certain countries cannot produce the same wholesome results when implemented in other national settings (Démurger at al, 2001).

However, regional dimension of development has become the subject of scientific and technical research in recent times, imposed on the processes and problems of inequality in utilization, organization and landscaping (Derić, Atanacković, 2000). The development of tourism and hotel industry in an area basically depends on the level and phase of development of the overall economy in the area. Thus, it can be concluded that the development of tourism industry is interrelated with other economic activities involved in
the creation of tourism products (Vukosav, 2010). Tourism is the world’s largest industrial branch which has opened 1 in 10 jobs since 2007 and hence making directly or indirectly 10% of total economic activities, whereas in 2008 it had the share of 10% in world’s GDP (Weaver, Lawton, 2010).

Vojvodina has excellent possibilities for tourism and hospitality development. Their spatial distribution suggests that they could be an important factor in the economic development of underdeveloped areas, which would further have impact on balanced regional development. The aim of this paper is to identify inadequate territorial distribution of hotels in Vojvodina and the absence of tourism destination development. Moreover, this paper attempts to determine such impacts on balanced development of all territorial units: Banat, Srem and Backa.

2. THE ROLE OF TOURISM AND HOTEL INDUSTRY IN THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF VOJVODINA

The role of tourism in the international economy is multifaceted and its effects are initially observed in depicting the tourist traffic and revenues from tourism. The volume of international travel expenditure conditions, the function of tourism as a major exporter and the participants in the international economic exchange predict that tourism will increase its economic activity in the world for 4% in the next ten years (Unković, Sekulović, 2010). Accordingly, it is expected that the economy of tourism in Central and Eastern Europe will have average annual gains of 5.7% in the period 2009-2019 (WTTC, 2009). With regard to this, it has to be understood that service sector is dominant in GDP and employment possibilities in more developed countries.

However, in the 1990s our country was exposed to the impact of many unfavourable economic and political factors, all of which substantially contributed to poor economic conditions throughout the country. Thus, it became impossible to make projections on the expected tourism movements in Serbia and Vojvodina. Interruptions in long-term development were particularly visible in steady decrease of foreign traffic, by means of which estimates can be made about potential tourism development and expected effects predicted for the forthcoming years. Today, the entire Serbian economy is undergoing the period of global economic crisis, which further complicates the development of tourism sector and negatively affects the number of tourist arrivals and overnight stays as well as foreign revenues.

Therefore, the assessment of the expected effects of future tourism development in Vojvodina has to start from the qualitative basis. It includes valuable resources, positive trends in international and domestic tourism environment, the further development of overseas tourism segments that are characterized in terms of quality requirements for certain facilities and readiness to invest further in essential elements (Vukosav, 2010). Conversely, according to the conditions several years ago: it can be concluded that the foreign currency revenues from tourism increased year by year. The increase in the period 2003-2008 amounted to almost five times for Serbia and almost four times for Vojvodina (Table 1). However, the participation of Vojvodina in the foreign exchange inflow evidently ranges from 6% to 10%, which expected increase in future. On the other hand, since 2007 our country has recorded a larger foreign currency outflow than inflow, and joined to the list of countries with negative economic effects. Moreover, the influence of global economic crisis
brought about evident decline in foreign currency inflow in 2009 an by about 10% compared to the reference period. What is expected in the future is certainly a greater economic impact of tourism on the economy of both the region and country, as assumed in the Strategy of tourism development of Serbia and the National investment plan.

Table 1. Foreign exchange inflow from tourism in Serbia and Vojvodina (in U.S. $ millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Serbia</th>
<th>% change</th>
<th>Vojvodina</th>
<th>% change</th>
<th>Share of Vojvodina in relation to Serbia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>158.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>220.8</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>304.1</td>
<td>37.7</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>9.7</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>400.0</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>22.8</td>
<td>26.0</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>531.3</td>
<td>32.8</td>
<td>46.6</td>
<td>104.4</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>940.0</td>
<td>77.3</td>
<td>74.0</td>
<td>58.5</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>850.0</td>
<td>-10.0</td>
<td>65.3</td>
<td>-11.8</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>885.9</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>68.7</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>991.0</td>
<td>11.9</td>
<td>78.3</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, Department of Economics, 2009-2012.

One of the main features of tourism and hotel industry is to use the manpower more intensively than in other industries. Based on recent research, tourism employs 225 million people worldwide and has the share of 7.6% in global employment (WTTC, 2010). Tourism development, particularly in developed countries is characterized by small and medium enterprises that are the basis of local development. In Canada, the USA and the UK they account for over 80% of companies that provide services to tourists.

Due to insufficient development of statistical monitoring of the area there are no precise data about the structure of hotel activities in Vojvodina, regarding the enterprise size. It is visible from the table that the number of units in this sector for the year 2008 is 3709. Out of the total, 168 are hospitality enterprises and 3541 hospitality units, which make about 25% of the total number in Serbia (Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Serbia, 2009). These figures lead to a conclusion that hospitality sector is dominated by small enterprises.

This positive growing trend of employment in the hospitality industry (Table 2) was interrupted in 2011. Employment decline in hospitality and hotel industry was a result of reduced workload due to decreasing trends of visits and declining tourist traffic throughout the country. Our country was struck by global economic crisis, similarly to other countries. However, its prolonged impact on the employees in hospitality and tourism is perceived.
The role of the hotel industry in the development of Voivodina

This situation has shaken the entire economy, but tourism and hospitality industries are among the most difficult to recover.

Table 2. Number of employees in the hotel companies in Vojvodina 1999-2008.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Hospitality industry</th>
<th>Hotels</th>
<th>The share of employees in hotels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>13250</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>23074</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>21567</td>
<td>2058</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>18,997</td>
<td>2933</td>
<td>15.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>14821</td>
<td>2588</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>19180</td>
<td>2480</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>20637</td>
<td>3074</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>20784</td>
<td>2956</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>15480</td>
<td>3088</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


3. THE ROLE OF THE HOTEL INDUSTRY IN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF VOJVODINA

Many developing countries have turned to tourism development and the hotel industry business as a way to acquire financial resources necessary for economic growth and restructuring, employment possibilities and regional development (Hall, 2008). The importance of hospitality role in regional development is confirmed by the example of Hungary. This country has selected a mixed route to enter international capital and management, simultaneously opening the way for the development of own relevant international expertise in hospitality and tourism industry.

National hotel companies "Danubius" and "Hungest" were formed under states jurisdiction in Hungary. Those companies are prominent regional factors and control almost half the hotel accommodation capacity in Hungary. Thus, supported by foreign companies, particularly in Budapest, possibilities for a rapid growth of the domestic hotel industry and entrepreneurship in the tourism industry in general have been opened (Strategy of Tourism Development, 2006). In Hungary, categorization of objects followed the same pattern as in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, with regard to jurisdiction over hospitality objects in public and private sector. Public sector is supervised by national tourism body. Categorization of objects is renewed every five years, primarily according to comfort criteria. In private sector, since categorization is not legislatively established, standards of certain association in this branch are applied, for instance HOTREC standards.

If hospitality condition in Vojvodina during the 1990s is compared to the present one, based on the analysis in Table 3, there is a qualitative and quantitative improvement of the industry both in the number of hotels, and their quality (category).
Table 3. *The structure of hotel capacity in Vojvodina by category and number of beds in 1999 and 2007 (comparative analysis)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hotel categories</th>
<th>Number of hotels</th>
<th>% share</th>
<th>Number of beds</th>
<th>% share</th>
<th>Number of beds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First category (*****)</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>/</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second category (****)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third category (***)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>2626</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth category (**)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth category(*)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>35</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>4111</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ćurčić, N., (2000): Application of marketing mix in urban hotels in Vojvodina, Faculty of Science, Institute of Geography, Novi Sad. Data obtained from the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, 2008 and author’s research

With regard to the condition in 1999, the number of hotels in Vojvodina increased by 21, most of which fall within the fourth category (10 hotels), second category (5 hotels), and 3 hotels in the first category (“Park” and “Leopold I” in Novi Sad and “Vila Breg” in Vrsac), for the first time in Vojvodina. The first two of them were opened as a result of transition and privatization processes. The greatest increase in the number of beds was observed in the first and fourth hotel category (more than 550 beds), and the number of beds doubled in the second and fifth hotel category. However, despite this qualitative and quantitative progress, the industry experienced balance deficit, which means that the number is neither sufficient for Vojvodina nor for the whole country in order to achieve approximate number to that of the neighbouring countries with higher level of tourism development.

This is confirmed by the data shown in the table 4. Utilization of tourist offer expressed in the number of accommodation facilities is not satisfactory and it is below the levels similar to neighbouring countries.

Table 4. *The number and distribution of beds in some European countries and Vojvodina (2009)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country/region</th>
<th>Area km²</th>
<th>Number of beds</th>
<th>Distribution of beds per km²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>93030</td>
<td>162000</td>
<td>1.7414</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech Republic</td>
<td>78866</td>
<td>232000</td>
<td>2.9417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austria</td>
<td>83858</td>
<td>571000</td>
<td>6.8091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slovenia</td>
<td>20273</td>
<td>32000</td>
<td>1.4798</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serbia</td>
<td>88361</td>
<td>30000</td>
<td>0.3875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vojvodina</td>
<td>21506</td>
<td>8000</td>
<td>0.3719</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu and Ministry of Economy and Regional Development

Serbia and Slovenia have approximately the same number of beds. However, the area of Slovenia is four times smaller than Serbia. Its area is approximately the same size as Vojvodina, but the number of beds in the province of Vojvodina is four times smaller.
Similar situation is observed in comparison to Austria, which covers a smaller area, but offers nineteen times more basic accommodation facilities, etc. Moreover, it has to be highlighted that these countries offer various forms of developed tourism, which is the consequence of their versatile relief which attracts different age groups of tourists. Vojvodina is most frequently visited for business purposes, cultural needs, and partly for rural and spa tourism, whereas in Austria or Slovenia, mountain tourism is one of the most developed tourism types.

According to the number of hotels the most developed municipalities in Vojvodina offer the highest number of beds (Fig 1). The leading one is the municipality of Novi Sad, the capital of the province and the major economic centre (1665 beds), or 32.4% of the total. Then follow Subotica municipality (684 beds), Kanjiza (342 beds), Vrsac (266 beds), Zrenjanin (215 beds), Backa Topola (203 beds) and others. Regional disparity between economically developed and underdeveloped areas in Vojvodina can be clearly perceived.

The concept of clusters is widely accepted and developed in developed countries. In this way, regions can increase their competitive advantage, if companies and institutions work in related fields and find appropriate connection method such as synergy effect of combined experience in order to increase their competitive advantage and thus beat the competition. Tourism resources of Vojvodina are scattered all over its territory, but spatially incompatible to form integrated entities and form complementary tourist offer.

Fig 1. The map of the number of beds in hotel accommodation in Vojvodina in 2007
(Source: Map was drawn according to data from the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development)
The analysis of economic, geographical and environmental spatial polarization in Serbia conducted by M. Milinčić and many other researchers involved in the regional dimension of development highlights industrialization and urbanization as dominant anthropogenic agents of territorial clustering in terms of their recent spatial distribution on the territory of Serbia. (Milinčić, 2004). Prominent regional imbalance between underdeveloped major parts of Serbia and developed territorial parts or segments is the result of joint impact of various factors as well as their mutual cause-result relations. Increased development polarisation is visible at different levels (development axis- broad underdeveloped hilly and mountainous region, urban agglomerations with their surroundings-rural areas, city centre-suburbs) (Miletić, 2006). Polarization under the influence of industrialization and urbanization is also present on the territory of Vojvodina, confirmed by spatial arrangement of the hotel industry (Fig.2). Regional disparity in the hotel industry is clearly visible on this map. Most of the hotels are located in urban agglomerations which is the result of economic factors impact and concentration of industry in big cities on the one hand. On the other hand, it may also be concluded, regarding the centre-suburbs relation, that most of the city hotels are located at most frequent locations, in the city centres which is induced by the most developed tourism type.

![Fig.2 The map of the spatial distribution of the hotel industry in Vojvodina in 2007](source: The map was created according to data obtained from the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development)

This is obviously inadequate territorial distribution. From territorial aspect, the largest number of hotels is situated in Backa region (80%) which is economically most
The role of the hotel industry in the development of Vojvodina developed region in Vojvodina. The analysis of the municipalities also indicates that the largest economic centres in Vojvodina also have the highest concentration of hotels (Novi Sad, Subotica, Backa Topola, Zrenjanin). Clearly, there is the deficit of hotels, primarily of higher categories (first and second), in Srem and Banat.

The analysis of spatial distribution highlights the deficit of so-called destination hotels and destination tourism in general (except for Palic, spa Kanjiza, and the municipality of Backa Topola to a smaller extent); because the main motive for the arrival of tourists in the province is business. Consequently, most of the hotels are concentrated in cities, thus neglecting the development of other tourist destinations such Fruska gora in Srem, and Bela Crkva lakes in Banat. Activation of these areas for tourism purposes would certainly initiate a rapid development of municipalities in Srem, Banat and the entire Vojvodina. Therefore, it is necessary to establish competitive tourism types and tourism products that may be successful both at domestic and foreign tourism markets as high-priority issues. Key products in Vojvodina, based on the Strategy of Tourism Development in Serbia by the year 2015, with the perspective of further development are: events, special interests, nautics, mountains, lakes, and rural tourism which would give a chance to the above listed destinations. One of basic problems in tourism development in Vojvodina is observed in deficit of management of tourism destination. Absence of management system and coordinated activities may lead to insufficient competition of tourism product in Vojvodina. Therefore, it seems urgent to introduce management in tourism development at provincial level, which would imply destination management by forming the managerial board for tourism in Vojvodina which would gather representatives of the following bodies: government, Tourist Organisation of Vojvodina, Chamber of Commerce of Vojvodina, Tourism Economy of Vojvodina, Secretariat for Culture, Sport, Ecology, Economy, Hospitality and Tourism Businesses (Vukosav, 2010).

4. CONCLUSION

Advancement and development of both hospitality and tourism play essential roles in national economy stability, regional development enhancing, unemployment reduction, income increase and higher living standards, which definitely makes them the most important industries today. Vojvodina has a solid base of resources for future development, but the role of hospitality under current business conditions in our country is still being economically marginalized. Conversely, development of other economic activities and the economy in general will affect the hotel industry in the region to take initiative in its own development.

Moreover, the role of the authorities in the next period is observed as highly important with all the efforts to change the poor present situation. Investments in destination tourism development are crucial for achieving the position of major tourist destination for Vojvodina at the tourist market and mitigating regional disparities. Commercial centres are certainly far from being the only segment of tourism that Vojvodina has to offer to its potential tourists. In conclusion, tourism development opportunity should be created for the following destinations: Palić-Suboica with surroundings, Fruska gora and Novi Sad, Gornje Podunavlje, Vrsac with Deliblatska pescara, Zobnatica and Karadjordjevo. Regarding tourism types, spa or medical tourism, business and urban tourism in larger cities in Vojvodina should also be enhanced.
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ENGAGEMENT OF RELIGIOUS SITES IN THE TOURIST OFFER OF NOVI SAD: POTENTIALS AND NECESSARY IMPROVEMENTS

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Abstract: Novi Sad, as a town which still does not have an image of a developed tourism destination certainly has great potential in terms of religious and cultural tourism as a multicultural center with numerous religious sites. The vivid history of the town, as well as ethnical, religious and national diversity strongly influenced the construction of many churches of different religious communities. In this paper the quantitative-qualitative method of assessment is used for the evaluation of nine representative spiritual sites which showed us that their current state is not at an enviable level. This paper indicates priority fields for improvements and engagement of these sites in the tourist offer which should be the guidelines for future development of religious and cultural tourism which have a good perspective to become one of the dominant forms of tourism in the city tourism product of this town.

Keywords: Religious tourism, churches, Novi Sad, quantitative-qualitative method, heritage assessment

1. INTRODUCTION

Religious as well as cultural tourism based on sacred sites has become very popular in the past few decades. Rinschede G. (1992) estimates that there are 200 million pilgrims who take part in international, national, and supraregional pilgrimage journeys alone. In addition, there is the yet uncounted number of travelers who annually gather at the regional religious centers or at religious ceremonies and conferences and who are not often counted as pilgrims. This shows the significance of this type of tourism in overall traveling.

Novi Sad, as a town which still does not have an image of a developed tourism destination certainly has great potential in terms of religious and cultural tourism as a multicultural center with numerous religious sites.

Vivid history of the town, which was caused by the existence of a significant military base and important trade roads, immensely influenced the settlement of many nations who ruled it. They have brought their specific culture, religion, customs and peculiar architecture, which interacted and continued to develop over time. As a result, this ethnical, religious and national diversity strongly influenced the construction of many churches of different religious communities. Some of them are especially remarkable due to their
monumentality, valuable collections of different sacred objects, sophisticated architecture and historical significance (Božić S., 2011). Even though these sacred sites are very alluring to tourists and represent a great base for tourism development and generation of significant tourist visits, their current state as well as tourism organization is not at an enviable level. Exploring the possibilities of restoration, reconstruction, protection and inclusion of religious sites in the tourist offer of the town was totally neglected in the past. Based on the above mentioned the principle aim of this paper is to show the great potential of Novi Sad in terms of religious tourism and to develop some useful suggestions for future innovations, improvements and better engagement of sacred sites in the tourist offer of Novi Sad, based on the results of the quantitative-qualitative method of assessment of 9 representative spiritual sites (Fig. 1), as well as their affirmation through sustainable forms of religious and cultural tourism.

Fig. 1: The location of nine representative spiritual sites of Novi Sad

2. STUDY AREA

The alluvial territory of the river Danube, where it makes a bend before turning East, represents the place where Novi Sad has been raised. This place is reputed to be a fertile ground on which, throughout ages, many nations, civilizations, cultures and religions have flourished. Novi Sad is the second largest city in Serbia. It is the main carrier of political, educational, traffic and economic functions, and it is the centre of the administrative district
of Vojvodina. The city is located on the border of Bačka and Srem, on the northern slopes of the Fruška Gora Mountain and on the plains of Southern Bačka (Arsenjev A., 2010).

The most remarkable characteristic of this town certainly is the idiosyncratic cultural and historical heritage, which is the main reason why it has become the cultural centre of the region. The name “Serbian Athens” completely justifies the above mentioned statement. The vivid and colourful history of the town, together with various nationalities, had an immense influence and impact on the architecture and construction of sacred places for many different religious communities. Some of them are especially remarkable due their monumentality, valuable collections of different sacred objects, sophisticated architecture and historical significance. In order to achieve the previously stated aim, nine representative sacred sites of Novi Sad were chosen, which are further described in Table 1.

**Table 1. Description of the study area**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the church</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saborna Church – Saint George’s cathedral</strong></td>
<td>Saint George’s cathedral is the central Orthodox church in Novi Sad and it is dedicated to Saint George. It has a full right to be called a “cathedral” because it represents the head church of the Serbian Orthodox eparchy of Bačka (Popov D., Stanojev B., 2004.) This church is under state protection as a valuable cultural monument (Ilić T., 2010).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Nikolajevska Church</strong></td>
<td>The church of Saint Nicolas is reputed to be the oldest church in Novi Sad, and it is believed that its construction took place in 1830. It is an orthodox church and it is dedicated to transfer of the relics of St. Nicolas to Bari (Penić M., 2002). It is specific because above the central nave, a small onion dome rises. This is an unusual feature for religious buildings in the Pannonian region, but on the contrary, very characteristic for Russian churches (Dobrić et al., 2009).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Uspenska Church</strong></td>
<td>Uspenska church is Serbian Orthodox church, dedicated to the assumption of the Mother of God. It was built between 1765 and 1777 in place of an older structure, dating from the early 18-th century. When it was finished, it was reputed to be the most beautiful church in the town. It was built in baroque style and the church is under state protection as an extremely important cultural monument (Petrović D., 2008).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Almaška Church</strong></td>
<td>Almaška church is the largest Orthodox parochial church in Novi Sad, dedicated to The Three Holy Hierarchies. The church kept it’s original appearance in the late neoclassical style and looks monumental. Today it is famous for Teodorovic’s paintings (Tišma M., 1994).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Church Name of Mary</strong></td>
<td>The Name of Mary church is a Roman Catholic Church named after Virgin Mary. It is located in the centre of the town, on the north-eastern side of Liberty square. The colossal size of the building, as well as the beauty of its neo-gothic architecture, is leaving a strong impression on the citizens of the town (Penić M., 2002).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Synagogue</strong></td>
<td>Synagogue, the Jewish Church in Novi Sad, is a part of an eclectic complex which consists of the Synagogue, which is turned into a concert hall, a former Jewish school and the building of the Jewish community centre. The present synagogue, the fifth one, was built between 1906 and 1909, according to a plan of Lipota Baumhorn, an architect from Budapest. It is considered to be one of the most beautiful monuments of its kind in Middle Europe (Tomić P., 2003).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reformation-Calvinist Church</strong></td>
<td>The present church was built in the former hay market bought by Calvinists. The church is built in neo-gothic style, designed by renowned architect György Molnár.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This religious building is particularly interesting because of the absence of conspicuous religious symbols. The Star of Bethlehem in the bell tower is the only symbol of this church and it is common for this religious community in Hungary (Arsenjev A., 2010).

**Slovak-Evangelical Church**
The church was designed by architect George Bema, and was completed and consecrated in 1886. The church was built by the Slovakian Evangelical religious community of Novi Sad. It is a small church with 150 seats and can accommodate up to 300 worshipers (Dobrić et al., 2009).

**Greek-Catholic Church**
The Greek-Catholic in Novi Sad, whose believers are Ruthenians, is dedicated to Christ's apostles Peter and Paul. The Greek Orthodox Church of St. Peter and Paul was built in the classical baroque style in 1822.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The essence of tourism evaluation is to assess the current state of resources because the assessment of their value enables us to set objective and realistic possibilities for tourism development (Čomič D., Pjevač N., 1997).

The word evaluation means determination of the value, estimation. Ahmetović-Tomka described tourist valorization as determining or assessing the value of the tourist attraction, and evaluation of the tourist attractiveness of those phenomena, objects and spaces which are, beside other characteristics, attractive for tourists and which help them meet their tourist (cultural and recreational) need. Two basic and most important categories of tourist valorization are the attractiveness and value (Ahmetović-Tomka D., 1994).

Under tourist valorization Čomič D., and Pjevač N., (1997) consider evaluation, and qualitative and quantitative assessment of the tourism value of all previously listed resources, as well as the other constituent elements of the tourist potential (tourist infrastructure). The aim of the evaluation is to assess the value of the elements of the tourist potential (individually and collectively) and to determine their utility and exchange value (Čomič D., Pjevač N., 1997).

All objects, phenomena or spaces formed by natural processes or human activity which possess a certain attraction for visitors can be a subject of tourist valorization. One of the most often used methods of tourist valorization is a quantitative–qualitative method, which allows a fair amount of freedom in the evaluation, and it is based on six indicators (Božić S., Berić D., 2013).

In this paper the quantitative - qualitative method of assessment is used for the evaluation of nine sacred sites of Novi Sad and following elements of evaluation are being taken into account: micro-location and accessibility, artistic value, ambience, tourist attractiveness, tourist infrastructure and fitting in with the other tourist assets in the vicinity. Cultural properties are assigned ratings from 1 to 5:

1. Insufficient quality, without potential for tourism presentation
2. A sufficient quality, local tourist significance
3. Good quality of resources, regional significance
4. Very good quality, a wider regional or national interest
5. Excellent quality of resources, international tourist significance
4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this paper, the technique of the interview was used in order to evaluate the sacred sites according to different indicators based on respondents’ answers.

In order to avoid subjectivity in the evaluation, the research was conducted in the following manner. One tourism expert from the Tourist Information Centre of Novi Sad and a University professor specialized in religious and cultural tourism were interviewed and they evaluated each indicator and gave their score to each of them. Moreover, the survey was conducted among 90 tourists who visited these objects using random sampling method, the indirect method of survey. Precisely, each visitor was asked to fill in a survey and assess each indicator for each sacred site. Eventually, the final score was obtained as the average of three estimates made by an expert from the Tourist Information Centre of Novi Sad, a University professor, and visitors and it is shown in Table 2.

Micro-location and Accessibility. Micro-location and accessibility of analyzed churches, for wide array of reasons can be considered very favorable. On one hand, advantageous position lays in the fact that Novi Sad has an excellent geographical and touristic position. And on the other hand, the majority of those churches are located in the old city centre, which is reputed to be the most alluring and the most visited part of the town by foreign tourists. The church Name of Mary is placed on the north-eastern side of Liberty square, which is the central city square. The advantage of this position lays in the fact that it often represents the starting point for tourist sightseeing. The cathedral is accessible from several directions. Zmaj Jovina Street has special importance as it is a pedestrian zone and one of the most dynamic and the most visited streets by tourists. The church Name of Mary is placed on the north-eastern side of Liberty square, which is the central city square. The advantage of this position lays in the fact that it often represents the starting point for tourist sightseeing. The cathedral is accessible from several directions. Zmaj Jovina Street has special importance as it is a pedestrian zone and one of the most dynamic and the most visited streets by tourists. Njegoseva Street leads from the church and connects it with Trifkovic square, where a spacious parking is located. On the opposite side, going from the cathedral through Modena Street, tourists can arrive at the taxi station, which immensely improves accessibility. Uspenska church is located in Uspenska Street and its attractive position is reflected through the fact that it’s near the Serbian National Theatre. The church is accessible from Mihajlo Pupin Street and a few meters from the church there is a parking of large capacity. Moreover, the bus stations are located in front of the church, which improves accessibility a lot, in terms of making it much easier for tourists to come and visit it. The synagogue is located in Jewish Street, widely open to traffic. To the west, it is connected with the avenue of Liberation, while to the south it goes to the city centre. The main disadvantage of the position is that the closest parking for buses is located 500 m from it, which limits mass tourist visits. Saborna church is accessible from the city centre, more precisely from Zmaj Jovina Street, which makes its position very favorable. Nikolajevska church is located in the Nikolajevska courtyard, also very easily accessible from the city centre. Nearby, there is a small convenient parking. In comparison with other churches in the city centre, Almaska church doesn’t have such an advantageous position. It is located in Almaska area, in the suburb of Novi Sad called Podbara. Regardless of this fact, its connection with the city centre, via regular taxi and bus lines is at an enviable level. When it comes to the micro-location of the Greek-Catholic Church in Novi Sad, it can be said that it is quite advantageous, considering its proximity to the city center. It is located on the corner of Jovan Subotic Street, which is a very busy street and it continues to Blvd. Mihajlo Pupin, and Svetozar Markovic Street. Directly across the street from this church, there is the Slovak-Evangelical Church, at the corner of Masarikova Street and Jovan Subotic Street. The accessibility of these churches is much
enhanced by the existence of parking, located about 200m from them, very close to the Uspenska Church, as well as Trišković square. The Reformation-Calvinist church is located on the corner of the Šafarikova and Paul Pope Streets, which continues to the boulevard of Liberty, while through Šafarikova Street it is connected with the Jewish street where the synagogue is located. Accessibility is enviable due to the immediate proximity of the main bus station and several city lines.

The Artistic value. The artistic value of churches of Novi Sad reflects in its magnificent architectural construction, diverse artistic styles (from baroque, secession to neo-gothic), outstanding interior decoration and valuable art works of famous Serbian painters. Moreover, the great value lays in longevity, if we consider that the oldest of these churches Nikolajevska, dates from 1730s. The spiritual value is of paramount importance especially for strong believers who consider those churches to be “guardians of the faith”. The Artistic value of those Orthodox churches is primarily reflected in a very valuable iconostasis, oil paintings and historical compositions. All of them are part of the magnificent work of most renowned Serbian artists, such as Paja Jovanovic, Uros Predic, Arsa Teodorovic. Besides this, it is important to emphasize the amazing achievements of baroque architecture as well as classicism (Almaska church) and the rich cultural treasure they keep inside. The synagogue has been valued by experts for protection of cultural monuments, as a building of high quality, monumentality and rarity (as the only synagogue in town). The great value lies in the secession style architecture, but on the other hand the most important artistic value-stained glasses have not been preserved in original form. They were restored and replaced in 1980s, and their appearance was significantly changed (Hozak A., 2008). The exceptional value of the church Name of Mary reflects in the elegant neo-gothic architecture with peculiar high tower, which aspires to heaven. Moreover, the artistic value of the church reflected in unusually big stained glasses, decorative rose window and high-quality sculpted statues of the saints, iconostasis and outstanding organs make this church one of the most visited in town. Reformation-Calvinist church has a significant value, which is reflected in its neo-gothic architecture, and high tower, which aspires to heaven, and the symbol of Bethlehem star. In terms of artistic value the interiors of the church are not on a high level due to the absence of the icons of the saints, as well as the organ. On the contrary, the artistic value of the Greek-Catholic Church reflects in the beautiful icons in Byzantine style, expressed as a mosaic of valuable Murmansk glass. Moreover, this church has magnificent architecture in Classicist-Baroque style, and the icons made by Arse Teodorovića and Ivana Ivanic, much appreciated artists of this period. The Slovak-Evangelical Church stands out with its baroque tower and architectural style with characteristics of the transition period between Baroque and Classicism.

Ambience. Quality of Ambience in which analyzed churches are placed, varies from church to church, but the urban component prevails. Generally, it consists of numerous cultural assets which surround those sacred objects and they have significant role in terms of improving attractiveness of those churches. Unfortunately, the natural components of the space, such as greenery and flowers, are insufficient and very rare. This can be a disadvantage, if we consider its important role in making church visits pleasant and convenient. The church Name of Mary is placed in a surrounding which consists of numerous buildings on Liberty square. In recent years, a lot of effort has been put into their restoration, and at present moment they make a harmonious whole with the cathedral. The whole area around the church is paved, and there are many wooden benches and flower
pots. Next to the cathedral, in the Catholic churchyard, there is a beautiful fountain which makes the atmosphere much more pleasant, and provides refreshment in the warm spring and summer months. The cathedral has also obtained an adequate lightning which makes it very noticeable at night. Uspenska church is located in not so pleasant surroundings for tourist visits due to its position near Boulevard, parking and numerous bus stations. They are the major causes of noise, which can be very irritating. The church doesn’t have a churchyard and there is no specially made fenced area and wooden benches. This may be the major factor which hinders tourist visits. Saborna church is placed in a small, but well arranged and fenced yard with lot of baskets and wooden benches which main purpose is to provide a short rest after their visit. The wider surrounding consists of valuable heritage of which we should especially mention the Bishop’s palace. The synagogue is located in very similar surroundings, but with less greenery and flowers. The Nikolajevska church has the most pleasant ambience because of the small park arranged around the church. In the park, natural components are more present then urban which make this place more convenient for visits. The park’s essential role reflects in the fact that it emphasizes the sense of peace, in the way that it is a significant isolation for noise, which is inevitable in urban areas such as Novi Sad. The environment in which the Slovak-Evangelical Church and the Greek-Catholic Church are placed is urban in character, as they are surrounded by old and modern buildings. Natural components are present but at limited space, which should change in the future by plantation of a variety of plants that will bring the atmosphere of peace and serenity to these churches. The place where they are located is extremely busy and noise is a significant problem. Reformation-Calvinist church defers from the other churches because, although it is in the city center, it is located in a quite peaceful and hidden place, with less traffic, which makes its ambience much more attractive.

Tourist attractiveness. In spite of the fact that each of the analyzed churches has potential to entice tourists and to be engaged in the tourist offer, up to now, this potential hasn’t been adequately used. The abovementioned Orthodox churches (Saborna, Nikolajevska, Almaska, Uspenska) still represent places visited mostly by Orthodox believers of Novi Sad, despite its outstanding cultural values and historical significance. Seldom are they visited by tourists, who visit them mainly as a “way station” while visiting other tourist sites, or in the form of organized student’s excursions. The Roman Catholic Church Name of Mary with its elegance and sophisticated neo-gothic architecture captivates all visitors including citizens. The strongest proof of this claim is that it is called the cathedral, as an expression of admiration, although it isn’t the seat of a bishop. The above mentioned has a great influence on its tourism potential and attractiveness, which is only partially used. Its location on the main square of Liberty creates an opportunity for more tourist visits than in the abovementioned Orthodox churches. However, the number of visits isn’t at enviable level yet. The concerts of sacred music could be one of the initiative factors of tourist visits. They have been held in the cathedral for the past few years, but in spite of this, people are not sufficiently informed about them. Adequately established advertising material doesn’t exist, and this certainly requires more attention on in the future, if our final aim is to make people come in draws to see churches. Considering the fact that the synagogue is unique and the only Jewish church in town, which makes it very distinctive, it’s potential and tourist attractiveness haven’t been adequately used. As numerous tourists visit the synagogue only during concerts it points out the cultural role and not the religious one. Visits in form of excursions exist, but are quite rare. The negative thing is that
buildings within the complex of the synagogue are closed for tourist visits. This fact significantly reduces the possibility of including this building in major tourist flows. When it comes to the attractiveness of the churches such as Slovak-Evangelical, Greek-Catholic, and Reformation-Calvinist, which are places of worship of religious communities not so present in Novi Sad, their engagement in the tourist offer is unsatisfactory, although the potential is certainly there. These potentials are reflected in the fact that these churches certainly contribute to the multiculturalism of Novi Sad, which is the subject of great interest especially among foreign tourists.

Tourist infrastructure. It appears as a very important factor which can considerably support the tourist affirmation of the churches. Recently, it has received adequate attention in form of required improvements. This reflects in the fact that roads, especially in the centre of the town, are becoming modern and of better quality. Moreover, parking spaces are built in every important place in the town. This certainly improves the accessibility of these sacred objects. Furthermore, the restorations of many old buildings have been made in order to improve the overall ambience of the old city centre. As a result, they regained their old glory and became more attractive for tourists. When considering this issue, significant work has been done on Liberty square, where the church Name of Mary is located. In its surroundings many building have been renovated, including The City Hall, building of the bank of Vojvodina etc. When the adequate lighting is concerned, the major results have been achieved in case of The Name of Mary church and The Synagogue. The other churches still have just basic lighting which makes them almost invisible at night. Not satisfying conditions of tourist infrastructure are within the church’s complex in almost all religious sites. The problem is that adequate objects are not built appropriately, so there is much room for improvement in this field. In those churches which have spacious, fenced yards (such as Nikolajevska, Saborna etc) souvenir shops should be constructed in accordance with a religious theme. The souvenirs should be sold at symbolic prices, and souvenir shops shouldn’t stand out of the entire ambience. The shops, located in the churches, could be moved outside the buildings, because it is not appropriate for one religious and spiritual place to have them inside the temple. Furthermore, one of the major disadvantages is that there are no adequate information boards in front of the objects, which would point out the cultural and historical significance of the buildings. The Synagogue has an information board, but all information refers only to concerts and events, without crucial information about the object. In addition, for the purpose of providing tourists with detail information about sacred sites, it is suggested to open an information stand in form of a separate object. Where there is enough space, a nice idea would be to build fountains for refreshment for both tourists and believers. They should also be constructed in a way that makes them harmonious with the environment. When it comes to tourist infrastructure of the Reformation-Calvinist church, there is much room for improvements. The façade of the church is quite dilapidated and requires extensive reconstruction in order to become more attractive for tourists. Also, the clock tower of the church is no longer working with the hands which are no longer in place. This leaves a very bad impression, and shows how little attention is paid for its tourist activation. The church is invisible at night, because the appropriate lighting still doesn’t exist. Thus, as soon as possible, the necessary steps should be taken in order to improve these elements. On the other hand, the Slovak-Evangelical and Greek-Catholic Church got new facades which returned them their former glory.
Fitting in with the other tourist assets in the vicinity. The level of integration in the tourist offer of analyzed churches of Novi Sad is satisfactory. They are located mainly in the old city centre with the major concentration of tourist assets. The significance of those churches and other cultural and historical sites lays in the fact that they are important complementary motives of tourist visits. The church Name of Mary makes a harmonious whole with other buildings in The Liberty square such as The City Hall, Hotel “Vojvodina” and the bank of Vojvodina. The Orthodox churches are located in a narrow territory, creating a unique whole with the other cultural resources. The synagogue is still not adequately integrated into the tourist and cultural wealth of the city. Nevertheless, its great potential can be achieved in terms of its joint presentation with the Jewish cemetery and a chapel. Even thought churches such as the Greek-Catholic, Reformation-Calvinist, and the Slovak-Evangelical haven’t been well engaged in the tourist offer so far, there are plenty of ways to make them fit in better with the other tourist assets in the vicinity. One of those ways is their connection with other churches in a single route, through which tourists, in one breath, could visit most of the sacred sites of different religious communities that exist on the territory of Novi Sad.

Table 2. Quantitative-qualitative method of tourist assessment of churches of Novi Sad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the sacred site</th>
<th>Micro-location and accessibility</th>
<th>Artistic value</th>
<th>Ambient</th>
<th>Tourist attractiveness</th>
<th>Tourist infrastructure</th>
<th>Fitting in with the other tourist assets in the vicinity</th>
<th>The overall rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saborna Church</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>Average mark</td>
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<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nikolajevska Church</td>
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The Overall Rating. The Overall Rating of the tourist value of the nine representative sacred sites is derived in Table 2, and it shows that it is medium for all churches together. It is very important to point out the fact that these figures refer only to the current situation. The main goal is to make improvements in the future in order to create better opportunities for tourist activation of these churches. The Name of Mary Church has the highest average mark (3.8) which indicates the regional significance of this object as well as the great potential for further tourist activation. After this church, the highest ranked church is Saborna church (3.7), as an important part of cultural heritage and a monument of regional significance. By implementing an intensive promotion there are odds to achieve their much better engagement in the tourist offer. Nikolajevska (3.2), Uspenska (3.1), Greek-Catholic (3), and Slovak-Evangelical (2.95) churches have a quite similar overall
assessment of the current situation. However, which of them will be more tourist attractive in the future, depends on their further maintenance, protection and promotion. The Reformation-Calvinist (2.3), Almaska church (2.6) and the Synagogue (2.7) have the lowest average grades as sites of local significance. This doesn’t mean they don’t have great potential and value, but points out that so far there not enough attention was paid to their opening to tourists and activation in these purposes. We should bear in mind that some of these elements, such as the cultural and historical significance, as well as the artistic value, are out of our influence, or we can influence them in a very small extent. On the other hand, elements such as the ambience or construction of the space heavily depend on men’s efforts and investments. Thus, the improvement of these elements should be more in focus in the future.

5. SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENTS OF RELIGIOUS SITES IN NOVI SAD

A very important thing which should be beared in mind when planning the development of religious tourism is the difference between two types of religious tourist:

First group of tourists are believers who have strong religious views and attitudes and who regularly fulfill their religious rituals. While choosing a tourist destination, it is important for them to have access to religious sites (ability to attend all church services regularly).

The second group of religious tourists have the travel motivation similar to the classical tourists. In comparison with the first type of tourists, they are reserved about religious principles and less familiar with theological dogma. They don’t visit sacred places only for religious reasons, but out of curiosity (Stamenkovic I., 2006).

Taking into consideration the above-mentioned differenciacion of tourists in religious tourism, it can be concluded that the time of their visit of religious sites should be different. More precisely, it is necessary to clearly define the time when the second type of religious tourists can visit these holy places, considering the time of the religious service, so as not to disturb the peace of believers. Otherwise, the basic religious values could be violated, which is against the aims of sustainable tourism development. This should be particularly taken into account when planning the itinerary for tourists in religious tourism. Furthermore, the time of visits should be determined, clearly stated and available to tourists, travel agencies and other companies which organize these tours. Noticing importance of the previously stated, some countries implemented good practices in order to tackle this problem. Some of them are scheduling important pilgrimage events during a time of year when relatively few tourists visit. Thus, at Bavaria’s beautiful Ettal Abbey, the main pilgrimage is held in November after the summer rush and before the ski season. Another solution is to have special areas set aside for the devout, as it has been done at the Church of All Nations in Jerusalem’s Garden of Gethsemane. Some churches post signs indicating that only worshipers may enter during times of religious services. Other signs may request that visitors be appropriately dressed if they enter the sanctuary, although the rules for “appropriate” dress code have been greatly modified over the past three decades (Nolan M., L., and Nolan S., 1992).

Of paramount importance for tourists who visit sacred places is to be accompanied with a person who will present them with all nessecary details related to religious themes
and stories, legends, or other items of their interest, such as architecture, art and the history of the church.

When it comes to religious tourism in Novi Sad, the situation is not satisfactory. Specifically, it could happen that tourists come to the church with the intention to visit it, but the church is closed or there is nobody to give them information about the church. Unfortunately, today these situations are reality and in order to develop religious and cultural tourism based on these sacred sites the changes are necessary in the long run. In order to achieve this goal in the future, it is necessary to fix the time for visits to the sacred sites and make this information public, in order to avoid the above mentioned unpleasant situations.

Those churches which have spacious fenced yards (such as Nikolajevska Church, the Cathedral, the Synagogue, the Greek-Catholic and Slovak-Evangelical Church) should relocate their souvenir shops there, instead of usual practice of placing souvenir shops inside the church, which is not appropriate for the interior of such religious and spiritual structures. These souvenir shops should be designed in accordance with religious themes which would fit in the ambience. The souvenirs should be sold at symbolic prices, in order to avoid commercialization of religious motives, which is of utmost importance.

As it was already mentioned it is of crucial importance to set up informational boards in front of the sacred sites, which for now, unfortunately, do not exist, but which are very important in providing tourists with the essential information about these places. More attention should be paid to the enhancement of the ambiance, in order to make a pleasant atmosphere for visitors. This especially refers to the construction of wooden benches, baskets, fountains etc. out of the material that would be fully compliant with the object. Some of the analyzed churches, with special emphasis on Nikolajevska Church, have a problem with the noise, which disturbs the peace of the visitors. This church is located next to the Secondary school of Economics, where a large number of children passes every day, and around which are areas covered with garbage, which is unacceptable if the goal is to engage this church in the tourist offer.

An important factor of tourism development and creating a positive image in the tourism field is certainly promotion. The artistic value, historical significance, and cultural heritage of religious buildings has no significant role in tourism, unless they are presented in a good way and tourists are aware of their existence. An interesting presentation of sacred sites should encourage even non-religious tourists to visit them and learn more about their cultural value. The best way to achieve this is the use of a wide array of advertising materials such as brochures, leaflets, guides etc. Moreover, the enviable results could be achieved by reports on television, various shows or by the organization of educational seminars.

Unfortunately, it is evident that people are not very well informed about these sacred places. For instance, not many citizens of the town are familiar with the fact that during the last few years, the church Name of Mary is the place where concerts of spiritual music are regularly held. Even less informed are tourists, who might be enticed to attend them. In order to make improvements in this field, the concert dates should be fixed and published in form of a calendar in the cultural guide of Novi Sad.

Moreover, the promotion of the synagogue is focused on presentation of the concerts and events which are held there, totally neglecting cultural values and religious significance of this spiritual site. In addition the buildings in the synagogue complex are closed for
tourists. Thus, their opening and preparing for tourist visits is the first step in terms of its tourist activation. Nowadays, the synagogue’s main purpose is to be a concert hall for the concerts of jazz, ethno and classical music. The main parts of the prayer were destroyed for this purpose, which is totally unjustifiable and a negative example. Since 1992, the organizer of music life in synagogue is the Music youth, and during the year there are approximately 90 concerts held. Most of them are organized during events such as Bemus, Nomus, Novi Sad spring musical, and one of the most visited are those held during Christmas and New Years cycle (Hozak A., 2008).

According to the staff of the Tourist Information Centre of Novi Sad, foreign tourists are especially fascinated with the multiculturalism of the city, and they are very interested in visiting various religious sites. For tourists who are not Orthodox, Orthodox churches are particularly intriguing, and they are eager to learn more about them, as something new, interesting and different from their religion.

Significant visits to those religious sites are only during religious holidays and are still at an unsatisfactory level. The poor attendance is caused mainly by the fact that travel arrangements of travel agencies rarely include religious building into the offer. These arrangements are made only at the request of tourists, and mostly include visits to churches such as The Name of Mary and Saborna church as important cultural symbols of the town. The other churches are visited mainly through panoramic sightseeing, usually without entering and visiting the churches’ interior. This has negative consequences on tourism development. In order to improve the situation it would be desirable to organize a travel agency specialized in cultural and religious tourism. Its main task would be making arrangements which would connect different religious sites in unique routes, and informing tourists about benefits of sightseeing of that kind. For instance, the Synagogue together with the Jewish cemetery and chapel could be interesting to tourists, if it’s followed with the story of Jewish people, their history, customs, culture etc. On the other hand, Orthodox churches should be linked in form of unique cultural and religious routes, followed with a story of their importance for people of this region, their dynamic history and cultural wealth. Religious buildings of old city centre should also be included in a unique arrangement and appropriately interpreted to tourists. To achieve this a high-professional guide is certainly neccessary. Apart from the historical facts, he should enrich his story with some curiosities and adapt it to the age and cultural level of the tourists.

6. SUGGESTED ITINERARIES

Certainly one of the good ways to enhance religious tourism and include religious sites in the tourist offer of Novi Sad, represents the organization of various religious and cultural tours. Due to the fact that visits to the multitude of churches in Novi Sad can be combined with a large number of monasteries in the nearby Fruska Gora Mountain, it would be hard to visit and experience all of them in one day, so it is suggested to organize a few different religious and cultural routes lasting several days.

For instance, the first day of the tour would include the visit of representative monasteries of Fruska Gora, known as Serbian "Holy Mountain" which is the cradle of Orthodox Christianity. The itinerary would include monasteries Kuršedol, Big Remeta, Hopovo, and Jazak Monastery.
With the intention to continue the story of Orthodoxy, the second day tourists would visit the most important Orthodox churches of the town, starting with Almaška Church leading to the Saborna, Nikolajevska and ending with the Uspenska Church.

The third day of the tour, the tourists would visit other sacred sites of the city’s core, such as the Synagogue, Reformation-Calvinist, Slovak-Evangelical and the Greek-Catholic Church. In this way, tourists would not be overloaded with too much information in one day, and they could make an adequate picture of the multiculturism of the city, starting from Orthodoxy, as the main religion of the city to the religious sites of various other religious communities which make Novi Sad a multicultural centre.

7. SUSTAINABLE RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL TOURISM AT SACRED SITES

Tourism based on sacred sites, whether religious or cultural, should be developed in a sustainable form, bearing in mind that mass visits of sacred sites can ruin the peace and the principal church values.

In addition to religious motives, tourists are attracted by various forms of attractiveness and authenticity, which are always present in religious buildings and monastery complexes.

Today, motives for travel in religious tourism are quite diverse. A religious tourist attraction may be thought of as a place that draws tourists by virtue of some aspect of site such as an architecturally exceptional church building, an outstanding art collection, an important historical association, or, in some cases, a spectacular view from the terrace (Rinschede G., 1992).

Tourists often view visits to historic religious sites as opportunities for cultural and educational experiences. Interpretation can be used to help provide these experiences, while reducing some of the negative impacts of tourism. Interpretation can help the tourists better appreciate what they are seeing; reduce congestion and crowding by making tourists aware of alternative sites to visit; and explain appropriate tourist behaviors that minimize impacts on the site and its religious use (Olsen D., 2006).

Tourists should be introduced with the issue of environmental protection and nature, through the so-called "moral codex", which is usually compiled by ecologists and tourismologists, but in the case of religious tourism, clergy should also be consulted (Stamenkovic I., 2006).

Preserving cultural heritage at religious sites requires allowing the local community to continue using the site; however, religious practices can be disrupted by the presence of tourists (McKercher B., du Cros H., 2002).

In this context we should take into account the carrying capacity of these objects. The carrying capacity in this case refers to the maximum number of visitors who can visit a sacred site at one time, without disturbing the peace or principal purpose of this object. However, it is not possible to determine the exact number of tourist visits in Novi Sad’s churches because almost none of the Orthodox objects keep records on the number of visitors. The assessments may be approximate, but certainly not true and accurate. The carrying capacity of each object should be determined and the number of tourist visits should be kept and followed regularly, in order to keep tourism in a sustainable form.
Moreover, tourism at these sites should be developed without the commercialization of religious motives and values, because this could lead to the trivialization of these sites. When heritage religious sites and practices are commercialized and changed for easy tourist consumption, the site often loses its authenticity (McKercher B., du Cros H., 2002). In many renowned religious sites this is unfortunately becoming a big problem. For instance, souvenir shops sell mass-produced souvenirs with religious themes at very high prices, making the real business of that. This should certainly be prevented with respect to religion as the main church’s value.

Many heritage religious sites encourage donations to help compensate for the impacts of tourism, but donations rarely cover the cost of maintenance and preservation (Olsen D., 2006).

Provided tourism based on religious sites in Novi Sad gains greater scale in the future, it is suggested that travel agencies donate a percentage of sold arrangement for restauration and protection of these buildings which will create mutual benefit.

8. CONCLUSION

From this extensive presentation of Novi Sad’s sacred sites their current state and potentials we can conclude that religious and cultural tourism have a good perspective to become one of the dominant forms of tourism in the city tourism product of this town. The lack of the tourism organization as well as conservation, restauration and promotion of these sites in the past period have thwarted tourism development and major tourist visits.

In the similar city destinations, who do pay attention to these important issues, such as for instance Maribor, cultural and religious tourism began to flourish and attract a lot of visitors. Many interesting tours such as tours of cultural heritage and many attractive church tours, are being organized in Maribor, which makes a significant contribution to the development of cultural and religious tourism. Maribor already included “The tour of Maribor’s churches” in its tourism offer which showed good results (Božić et al., 2013). Novi Sad should implement this and other examples of good practice in the region and foster its culture and religion through sustainable and balanced tourism development.

This paper indicated priority fields for future improvements which should be the guidelines for plans and actions of the local tourism organization, as well as private companies taking into account the importance of cooperation between public and private sector which is very important for the tourism development and it should be beneficial for both sides.

Based on all above mentioned we can draw a conclusion that with necessary innovations, improvements and better engagement in the tourist offer the immense tourism potential of Novi Sad’s sacred sites could be realized and contribute to the creation of an image of Novi Sad as a developed tourist destination.

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