Present and Perspectives in Tourist Evolution of the Urban, Suburban and Metropolitan Areas

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Abstract

The concept of metropolitanisation is more than just a synonym of the urban growth according to the accepted and statistic meaning: an entire package of tendencies, as for instance the urban surface, or the increase of the urbanizing rates in areas already strongly urbanized. The phenomenon of metropolitanisation surpasses all these tendencies. It represents a pattern in which the process of concentration, of law, of control, coordination and creation of codes dominates the other means of regulation. The metropolis plays an important role in the territorial organization of the activities: it attracts population and encourages complementary activities for those concentrated in this area and rejects those from peripheral areas. It is supposed that a metropolis must void the remote periphery, in order to generate a phenomenon of segmentation and territorial segregation. Indeed, the concentration of specific activities in one place generates an area of influence, probably to determine the territorial mark of the metropolis.

Key words: *metropolitanisation, development, pattern, globalization, standardization, accessibility, density, urbanization, suburbanization*

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Territorial Dimensions, Human Hierarchies and Labour Force

The process of metropolitanisation is different according to predominant opinions concerning the urban development. It is strongly connected with the selection of the services' and activities' concentrations and with social polarization and spatial fragmentation. It is mainly associated with very big cities.

Most researchers and professionals who study the urban fields agreed upon the idea that metropolitanisation is "the direction of the process which intensifies the wide urban dimension, which is marked by the changes of the productive system analyzed for the level widespread all over the world, that leads to a new organization and reorganization of the territories and which also implies their internal and external relation". The main ideas, connected with the selective concentration (population, activities, functions, results), the changes concerning the urban and interurban relations and foundation of an urban hierarchy, represent the vitals of this movement.

At the same time, a metropolis stimulates the non-territorial functions, the functions from all over the world. A metropolis is particularly sustained by the development of the communication networks (material or immaterial resulted), that becomes an important element in its area of

influence. Paradoxically, this latter aspect was developed more than the former. With a particular emphasis on the etymological meaning of the metropolis, we can forget that it is also offered with its own functionality and efficiency. More precise, the research gave great importance to the style of the non territorial processes, investigating the relevance of distance as an explicative and restrictive variable for the economic dynamics. Although globally distance does not constrain anymore, it still remains a key factor at the local level. If practically, distance is not an impediment in multiplication of changes, it is likely to generate blocking phenomena or lack of balance that the territorial structures can explain. A striking example regards the congestion in the systems of deportation. The individual displacement, for any reason, indicates these limits and raises the question of the territorial influence of the metropolis.

Then, the phenomenon of becoming a metropolis, that creates concentration and dispersion, polarization and diffusion can exist according to the varied patterns, adapted to any urban dimension and in every period of time. Certain places generated changes sustained through specific production, technologies and adequate cultures, even if it is true that for fifty years New York, London, Paris, Tokyo, Los Angeles were constantly illuminated. The concept must be preserved and developed: the processes must be appreciated in different series of cities, but for all urban dimensions: all over world, regional and local "the main idea will be to focus on the analysis and mechanisms, advantages and disadvantages of becoming a metropolis, which is conceived and led as a potential phenomenon that can happen in every city, regardless of size, functions or its history".

Metropolitanisation

Metropolitanisation is not the prerogative of the impressive cities. The focus is on the urban regional dimension and the phenomenon is studied through the structural components of the labor: demand and offer. The densities and the rigidity of the labor market are analyzed according to the skill of the labor and the distance from the centre limited to 40 minutes by car. Because a metropolis should generate concentrations and dispersion, the effect of centralization and density at regional level, the analysis should reveal a strong tendency of the spatial organization, because both of them go beyond these tendencies and intensify the territorial guide mark of the metropolis Bordeaux. Bordeaux and its close periphery concentrate mainly qualified jobs, while the remote periphery is rather specialized in specific and complementary activities that require not so qualified jobs. Better than the condition of the size of a metropolis, beyond the non-territorial features that connect a metropolis with the development of the whole world, it seems that metropolitanisation can function at different dimensions.

Metropolitanisation as a Privilege of the Big Cities

Originally, the research over metropolitanisation was connected with globalization and the changes of the productive system. A rich literature tries to understand the evolution from The Old Economy to the New Economy, in what regards the definition of the new functions and activities, and the understanding of some privileged locations: the well known cities of the world or the global cities London, Tokyo, New York, Paris and so on. The study of metropolitanisation implies the necessary conditions of the process: a relevant demographical size (at least 1000 inhabitants), easy accessibility, the development of the new technologies and of the digital economical activities, a capital mainly technical, political and symbolical that strengthens the role of the city capital (The Economist, 1998) and of "the perfect cities" (Paris and London). Metropolitanisation implies an endless concentration that leads the national territories. The metropolises use a great effort for reaching international levels that lead towards a pronounced competition for the specific functions (Money Market, Finances and Culture). They are very attentive not to give to every town, especially to the small ones, the minimum of

gain or monopoly. From this perspective, the phenomenon of metropolitanisation is definitely the prerogative of big cities. So, defining metropolitanisation as a high degree of urban change, we are led to the debate of the economic agglomeration. The analysis of the process focuses indeed on the elements that explain and evaluate the concentration of activities and of powers, but also the return of some urban functions. Metropolitanisation is the ability to create, to develop or strengthen new activities in traditional locations or near the great urban areas. It obviously suggests the idea of diversity that seems to be the prerogative of some great cities. Without a doubt, diversity explains why these cities can attract, adapt and change simultaneously, because they have an important capital supply that is strengthened and renewed, which intensifies the appearance of the new activities.

In another context, Quigley (1998) asked the same question: "How can diversity and size affect the level of production and of the welfare in a city?" It is still one of the arguments emphasized by Anas (1998) who, after analyzing the empirical report of the multicentered city points out the fact that "Most of the services are outside the centre" and "we can agree that the new growth is far more dispersed than the early growth". And they add: "Are the crucial questions without answer old centres still vital, or are they replaced with newer ones?" Quigley (1998) suggests arguments that are emphasized in The New Theory of Growth. He says that even though many points were listed in The Principles of Economy, Industry and Commerce, by Marshall, they became more adapted and more precise. He draws the reader's attention upon four main points: the dimension of economy, the firm indivisibility, the united and useful participation of different activities in one single place, and the effects of the law of the high numbers that attenuated the change of the activities.

The features of the territorial structures and of the urban morphology represent the second argument connected with the urban dimension. It implies the re-location of population and of the activities in the peripherical areas that are not needed or wanted by the centre of the city, while the free areas offer good opportunities for the new agents with high incomes (the theory of the volcano). It refers to the well known Anatomy of the Metropolis and to the crucial problems learnt from the patterns Alonso and Von Thunen. Along the outline of the first analysis, the process of metropolitanisation implies a higher degree of selection, concentration and standardization, dispersion and re-location of activities: "at the same time and almost in every city, the services that were assured by some places, including political, educational and health functions, cultural and economical activities, are widely available". Expressed in economic, political, cultural and financial relations, Paris, Lyon, Bordeaux do not belong to the same group. But, when we consider similar cities "metropolitanised" in France (so called metropolises of equilibrium) or European and International Cities (defined by special qualities), if we agree that each place is a potential or current part of the planetary village, we can analyze the process of metropolitanisation regardless of the selective extreme locations.

Metropolitanisation, Labor Market and Jobs

Factors like geographical mobility, signs of industrial reorganization, and new forms of productive organizations, the dynamism of the markets, and the local service systems that constrain the landscape where people search for jobs were selected in order to live and function. In this regard, the most important elements are the local systems of hiring (Jayet, 1997). The behavior of the local systems of jobs needs to be placed in the context of the urban structures, in order to show recent changes in the urban economies and the segmentation of activities. An approach like this admits the egress of the high levels of urban hierarchy, characterized by quality, diversity and by the specialization of functions in economic activities, while at the same time development is a place of exclusion where spatial and social segregation are normal.

This is how, the apparent fluid and spread markets of services can also be those in which the individual abides varied abnormalities, which are characterized by multiplication of segmentation of the new urban economy and the wrong spatial administration of the service and of the associated population with the insufficient disposition of a searching behavior of the job, the material accessibility (distance) and immaterial accessibility (information). If uncertainty exists and it is connected to the determinant urban factor of labor, any analysis that tries to examine the notion of "job city" must begin with an articulation of the relationship between the urban dynamics and the dynamics of labor.

Thus, labor market is an essential part of the patterns of urban development and represents a proper tool for exploring the territorial landmark of metropolitanisation. Two analytical options can be considered in exploring the relations between urban patterns and labor. The first relies on the labor market, with the stress placed on the determinant micro and macro-economical factors of the job; because of the creation of the job and losing the job; with the role of structuring labor and geographical-professional mobility. Furthermore we must be informed about the misfits from unemployment, the creation of jobs, the different dynamics of metropolitan areas and the precarious nature of poverty. Here, the relations between the urban theory and the urban unemployment must be placed more firmly in the urban context. More precisely, it should be written down that the research of the local markets of labor (or local systems of jobs) tends to compare them with the diversity of the national, regional or metropolitan markets, the main characteristic of which is to produce and emphasize the process of segmentation and exclusion. Nevertheless, the offer of the extensible nature of labor market, the relations between the local, metropolitan and regional market became much more important.

The second opinion is centered more directly on the analysis of the urban dynamics. In this way, the city and its attributes are evaluated by indicators associated with the job. The alternative of the approach suggested by Quigley (1998) is also mainly interested in urban growth. He explores the nature of the sample-locations inside the metropolis whose characteristics are appreciated with respect for the qualified job (the nature of services, activities) suggesting that the close start should be the household element (the movement associated with residence and labor force). The urban structure, the size and the dynamics of cities are the main problems of this concern, representing the considerable part of literature. Other researches explored the basis of the multiplication pattern, created typologies of activities and economic functions and tried to quantitatively determine and evaluate the external economies and the effects of throng. In these studies, the dynamics of cities are initially evaluated using variables associated with the job and the change in the locations of the activities and companies.

Due to the analysis of the density of qualified labor force and of the compactness of labor market, the metropolis is characterized by two features: a world-widely known feature is that international networks are leading and a territorial aspect is that local or regional dimensions must be defined. For example Bordeaux, the important city of Aquitania, can be connected to the international networks (through the wine market in particularly), it can be an idea for a metropolis and reveals the fact that the process of metropolitanisation is interested particularly in territorial structures. Despite what we would call the 'size' of the whole world, Bordeaux developed national networks and a territorial delimitation that marks this area of influence.

In order to analyze the territorial landmark of metropolitanisation, with Bordeaux and its labor market as a case study, there were used two types of information. The first comes from the National Service Agency that dates from 1999 and implies 500 cities representing the Gironde department. The second one, duration of the drive towards Bordeaux was evaluated for each city located in Gironde. Despite their intrinsic interest, information suggests some arguable points. The conception is initially based on the offer of services (the registration of opportunities, announced services) and on the request of services (job seekers by the end of the month) listed by cities. We admit the fact that the local demand and the local offer match territorial realities, capable to test the local labor market. In order to compare this information, the registered offer

and the request of services was replaced by annual statistics. This statistic specific frame can not seriously attack the problem of adjustment or more precisely the hypothesis of spatial misfit, which is connected to the phenomenon of residential segregation, suburbanization and generally speaking to the relocation of population and activities.

Thus, a culture of labor force is implemented, based on the phenomenon of metropolitanisation, especially on its implications in agreement with attraction and exclusion. The analysis introduces the distance towards the centre of Bordeaux as a sign of awareness of the manner in which the labor market can structure metropolitan theories. Thus, the distribution of the great density of demand and offer can obviously be considered a tool for evaluating the rigidity of the labor market. Another opinion is that distribution can denote information about the role of Bordeaux in generating effects of centralization, for example. Unlike North-American contexts, it must be said that the notion of centralization we are using corresponds to local realities, maybe to national realities.

Case Study: Bordeaux Metropolis, Centrality and Rigidity on the Labor Market

A metropolis is often associated with the ability of concentrating and developing specific activities implying high qualification of services. Without being part of international networks, a metropolis does not need a particular territorial delimitation. It can be reduced to a status, made of a set of attributes that are located in a set point from space. So, awareness of the tendency towards offer (service advertisements) and demand (service seekers) along with the distance towards the centre of Bordeaux and the decrease of density from the centre towards periphery reveal the strong effect of polarization generated by the metropolis. Nevertheless, the levels of qualification, the densities of job seekers and job advertisements are higher in Bordeaux than in other cities from Gironde. Here are some of the significant discoveries in what concerns the elements that structure the metropolitan area of Bordeaux.

First of all, the rigidity inside the labor market according to the time spent while travelling along is more effective for the high-qualified categories than for the low and medium groups. This result supports our remarks on the effect of centralization: the density of published jobs and of job seekers decreases as the distance towards Bordeaux increases. The densities of demand and offer in connection to the distance towards Bordeaux are stronger for medium qualified category than for lower categories and highly qualified. This feature offers Bordeaux a specific pattern: the stress for highly qualified category is greater in Bordeaux than in the surrounding cities that are located 10 minutes away from Bordeaux. We also observe that the densities of published jobs and job seekers for medium qualified category are more important in Bordeaux than the highly and low qualified categories. This tendency reveals specific characteristics in what concerns both services located in the centre of the city and the population specialized in jobs with medium and high qualifications. Then, Bordeaux seems to look for diversity through medium dimension: a metropolis of medium qualified workers (mainly hired), specialized and developed through a process of decentralization. Like in other seven cities in France, Bordeaux was projected as a metropolis of equilibrium, in 1965, in order to counteract the prominent influence of Paris, known as a "macroscopic metropolis". These observations contribute to the definition of Bordeaux as a regional metropolis. The process of metropolitanisation can be explained through the location of job advertising in the case of jobs with a high degree of qualification from the urban area of Bordeaux and also through the presence of jobs with a medium degree of qualification in the centre of the city and in the far periphery. Some labor markets (like those connected to spatial activities) really depend on the national and international development (competition with other regional cities like Toulouse, Grenoble and spatial programs for example).

Secondly, rigidity on labor market varies according to the distance traveled by car to the centre of Bordeaux. The tension reaches minimum level in cities located 35 minutes away from Bordeaux. In the category of those poorly qualified, the minimum tension is reached in rural areas, especially those located at 30-40 minute distances. The minimum tension for the group with medium qualification is noticed in the centre of Bordeaux and for those highly qualified, inside the urban area of Bordeaux, in cities located 10 minutes away. The tension reaches its maximum level in cities located at a 20-minute drive from Bordeaux. The maximum for those poorly qualified is observed inside the areas located 15 minutes away, while for the medium qualified there is a maximum degree observed at 20 and 30 minutes away. For those highly qualified the rate is estimated at 20 then at 35 minutes. This movement illustrates the theory of the volcano and coincides with the movement of the urban territory from the centre of the city and with the densification of this area.

Tension tendencies allow us to define different types of labor markets according to their approximation or distance from the city centre. This segmentation of markets matches different realities (opportunities of jobs, dynamics of markets) and also social realities: the specific location of minorities, like young people searching for jobs, or long-term job seekers. Those highly and medium qualified surpass the distance of a 20 to 40 minute-drive from Bordeaux, and those highly and poorly qualified are outside the range of 30-40 minutes, so the territorial structures play a crucial role in establishing some limits. Indeed, cities located at 10-20 minutes away have high proportions of supply and demand (they represent 65% from the entire Gironde supply); while cities located farther than 20 minutes have lower proportions. The results are similar under different types of skills and also, with durability of jobs, full-time jobs, temporary jobs or occasional ones.

These aspects express specific territorial features: a relative uniformity of the first urban ring that covers cities located at a distance of 10-minute-drive from the centre of Bordeaux; these places are representative for great agglomerations and for the densities inherited from the industrial history of Bordeaux. Then, a second ring (15-20 minutes) that expressed varied periods of urban development and urban spread; it is a suburban area, which implies cities mainly characterized by disposal of residential goods during the 60's-the 70's, a landscape made of suburban accommodations and decentralized activities. If duration is higher than 20 minutes, the territorial structure changes. We are referring to a transitional area which is affected by the process of metropolitanisation, while the important rural features are being maintained and it can be defined as a metro-rural area.

The city-metropolis and metropolitanisation are firstly explained by comparison with an external environment, pushing away the close territories: the territory a metropolis is placed on, the territory controlled by the metropolis, structures and specializations. Taylor and others (2002) observed that "its essence is its power of serving the global capital". Bordeaux strayed from its ideas, focusing on the international commerce; very recently the city has discovered that the river has a right shore. During the first phase of the research of metropolitanisation, it was no doubt necessary to concentrate on globalization and to emphasize the new aspects and changes by using the traditional analysis of urban development. The following studies must be done in order to identify the dimensions of operation and the levels of success of the processes of metropolitanisation. An evaluation is needed, together with comparison and empirical research on these topics in order to take into account, particularly, The New Challenges of the Urban Government.

The example of the labor market system that functions in the metropolis of Bordeaux raises some question marks in what concerns the dimensions of the process of metropolitanisation. A relevant typology of metropolitan dynamics should be distinguished when we refer to the global, regional or local level. For each dimension we explored and specified their territory of influence, their main activities, the characteristics of their labor markets and also the costs of

transition. These dimensions of metropolitanisation are obviously simplified and require more investigations.

The global scale is connected to a vast literature and it is mainly made of theories of metropolitanisation. At first sight, the global metropolitanisation pattern is a form of tautological excess, although the debates have as subjects the cities worldwide, the global cities and so on. Even if global metropolitanisation is apparently well-known, the predilection for these cases is neither representative, nor vast in what concerns the metropolitan dynamics.

The second scale, known as the local scale aims to clarify how medium size cities, small units or even big villages can play an important territorial role. This scale is connected to the phenomenon of metro-ruralization aiming at rural metropolises or cities that unexpectedly appeared. In some rural areas, action is often taken in order to develop some traditional activities or to create new activities, which combine advantageous conditions and high technology more or less successfully.

The third scale, also named the regional scale was defined in order to complete an analytical gap. Regional metropolises were indeed widely studied from the point of view of regional planning and economical misfits, probably to accentuate the regional imbalance and to weaken the national territory. They also appear in the research of European cities and international cities. We have showed that the regional scale can be intended to bond non-territorial dimensions with territorial ones. Nevertheless, the reality and relevance of rural metropolitanisation must be more developed and better identified.

Finally, it seems crucial the assessment of reasons that gave to some cities, whatever size or position in urban hierarchy, the qualities and features that made them positively different from other cities located at the same dimensions and apparently with the same purposes. This is the endless ambition of the metropolitan paradox.

The Development of Suburban Areas

The process of metropolitanisation is usually identified as a serious development issue in developing countries and received attention from urban geographers, sociologists, economists and designers, being approached from different points of view for decades.

Metropolitanisation is closely related to the urbanization process that followed an exponential development at the end of the 19th century. Antrop (2004) defined urbanization as a complex process that changes the natural rural landscape into an urban industrial one, creating the spatial pattern of the planet controlled by material conditions of the place and its accessibility through transport routes.

The second phase after urbanization is called suburbanization and it also shows an increase of population, of whole urban agglomeration, but the interior city has a decreased number of people, while the marginal urban area is rapidly developing. Urbanization is growing and affects all rural regions and it is no longer limited at the marginal urban areas.

Morphological and functional the spontaneous and simultaneous urbanization invades the rural traditional village causing deep social, economic and cultural changes. Urbanization causes polarization of space through the change of the population's density, economic activities and mobility. Far rural areas with low accessibility become abandoned and in many cases forests are spreading. The rural regions affected by urbanization become a complex, intense and multifunctional space used in a higher urban network.

Local decentralization is known as a mechanism that can increase democratization and development. From this point of view, the power, the resources and services can usually be fairly distributed to groups and communities that are abandoned with the practice that

concentrates these elements in the centre. With deep implication and participation of local units and other non-governmental and governmental institutions, including civil society in the field of governing and taking decisions, the development strategies can meet people's needs.

The Experience of Metropolitanisation in the World

While the process of metropolitanisation was rather new in developing countries, it has a real tradition in the most developed countries in the world. A metropolitan area is seen as a functional entity at an extended scale, probably containing some urbanized areas, discontinuously built and still operating as an integrated economic overall.

The Census Bureau of the United States redefined the concept of metropolitan, in order to summarize from time to time the realities concerning the changes in population, material dimensions and functions of urban regions. The actual metropolitan statistical areas (MSA) include central countries or counties with at least one urbanized area of at least 50.000 people, plus the neighboring counties with a high degree of social and economic integration with the central committee that is measured through the commutation of volumes. An MSA is a similar, but smaller version of the concept of metropolitan. It is based on the committee of the central city with a minimum size of the urban group between 10.000 and 50.000 people, plus peripheral counties with a considerable social and economic integration.

Mieszkowski and Mills (1993) debated two classes of the theory of suburbanization in the United States. The first one, favored by urban theoreticians and experts in transportation, can be considered a theory of natural evolution. When the job is concentrated in the centre of the city, near a harbour or unloading outlet, the residential development takes place from inside to outside. To minimize the change in costs for business trips towards the Central Business District (CBD), a central area is developed first and as a field in central cities becomes absorbed, the development is moving in order to open grounds at periphery. The tendency of the middle class to live at periphery was consolidated by the innovations of transportation and the attention to travelling time. During the first half of the 19th century, when the cost of goods' transportation and people's commute between cities was high and urban areas were dense and small in what concerns their space, highly paid groups were located in the centre, while low paid groups were commuting to work.

Decentralization of residential activity was followed by employment and decentralization partly through the innovation of transport trucks for goods. The companies followed the population in the peripheries in order to ensure services to the inhabitants and also to take advantage of the low level of payment from peripheries and the price of land. This process strengthened: while the big employers became suburbanized the employees followed them.

In contrast, a second class of explanations for suburbanization focuses on tax and social problems of central cities: high taxes, low quality public schools and other governmental services, racial tensions, crimes, congestion and the low quality of the environment. These problems determine large numbers of inhabitants from rich central cities to migrate towards periphery, which leads to life quality and financial deterioration of central areas, which leads to the migration from the outside later on.

European Experience

There are around 120 metropolitan regions in the vast Europe of UE and of developed countries. These are extended urban areas with a population of 500.000 inhabitants or more and contain 60% (or 280 millions from 470 millions inhabitants) from the vast Europe. This is a standard of competitiveness and metropolitan prosperity and also the economic and social cohesion of Europe.

Metrex is a network of professionals from 40 metropolitan regions of Europe and areas that are involved in expressing and applying spatial planning and the development of strategies, policies, programs and projects at metropolitan level. Metrex was founded in 1996 within the framework of Metropolitan Conference in Glasgow with the support of European Committee for providing a method of efficient advancement of government for leading the change at metropolitan level and for answering to the European problems. Metrex promoted at Porto Convocation in 1999, at the initiative of Do Porto Metropolitan Area and having the support of The European Committee that had as a result 40 signatures in Metropolitan Magna Charta and it is associated with Practice Benchmark. These provided activities and initiatives for Metrex foundation. It is well known the fact that metropolitan spatial planning will not be efficient unless the necessary competences, possibilities and processes are organised. Competence refers to having the authority of choice, of implementation and it carefully guards the metropolitan spatial strategy. The possibilities consist in having knowledge and understanding in order to take decisions in a documented manner. This process means having the ways of regular monitoring and updating the strategy. These are the fundaments of effective planning of metropolitan space.

The main conceptions within the European process of metropolitanisation are: a maintained proximity of European metropolitan strategies will imply dense and mixed urban forms and also public transportation, the development of which is oriented and focused on cities. A polycentric approach of this kind from metropolitan areas will require an efficient metropolitan government. A sustained approach in order to improve the quality of urban life requires also social and economical integration, ambiance and spatial action at metropolitan level.

Romanian Urban System

The Romanian territorial reorganization from 1968 created 39 counties and consolidated the position of the new residence-cities. The competition between the cities of Romania was an unfair one, the residences having a clear advantage on other urban centers (small and medium size), especially those cities that kept this function until 1984 (Caracal, Câmpulung, Rădăuți, Dorohoi, Roman, Blaj etc.).

The delimitation between urban and rural became a hard job implying a lot of uncertainty together with the impossibility of limited grounds to have a stable delimitation. The difference between villages and urban areas does not consist only in the number of inhabitants and morphology, but also in different concentration of varied activities, people and cultures. Indicators of urbanization like the proportion of the population that lives in urban areas and the request of general patterns of evolution should be used with external precaution.

The urban population of the world represented approximately 3% of the global population in 1800, but it came close to 30% in 1950 and reached 50% in 2000.

It was supposed that until 2025, 60% of global population will live in urban areas with dozens of mega-cities that will be occupied by 20 million inhabitants or more.

The Romanian urban network is represented especially by small and medium cities that have less than 100.000 inhabitants representing 90% of the total number of cities, and more than half

of the number of those which have less than 20.000 inhabitants. Together with numerical and territorial expansion of the urban network, big cities with over 100.000 inhabitants had an important role in the development. Between 1966 and 2002 their number doubled and the population number increased, half of those cities have now between 200.000 and 400.000 inhabitants, while in Bucharest there are over 2 millions. Today there are 41 counties and the capital, Bucharest.

There are *four categories* of cities within the Romanian urban system:

Category "0" is represented by the capital, Bucharest. It has a national and European geo-strategic location thanks to its position at the intersection between important national axes and European communications.

Category "1" includes 11 counties' capitals (among which: Iaşi, Constanţa, Cluj-Napoca, Timişoara, Galaţi, Brăila, Bacău) with a population of over 200.000 inhabitants. Their geographical position is northern-central with a strong influence in their own territory. Their influence area is between 60-100 km with direct access to the main roads, railways and national and international airports.

Category "2" includes counties' capitals and cities with a population between 50.000 and 200.000 inhabitants and their influence area lies to 60-80 km. These cities have diverse economic basis and their demographical dimension has a secondary role.

Category "3" unites cities with a population between 5.000 and 30.000 inhabitants. Their important role is the local attraction with a range of 10-12 km. These have secondary functions (manufactures and constructions) and tertiary (social services and commerce) but also primary functions (mining, agriculture, fishing and forestry). Many of these cities have healthy resources. Their influence areas cover approximately 2/3 of the national territory which means that 1/3 of the country is outside any urban area of polarization. These are cities situated in scarcely populated areas. If we are referring to the total number of cities from Romania, the urban network is underdeveloped: there are 313 cities, while the optimum number for a country of Romania's size is of approximately 400-450. During the communist regime the relationship between important cities and their influence areas was influenced by the socialist industrialization, the nationalization of agriculture and by the way in which the activity of the urban system was organized. Industrialization appealed to the labor force from rural areas towards cities. After 1989 while the industry was reorganized, the relationship between cities and their influence area changed: the industrial capacity was mainly reduced which led to a decrease in the number of commuters with 1/3 as compared to their number in 1989.

Metropolitan Areas in Romania

Geographers define metropolis as "any big city, but especially urban centers that play the role of national or regional capital from the economic, cultural, administrative point of view, a high level in urban hierarchy with a population of over 1 billion inhabitants".

In the Romanian legislation there are two laws that refer to metropolitan areas: Law no. 351 from 6th of July 2001, concerning the Management Plan of the National Territory, section 4, which defines metropolitan areas as "area organised through association, through voluntary partnership between main urban centers (the capital of Romania and municipal authorities of first degree) and adjacent urban and rural colonization situated to distances of up to 30 km that establish relationships of cooperation at different levels". According to the definition 12 cities from Romania tried to develop a metropolitan area: Bucureşti, Iaşi, Constanţa, Cluj-Napoca, Timişoara, Galaţi, Craiova, Braşov, Ploieşti, Brăila, Oradea şi Bacău. It seems that voluntary association contributed to the complementary terms between colonizations and risk takers who are involved in local development. Law no 350/ 2001 concerning the Planning of Territory and

Urbanism defines metropolitan territory as "an area located near a great urban agglomeration, outlined by studies, in which the structure seems to be influenced by relations in the social, cultural, communication, economic field or public infrastructure".

Urban Conglomerations

Unlike other European countries and other parts of the world with the same political system, it is only in the 90s that it was established in Portugal a form of government delimited in two urban conglomerations, Lisbon and Porto, as a result of an attempt to rationalize the administration with the purpose of handling a plan and urban managerial problems thanks to political devising of local government and international competition between cities aiming at economic development. In a way, Portugal is against the ideas that overlapped the European political conceptions of the 80s, sustaining the dissolution of the double metropolitan government, being based more on political arguments linked to specific weaknesses of this government pattern displayed by many countries.

Still, many proposals of metropolitan government were made in Portugal, especially after the elimination of dictatorship in 1974. These proposals were based on two or three patterns of metropolitan government, the associative one (polycentric) and the double one, excluding the unitary pattern of government. In 1991 the associative pattern was adopted as being the easiest to implement and requiring no reorganization of local government, but with a very limited rate of success in application, because it was not capable to force municipalities to put an end to governmental policies (seen as harmful), but which could bring an improvement to metropolitan region as a whole.

There are revealed recent events of the working system of this institutional pattern, selecting by evaluation some of the mandates and ideas in the light of recent developments in territorial and dynamic structure, in the planning system and in connection with political changes since the beginning of 2002 at the level of municipality and government's politics. Most authorized agents evaluated the present pattern as negative, without the consensus between main political parties in this sense.

The Metropolitan Region Lisbon. Lisbon is a capital, but also the biggest city in Portugal. The Metropolitan Region Lisbon (MRL) is by far the biggest urban agglomeration in the country with 2.6 million inhabitants (25, 8% of the entire number of inhabitants of the country) and a surface of 3.213 Km². Its population represents approximately 77% of the entire Lisbon Region. Lisbon is the third biggest city from Iberian Peninsula, after Madrid and Barcelona. The second metropolitan region in Portugal is Porto with 1.2 millions, having low economic importance.

However, the metropolitan region remains focused on Lisbon and it is made up of 19 municipalities, different in size starting with Lisbon (with 556.797 inhabitants in 2001) up to suburbs like Sintra ((363.556 inhabitants), Loures (198.685 inhabitants), Amadora (174.788 inhabitants), up to municipalities almost rural like Alcochete (population 12.831). Lisbon reached its maximum number of inhabitants in 1981 which is decreasing nowadays.

Socio-Economic Implications of Metropolitan Areas in the Future of Europe

On November 7th 2006 the Federal Ministry of Transportation, Public Works and Urbanism requested the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), in the name of the future German presidency the drafting of an opinion about "European Metropolitan Areas: Socio-Economic Implications for the Future of Europe".

The section for economic and money union, for economic and social cohesion adopted its notice on the 29th of March 2007.

In the 435 Plenary Meeting on 25-26 April 2007 (the meeting was on April, 25th) the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) adopted the present notice with 125 votes in favour, none against and 5 abstentions. The present notice is the continuation of ECO/120 notice "Metropolitan Areas: Socio-Economic Implications for the Future of Europe". The two notices form a coherent whole.

Conclusions

In the last 50 years, the European space has changed and globalization is about to speed these transformations, leading to considerable consequences for gravitational centers of Europe, represented by metropolitan areas. These are in the best position for meeting the challenges and obtaining benefits from the opportunities resulted from these changes.

EESC feels like the evolution of metropolitan areas, just like national initiatives in the field must be the subject of an analysis and of some orientations with generalization within the Council and the Committee. A well structured debate at European level will provide a common perspective to national approaches, which will stimulate regional actors.

EESC feels that a better structured debate concerning metropolitan areas in Europe would stimulate them to successfully apply the Lisbon-Gothenburg Agenda, which could be included in the national programs of reform.

EESC notices that in the last years a vehement debate has taken place. The relation between big metropolises and Lisbon Strategy focuses more on socio-economic implications of these metropolises. This represents a step forward.

In many countries and regions, public authorities, as well as the private sector and civil society try to create necessary conditions for sustainable development of metropolitan areas and assure them competitiveness in Europe and worldwide. The evolution particularly observed in Germany is worth all the attention. The objective character of the debate is facilitated by studies made at university and federal level. The national and regional authorities were involved in inter-ministry conferences concerning metropolitan areas.

The urban politics of the Committee and the project of Territorial Agenda of the Council represent steps forward. These offer the frame of an ambitious urban politics. The Agenda underlines some specific characteristics of great metropolises. Yet, EESC notices that territorial Agenda is still uncertain in this respect.

Despite different structures and approaches from country to country, the challenges and ambitions of great urban regions are generally the same.

Lack of identity and the absence of an adequate government represent the weaknesses of a balanced development of metropolitan areas. Existing administrative entities are often very old and prevent soft adaptation.

In order to promote the success of metropolitan areas it becomes indispensable the hiring of national, regional and urban levels, which assumes legitimacy of decentralized authorities and will encourage the initiatives of the private sector and of nongovernmental organizations.

EESC notices again the lack of socio-economic and of environment protection data regarding metropolitan areas, data that could be comparable at European level. EESC considers that, as this should be undertaken at European and national level, it is necessary to monitor the performances of European metropolitan regions from the economic and social point of view but

also from environment protection perspective, in order to increase the awareness of the current situation in each region and to encourage the mobilization of those metropolitan areas.

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Prezent şi perspective în evoluţia turistică a zonelor urbane, periurbane şi metropolitane

Rezumat

Conceptul metropolitanizării este mai mult decât un simplu sinonim al creşterii urbane conform cu sensul acceptat şi statistic: un întreg pachet de tendinţe, ca de exemplu întinderea urbană, sau creşterea ratelor de urbanizare în spaţii deja puternic urbanizate. Fenomenul metropolitanizării depăşeşte toate aceste tendinţe, constituind un model în care procesul concentrării, legii, controlului, coordonării, şi creării de coduri sunt predominante faţă de celelalte moduri ale regulamentului. Metropola joacă un rol important în structurarea teritorială a activităţilor: atrage populaţia şi stimulează activităţi complementare acelora care sunt concentrate în acest centru şi le respinge pe cele din zonele de periferie. Se presupune că o metropolă trebuie să golească periferia îndepărtată, pentru a genera un fenomen al segmentării şi segregării teritoriale. Într-adevăr, concentraţia activităţilor specifice într-un singur loc generează o zonă de influenţă, probabil pentru a ilustra reperul teritorial al metropolei.