

Dear Reader,

You are holding the 2012 second issue of the North Hungarian Regional Strategic Papers.

Traditionally, this issue focuses on one of the emphasized topics of regional development. Yet, alongside the thematic focus of regional economic growth and development, a territorial perspective also prevails. Examining the actual economic and spatial development issues in a broader context of various regions of Transylvania and – where possible – defining specific development proposals are wider purposes of this journal which primarily deals with Northern Hungary rather than merely presenting an outlying region of its own.

The latest findings of territorial studies indicate the strategic significance of the so-called “Transylvanian Studies” on the Northern Hungarian region. According to these studies, the regions’ future transformations will be highly influenced by the economic-, demographic-, or political processes occurring in the nearby - distant or neighbouring regions. The neighbourhood relations are vital in shaping the development path of Northern Hungary. Further, the increased mobility of production factors and the regions’ greater international competitiveness justifies the increased analysis of the external environment of the region.

This is a particularly valid point in relation to the regions within the Carpathian Basin, considering that the expansion of narrower cross-sectional regional analyses are far better established by common cultural and economic aspects together with the integrated requisition of the existing natural risks.

Although the articles in the thematic section may seem to be heterogeneous at first, in fact they provide an analysis of the most important factors within regional development. The studies of Stănculescu, Varvari and Cristea, as well as of Cristea, Varvari and Benedek, deal with the competitiveness of the North Transylvanian companies in conjunction with the foreign direct investment analysis of Cluj County. The studies carried out by Vicsai and Cozma analyse the spatial coherency in tourism. Bajtalan, Blénessy, Deák and Szabó outline the perspectives of pursuing sustainable development in a micro-region of Szekler Land, whilst Bartók and Bartha examine the possibilities of supplying electricity to several villages in Harghita County. We found it important to include the study conducted by Anna Nagy which critically evaluates the Romanian regional development policy.

Certainly, the issue has retained its traditional headings next to its thematic, emphasized studies. Within the headline named “Facts”, Zoltán Nagy and Dóra Szendi analyse the demographic processes in Miskolc and its vicinity. The headline named “Workshop” introduces to the Reader the practical side of the regional scientific studies carried out at the University of Miskolc. Further, we bring your attention to the work of Katalin Nagy about the cultural route of Switzerland, published under the “Overview” headline.

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Summaries

Oana Stănculescu – Stefana A.D. Varvari – Marius Cristea

The competitiveness of companies in northern Transylvania – case study using the global utility theory

The paper is trying to emphasize how local competitiveness is transmitted and taken at regional level, what the determinants of these two concepts are and what the place of the counties in regional hierarchy and the place of the regions in national hierarchy are. Studying the most important indicators that characterize the private business environment, we were able to draw some conclusions regarding the most competitive counties from northern Transylvania and the factors that contribute to these results.

Marius Cristea – Stefana A.D. Varvari – József Benedek

Pros and cons of foreign direct investments on local economy A case-study on the Cluj County

Foreign direct investments represent an essential factor of economic development and growth at all levels: national, regional and local (county or municipality/city/commune). These investments can have both positive and negative impact on the local development depending mostly on the type of FDI taking into consideration the attraction factors for specific foreign investors. The authors try to underline these aspects by analyzing the FDI in Cluj county and taking the NOKIA investment in Cluj as a case study and presenting the benefits and also the problems it created for the local community.

Nóra Csilla Vicsai

Tourism in the Cluj-Napoca metropolitan area

Cluj-Napoca metropolitan area is composed by the town of Cluj-Napoca and other 17 territorial-administrative units. The area is characterized by diversity; the containing settlements offer a variety of opportunities, and it ends up in a wide range of forms of tourism. The core of tourism is Cluj-Napoca. First of all, the city hosts cultural (urban) tourism and business voyages. The secondary centre is Gilău and its surroundings: the site of Someş - Tarnița offers an opportunity to recreation, trekking, so it is a typical weekend tourism destination. However, transit tourism also makes its appearance, taking the advantage of the favourable geographical position. Transit tourism characterizes especially those settlements that are located along the Cluj-Napoca – Oradea highway. Different forms of tourism can complement each other: the metropolitan area provides opportunities for the development of an integrated tourism – therefore a research on tourism at a higher level, at the level of the metropolitan area worth it.

Cozma Lujza Tünde

North-West Transylvania's place and role in Romania's tourism

Tourism plays an increasing role in regional development worldwide and is getting more and more attention in Romania's development regions as well. North-Western Transylvania's position on national and wider European context is strengthened by its favourable geographical position, natural resources and values, developed transportation system, attractiveness from economic point of view, cultural diversity and valuable tourism potential. However, relatively little is known about North-Western Transylvania's specific position in the country's tourism. Therefore the aim of this study is to define the place and role of North-West Transylvania in the Romanian tourism. The key elements of the regional tourism offer are analyzed, along with the region's tourism performance in the last decade compared with other regions of the country. Besides the intensity of tourism flows and quantitative characteristics, the study also extends on the qualitative characteristics. In addition, in connection with the geographical environment of tourism, the study highlights the special segments of the tourism offer in North-Western Transylvania and comprehensively discusses the region's territorial aspects. Based on the results, it may be inferred whether the region has the ability to meet the increasing challenges of tourism or not, and thereby to contribute to territorial development.

Anna Nagy

**Regional development policy in Romania,
in the light of the 2007-2013 programming period**

Today in Romania, the regional development policy is almost exclusively in relation to the spending of structural and cohesion funds in the public debate. Journalists, politicians and experts are trying to offer cause-effect explanations in a more or less coherent way. The study tries to undergo this topic in a scientific manner, embedding the process of Romanian regionalization in a historical perspective. It also analyses the roots of the problems related to the actual programming period and seeks for future possibilities of adjustment.

Hunor Bajtalan – Gabriella Blénessy – Attila Deák – Tamás Szabó

For a sustainable Gheorgheni Microregion: paths of development and alternative strategies in a sustainable context

In this case study, four friends pledged themselves to present and share their ideas, desires accumulated over the years of their homeland. The task is not an easy one, because as we have all seen, despite the rich natural and cultural-historical endowment of the Gheorgheni Microregion, the new market oriented economical environment brought by the democratic transition mainly favoured the traditional core areas and big cities and less the provinces and the countryside. In this context, even with the ever widening possibilities of a more and more integrated Europe and the rebirth of local energies, the Gheorgheni Microregion could not take on a path of development and prosperity, but rather on one of continuous degradation and stagnation.

In relation to these circumstances, the aim of this paper is to give an in-depth analysis of the situation of the Gheorgheni Microregion through a holistic approach from a socio-economical perspective to a geographical context, nonetheless to identify the region's problems and tranche its future prospects in the concept of sustainability.

Blanka Bartók - Tamás Bartha

The role of solar energy in the electricity supply of dispersed rural villages in Harghita county

In the study, the settlements without electricity in Harghita county were analyzed where the infrastructure developments regarding conventional energy supply is still not economical. In the case of these households, an alternative solution was elaborated including solar energy use. Based on the technical and economic calculations, it could be confirmed that the solar energy use is a more efficient and sustainable way of electricity generation than the conventional one in that regions.

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