

ISSUES OF REGIONAL PATTERNS IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM

Daniela Ruxandra ANDREI, Rodica-Manuela GOGONEA,
Vergina CHIRÎTESCU, Monica-Paula RAȚIU¹

Abstract:

This paper conceptually addresses aspects of the relationship between tourism, regional development patterns and the sustainability process. It individualizes basic elements of regional development, by presenting the summarised analysis of regional patterns and indicators. It also mentions the place and role of tourism in the sustainable regional development process.

I highlighted the need of initiating and performing certain actions for inspiring and training a mentality appropriate to the contemporary kind of development that interacts with an emphasis on sustainable development in regions of reception, in order to define a new development perspective of tourism, in line with international standards.

Keywords: tourism, regional development theories, regional patterns, sustainable development

1. Introduction

Treated by several specialists, sustainable regional economic growth is analysed primarily from the concept of “sustainable regional economic development”. The aspect can be approached in relation to the following basic elements: environment, society and economy. These three important components outline a system determining and measuring the sustainable economic development image and the reciprocal actions between them.

The process of economic growth can be considered sustainable in economic, social and environmental terms, based on preventing and shutting down the actions of depletion of natural resources and environmental degradation.

Environmental protection and economic growth were seen diverging by Meadows *et al.* (1972) [1], which show the boundaries imposed by the limited character of the natural resources reserves on the economic growth and the impact of the latter on the environment². Step by step, we reach certain reconciliation. On this background, despite all significant differences existing between sustainability and sustainable development, these two terms come to be used as synonyms in this attempt at reconciliation.

¹ Author 1 is an assistant at the Romanian-American University of Bucharest, e-mail address: e-mail:ruxandrei@yahoo.com; Author 2 is at the Bucharest University of Economic Studies, e-mail address: manuela.gogonea@gmail.com; Author 3 is at the Romanian Academy, Institute of Agricultural Economics of Bucharest, Romania, e-mail address: v.chiritescu@yahoo.com; Author 4 is an assistant professor at the Romanian-American University of Bucharest, e-mail address: ratiu.monica.paula@profesor.rau.ro

² In 1972, The Club of Rome, in the *Limits to Growth*, show that long-term depletion of certain natural resources will limit the economic growth.

In order to maintain the ecosystem resilience, a criterion was shaped, limiting the economic activity volume, the consumption and the population, contributing to the advancing of opportunities for regeneration of global ecosystem¹[2].

The context presented enables an analysis of the sustainable development of tourism through regional development, based on the clarification of concepts such as region, regional development.

Regions are presented as a space of running overlapping processes, presented by R. Balme [3] as representing features of contemporary governance. Functional and institutional linkages are highlighted through the significant role of the regions. The region acts as first intermediary pawn between territorial and functional, then between local and national, but also as integrator of government policies.

Erdeli G [4] presents the region as territorial delimitation to guide the regional policy of the government towards reducing territorial imbalances identified between most developed and least developed areas and the best framework for implementing and assessing the regional development policy.

A significant component in defining a region is considered by Thise J.F. as the similarity that says that “places forming the region are, in one way or another, considered similar enough to be grouped together within the same spatial entity” [5]. This author presents the similarity by interlocking two sides:

- on the one hand, according to the principle of homogeneity - This concept has been used by geographers in the nineteenth century, through the similarity between places;

- on the other hand, according to the functional principle - the interlocking of two concepts, thus addressed by geographers and economists, context in which similarity is regarded by certain relationships between different places forming the region (*idem*).

In time, a weak correlation was noticed between borders of regions approached in terms of results based on statistical information and limits set with respect to their political and administrative boundaries. In this context, because of these inconsistencies, situations often appeared where specialists in forecasting draft regional development strategies that are not consistent with regional issues [6].

However, although definitions and boundaries aimed at functional economic criteria with precision and enhanced utility are approached, the processes of facing the impossibility of gathering comparable data and the dynamic limits position, which may change over time, represent impediments towards their applicability.

As regards the regional development, Polese M [7] presents it as a capacity of regions to produce (and sell) goods and services, and therefore a capacity to earn income by the population. Regional development disparities refer to differences between regions in their ability to provide opportunities to earn income for their residents.

This type of development requires shaping a functionalist reason of organizing economic life and are focuses towards a “territorial” reason: “*development will be able to meet the real needs of the population locally and by means of local values and resources and the participation of local people*” [8]. This phrase increasingly used in recent decades, “*regional development*”, is also approached by the United Nations to appoint efforts to better organize the space of populations and human activities [9]. Its goal is to

¹According to WWF(2008),the global mark already exceeds the regenerative capacity of the planet by approximately 30%.

improve the living conditions of the entire population, to implement a multi-dimensional reason as regards the development and to adopt the region as a basic unit to organize such activities [10].

The evolution of regional patterns is experiencing the phenomenon of disparity in development levels among regions, being more acute in the early or intermediate stage of economic development of a country. As mentioned by *Parr J.B. 1999* [11], this happens because the economic activity is not dispersed, but only at certain points and regions that enjoy competitive advantages: resources, access to markets, proximity to political and administrative centres, etc. A sustained economic growth of the country will lead to a maximum level of disparity between regions, where these disparities fall.

The interdependence of sustainability with regional development is seen very well at the level of tourism. This area is well suited to sustainable regional development, given that the practice of tourism activities is performed under environmental protection and rational use of resources. However, the development of regional tourism activities by constituents leads to a rational and responsible resource and results management based on environmental conservation and protection, representing a lever for economic recovery.

2. Tourism and Regional Patterns in Sustainable Development

Given the need for any country to develop simultaneously with meeting at the highest level the needs of its citizens, the context of world coexistence of various cultures, economic and social systems against the backdrop of sustainable development has emerged.

The analysis of spatial variations of Romanian tourism is gradually emerging from existing approaches worldwide, as regional study methods and techniques are discussed, as a consequence of economic growth theories formulated over time.

Taking into account geographic, demographic, economic and social criteria, the following areas were established and identified in Romania, as a result of applying the regional development strategy:

➤ *traditionally underdeveloped areas*, such as: areas of Botoșani and Vaslui counties (in the North-Eastern development region), Giurgiu and Teleorman counties (South-Muntenia region), Dolj and Olt counties (South-West Oltenia region), Maramureș and Bistrița-Năsăud (North-West region);

➤ *industrial declining areas*, most notably: areas of Botoșani and Suceava counties (North-Eastern region), Brăila and Buzău (South-East region), Giurgiu, Botoșani, Teleorman, Călărași (South-Muntenia region), Hunedoara (West region), Maramureș and Cluj (North-West region), Brașov (Central region);

➤ *poor infrastructure areas*, such as: areas in the Neamț County (North-Eastern region), Galați and Brăila (South-East region), Prahova, Călărași, Teleorman, Dâmbovița (South region), Gorj (South-West Oltenia region) Hunedoara (West region), Satu Mare (North-West region).

This classification is significant because of the interdependency of activity areas and the role of tourism in the process of economic and social recovery and completion.

The sources of regional economic development are the interaction result of activities of various areas (geography, public administration, economics, forecasting etc.).

However, in relation to the regional supply and functional relationships manifested in the settlement system, they disrupt the territorial flows configuration while outlining inequalities and imbalances that needed shaping certain regional growth theories.

Internationally, typological groups of regions identified the following categories with the highest frequency:

- ❖ difficult agricultural regions;
- ❖ declining or abandoned industrial regions;
- ❖ regions that bear a rapid increase pressure

Also, regions can be urban, rural, bordering, transnational, capital regions, declining industrial regions, regions with development problems (difficulties).

Regions can also fall into the following groups [12]:

- political regions - parts of a state which is at the boundary between federal and unitary states, with their own competences in terms of legislative and executive powers, but which retain a judiciary system only at central state-level (Spain, Italy);
- administrative regions – they are the classic regions, created through decentralization de jure of local territorial authorities as administrative autonomous (e.g. France);
- embedded regions - result of the creation of a unitary state by merging several states retaining some individuality (e.g. the UK, which today tends towards federalization);
- diverse regions - with regional limits established not only according to the territorial and political criterion, but also on other criteria, such as language and culture (Belgium before its transformation into a federal state);
- functional regions - created by devolution as simple constituencies of central state administration (Greece);
- regions formed by cooperation between smaller size areas - as institutionalized forms of cooperation between local territorial authorities (e.g. Romania).

D. L. Constantin [13] presents the **classical method of conceptualizing regions** through a classification of regions on three types:

- *homogeneous regions* in terms of key criteria, unifying (economic, geographic, social and political);
- *nodal regions (polarized)* - cohesion is the result of internal flows, of interdependence, relations polarized around a dominant centre (node);
- *regions for planning (programming)* - the unit is given by the administrative-territorial framework and the implementation of regional development policies and programs intended for that space.

Setting up the regional economic growth theories is strongly interrelated with territorial analyses made by outlining territorial trends in the application of regional strategies and policies.

The literature identifies three stages of the process of economic development [14]:

- the phase of production of support elements necessary for life (primary needs: food, housing, health services, etc.) and then extended widely;
- the phase of growth in living standards (standard of living);
- the phase in which individuals have a choice, accompanied by diminishing feelings of fear

At the basis of regional science underlying, there are theories of regional economic growth that were summarized as follows (Table 1):

Table 1 - Items of characterization of regional development theories

No.	Theory		Features	Authors with significant contribution
1.	Localization theories	Localisation based on transportation costs	Isolation of transportation costs as linear function of distance, from all other factors that influence the localisation of agricultural production and the use of the land	Johann Heinrich von Thunen, Wilhelm Launhardt, Rau Hermann, Max Weber
		Interdependence of localizations	Addressing market areas by determining the size, number and distribution in the cities from the area by analytical observations on consumer behaviour	Wilhem Roscher, Ernest Ross, Achille Loria, Max Weber, Harold Hotelling, Edward Camberlin, Abba Lerner, Hans Singer, Arthur Smitheis
		Theory on attraction areas	Correlation analysis of economic regions and national states	August Losch
		Localization theory based on interregional exchange	Achieving a balance between regions taking into account economies of scale and the specialization of labour force, favours spatial concentration of activities of certain areas	B. Ohlin
2.	The neoclassical theory of regional growth		It envisages analysing and interpreting the regional income and balance between regions, that occurs when there is an equalization of average wages	G.Borts L.Stain
3.	Growth poles theory		The growth effects are not propagated equally in all economic sectors, but especially in those considered “development locomotives”; The specific action is signalled, directed to complex economic units which, by their position and size, have a dominant role, determining the occurrence of territorial inequalities.	F.Perreux
4.	Theory of uneven development	<i>Theory of centre-periphery relationship</i>	The relations between the two areas can be considered true engines of development or determining the emergence and increase of inequality	John Friedmann, Stuart Holland, G. Myrdal
		<i>The theory of circular and cumulative causation</i>	Inequalities may be imbalances that, in their turn, drive the reaction of a system;	Th. Balogh, G. Myrdal, R. Prebisch,

			Factors mobility can be an unbalanced element, by guiding inputs, capital and labour to more developed and / or technologically advanced areas / regions, but also an element of rebalancing of imbalances	F. Hilgert
		<i>The theory of endogenous development</i>	Component elements are linked to critical theory based on the free market and the profitability of independent agents; It proposes the idea of a flexible economy, able to adapt to the outer environment and it is an alternative to economy based on large units	J. Friedman, W. Stohr
		<i>Theory of regional development in phases</i>	Any balanced spatial structure is the result of progressive development	Walt Whitman Rostow
		<i>Keynesian model at regional level</i>	Economic growth can be influenced by the demand; Explains the regional product through a multiplier of exports through an accelerator of investments and the exogenous growth trend in the region.	Hartman, Seckler
		<i>Regional decline theory</i>	Passed prosperity can be the carrier of germs of a deep decline in new economic and technological conditions (growth poles theory can explain the negative regional developments)	F.Perreux
		<i>Long cycle theory</i>	Space is allocated between growth poles, poles of attraction and intermediate regions	P. Nijkampf, J. Paelinick, Ph. Aydalot
		<i>Cluster theory</i>	Close relationships between companies and industries; It analyses the final element of a mechanism for dynamic development of the industry; The evolution of cluster phenomenon is influenced by changes in the competitive environment, the technologies in demand and company strategies	Michael E. Porter, Max Weber, Orjan Solvell Christian Ketels, Goran Lindqvist

Source: drafted by the theory presented by D. Antonescu [15]

In the economic regional theory and practice, concepts of convergence / divergence are rooted in neoclassical patterns of economic growth, being in the spotlight as a central topic of national or regional performance analyses [16].

Convergence is defined as a process by which different economic, social, political actors interact to diminish the gap between them. It is, in fact, an analysis of the way in which the economic social, monetary, financial and performance indicators of states / regions come together. It is the favourite concept of regional specialists as it best

uncovers the Community regional policy objectives: the balanced development of the territory, along with reducing inequalities and territorial valorisation. Convergence involves a wide range of actions closely linked to the strategic objectives of regional policy [17].

The theories of regional development confirm this (Table 2.2.):

➤ *the convergence of the development level* expressed by the level of development between regions which is transient and the difference that propagates adjustment processes (theory of international trade, migration theory, regional growth etc.);

➤ *the divergence of the level of development* between regions: the level of development between different regions increases, the convergence is impossible (the growth pole theory, of cumulative causation, the theory of centre-periphery, etc.).

Table 2 - Trends in regional development theories

The theory	Long-term trends	Regional development mechanism
<i>Neoclassical growth theory</i>	Convergence	Mobility of production factors of countries (capital, technology, labour force)
<i>Theory of export base</i>	Convergence	Investments in export activities Increased foreign demand
<i>Cumulative causation theory</i>	Divergence	Agglomeration savings in initially industrialized regions
<i>Growth pole theory</i>	Divergence	Stimulating industries in urban areas Dissemination of economic development in the area of influence
<i>Endogenous growth theories</i>	Divergence	Process flow Investment in human capital Effects of learning
<i>The new geographical economy</i>	Divergence	Agglomeration of industrial activities, driven by economies of scale, transport costs and demand Labour force mobility industry
<i>Institutionalist theories</i>	-	Political institutions (constitution, structure of government), economic institutions (property rights, etc.) and social institutions that influence economic growth

Source: Adapted by Benedek, 2004 [18]

The process of substantiating and applying theories of regional development manifests by means of research and analysis conducted, due to the use of multiple general patterns and techniques or specific to study areas of socio-economic phenomena, implicitly of tourism, underlying economic growth.

Regional science has enabled the application of various research patterns, known in the literature as **regional analysis patterns**, which can be summarized as follows:

❖ neoclassical patterns (single-sector neoclassical pattern without technical progress, single-sector neoclassical pattern with technical progress, the pattern of interregional mobility of factors of production etc.);

❖ patterns focused on the outer demand of the region (pattern focused on the role of export on economic growth, cumulative causation pattern, etc.)

However, the assessment of regional trends involves the application of patterns used in the study of overall economy (economic growth patterns, multi-criteria analysis

patterns, input-output patterns, etc.) in close interrelation with the methods and techniques of other disciplines of study: statistics, econometrics, forecasting, geography and so on.

Regionally, a synthesized classification from literature was drafted by D Antonescu [15]:

1. Classification of regional patterns depending on the origin and conception:
 - ✓ cybernetic-economic;
 - ✓ econometric;
 - ✓ decisional (taking into account several criteria, risk factors, uncertainty)
2. Classification of regional patterns depending on variables:
 - ✓ deterministic (known sizes);
 - ✓ stochastic / probabilistic
3. Classification of regional patterns depending on the time factor:
 - ✓ static;
 - ✓ dynamic (short, medium or long term).

A basic element in measuring regional development is the system of indicators. The most used indicators are: the region's total output (measured in total - gross output of a region, the region's gross domestic product, the region's net domestic product, etc.), the output per employed person, the output per capita [19].

The use of one or another of these measuring indicators of dynamics of regional development is very important because, on the one hand, the choice must be consistent with the purpose of measuring, and, on the other hand, it determines the drawing of various conclusions as regards the real situation of regional disparities. For example, the total output is used as an indicator signifying the productive capacity of a region, the output per employed person is an indicator referring to the productivity of the region determining the competitiveness of a region, and the output per capita indicates the economic welfare of the region [13]. We can therefore say that there is no "best" indicator, each of them being useful depending on the measurement purpose.

The most widely used indicator to measure the levels of development between regions is the gross domestic income per capita (GDP / capita), which is applied by the European Union to measure development disparities between regions, including for the indicative financial allocation between its regions in terms of cohesion policy.

Several authors believe that other indicators should be considered in the measurement of regional development disparities, living and existing facilities ("amenities") having great significance in the welfare of the inhabitants of a region [20].

The most used methods for assessing regional disparities are structured in a system of indicators which determine the degree of concentration and territorial distribution of activities at regional level (coefficient of localization, localization share, indicators of concentration / diversification, indicators quantifying the mobility in space).

3. Conclusion

In the sustainable development, tourism plays a major role in the process of observing and promoting the general objectives of the society. The context leads to its orientation towards the establishment of balance between tourism activities and the sustainable development ones as foundation in the regional economic development process.

Tourism, the regional economic development essence, is presented in the literature through numerous studies conducted at the level of various economies and regions nationwide or worldwide.

Regional development theories, regional analysis patterns, the assessment of regional trends, in interdependence with tourism, stood at the basis of regional science foundation. This justifies the choice of synthetic analysis thereof and of highlighting the significant link between regional development patterns and tourism sustainable development.

In this context, the performance of tourism activities and their intensity are in line with the elements which determine the interest of tourists, but also the facilities and services required for their accomplishment. To address tourism at national or regional level, the following concepts should be very well defined: tourism heritage, tourism potential, tourism activities, sightseeing, tourist village, tourist centre, tourism axis, tourist area, tourist region etc.

Romanian tourism spatial variations, the definition of regional study patterns and techniques should be outlined in order to present the conjuncture of tourism at regional level. However, the application of regional policies aims at identifying and mitigating regional disparities manifested between regional or national economic systems.

Treating the essential coordinates of the sphere of knowledge, understanding and application of tourism activities, and how they manifest regionally, in terms of sustainable development shall include:

- developing a conceptual framework about tourism in inseparable relation with the plan of regional development and economic growth while ensuring sustainability;
- analysing the scientific sources and evolution of regional development patterns;
- identifying and analysing the relevance of indicators to quantify regional tourism disparities and outcome thereof on the economic growth;
- detecting the methodologies and methods applied to information regarding tourism activity components and on customizing data on the eight development regions of Romania, and its results at micro and macroeconomic level with impact on the same;
- customizing the modelling of information and results simultaneously with the analysis between tourism, regional development and economic growth

Decisions included in the National Strategy of Sustainable Social and Economic Development on medium-term consider tourism as a priority, considering that it is able to contribute with a significant share to the economic recovery and relaunching of Romania, by widening its role within the sustainable economic growth.

The process of changing the tourism product from the enshrined values to those of international standards requires initiating and developing actions involving on the one hand the development of processes of education and training of a mentality appropriate to the current type of development, and on the other hand an increase in sustainable development in the reception regions. This emphasis process involves the manifestation in time and space of environment-economy relationship, leading to the establishment of a balance between negative and positive effects achieved as a result of the performance of tourist activities.

References:

1. Meadows, D.H., Meadows D.L. and Randers, J. (1972), *The Limits to Growth. A Report for the Club of Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind*, Universe Books and Potomac Associates, New York.
2. Common, M. and Stagl, S. (2005), *Ecological Economics. An Introduction*, Cambridge University Press, *Rome's Project on the Predicament of Mankind*, Universe Books and Potomac Associates, New York.
3. R Balme - *Les politiques du neo-regionalisme*, Economica Publishing House, Paris, 1996, p.39
4. Erdeli G – *Dictionar de geografie Umană*, Corint Publishing House, Bucharest, 1999
5. Thisse Jacques-Francois (2000) *Agglomeration and regional imbalance: Why? And is it bad?*, EIB Papers, Vol. 5, No 2
6. Dawkins Casey G. (2003) *Regional development theory: Conceptual Foundations, Classic works, and recent developments*, Journal of Planning Literature, SAGE Publications
7. Polese Mario (1999) *From regional development to local development: on the life, death and rebirth (?) of regional science as a policy relevant science*, Canadian journal of regional science, XXII:3, pp. 299-314
8. Ph. Aydalot, *Economie Régionale et Urbaine*, Economica Publishing House, Paris, 1985, p. 109. Although proponent of the idea that development is determined by the existence of external impulses, Aydalot recognizes that this is not enough and should be supported within the region.
9. Site-ul United Nations Regional Information Centre, www.unric.org
10. D. W. Edgington, A. L. Fernandez, *The Changing Context of Regional Development*, In: D. W. Edgington, A. L. Fernandez, C. P. Hoshino, *New Regions: Concepts, Issues, and Practices*; vol. 2, Ed. Greenwood Press, Westport, 2001, pp. 3-17.
11. Parr B. John (1999) *Growth Pole Strategies in Regional economic planning: a Retrospective view. Part 2. Implementation and Outcome*, Urban Studies, Vol. 36, No. 8, SAGE Publications
12. Antonescu D., Popa F. – *Decentralisation and regional disparities in the context of the new cohesion policy*, 2014 (<http://www.revecon.ro/articles/2014-1/2014-1-8.pdf>).
13. Constantin Luminița Daniela (2004) - *Elemente fundamentale de economie regională*, ASE Publishing House, Bucharest
14. Michael P. Todaro, (1992), *Economics for a Developing World: An Introduction to Principles, Problems and Policies for Development*
15. D. Antonescu – *Dezvoltarea regională- tendințe, mecanisme, instituții*, Top From Publishing House, Bucharest, 2011, p.15-38
16. Iancu A.- *Problema convergenței economice, Studiu introductiv – Proiectului „Creșterea economică, ocuparea și competitivitatea în economia bazată pe cunoaștere”*, Programul CEEX 05-08-nr.24/05.10.2005,
17. (<http://store.ectap.ro/suplimente/supliment.pdf>)
18. <http://www.mdrap.ro/dezvoltare-teritoriala/cooperare-si-coeziune-teritoriala/coeziune-teritoriala>
19. I. Trincă – *Rolul orașelor mici în dezvoltarea intraregională. Studiu de caz: Regiunea de dezvoltare Sud-Est*, rezumatul tezei de doctorat, The University of Bucharest, „Simion Mehedinți” PhD School, Bucharest, 2011, p.9, <http://www.scribd.com/doc/118946259/teza#scribd>
20. Thisse Jacques-Francois (2000) *Agglomeration and regional imbalance: Why? And is it bad?*, EIB Papers, Vol. 5, No 2