THE ECONOMYAND DIVERSIFICATION POSSIBILITIES OF THE TIMIŞ-TORONTAL MICROREGION

ECONOMIA MICROREGIUNII TIMIŞ-TORONTAL ŞI POSIBILTĂŢILE DE DIVERSIFICARE A ACESTEIA

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Abstract: *The Timiş-Torontal Microregion, due to its geographic position in the county and having a border with Serbia, offers good conditions for economical development. Agriculture is a strong point of the Microregion because it owns land of good and very good quality and also because of the optimal climate conditions that enhance its development.*
In the present paper the authors propose a study of the actual status of the Microregion's economy and its development possibilities, so that it becomes competitive with the economy of the developed countries in the European Union.

Key words: *economy, agriculture, industry, development*

INTRODUCTION

The Timiş-Torontal Microregion is situated in the West part of Romania, respectively in the South part of the Timiş County, being delimitated at South and South-West by the border with the Serbian Republic, at East by Caraş-Severin County and at North by the Timişoara Municipality. The surface of the administrative territory of the Timiş-Torontal Microregion is of 1.447 km^2, representing 17% of the total surface of Timiş County.



Fig 1. Territory delimitation of the Timiş-Torontal Microregion

The Microregion consists of 3 small towns that do not exceed 7.000 inhabitants each: Deta, Gătaia, Ciacova and 11 localities ranked as communes: Birda, Banloc, Denta, Giera, Ghilad, Jebel, Jamu Mare, Liebling, Moravița, Pădureni and Voiteg.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

As a working method the following were used: field study, data gathering, observation, data processing and comparative analysis.

1. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The social and economical activity of the Microregion gravitates around the three cities, with a plus for Deta, which polarizes the largest part of the area through its industrial activity, excelling through textile, leather and food industry and also through the concentration of banking, health and educational activities. However, the area is weakly represented by industry, being mostly agrarian, with a developed and recognized cult

of the people for work and property.

1. AGRICULTURE

With a few small exceptions, of approximately 1000 forest ha, the land is agrarian, from which 75% is arable. Practicing agriculture is encouraged in the region by the temperate continental climate and also the inhabitant's respect for the land. The agricultural surfaces are worked individually, in agricultural associations, exploitations with legal personality and family exploitations.

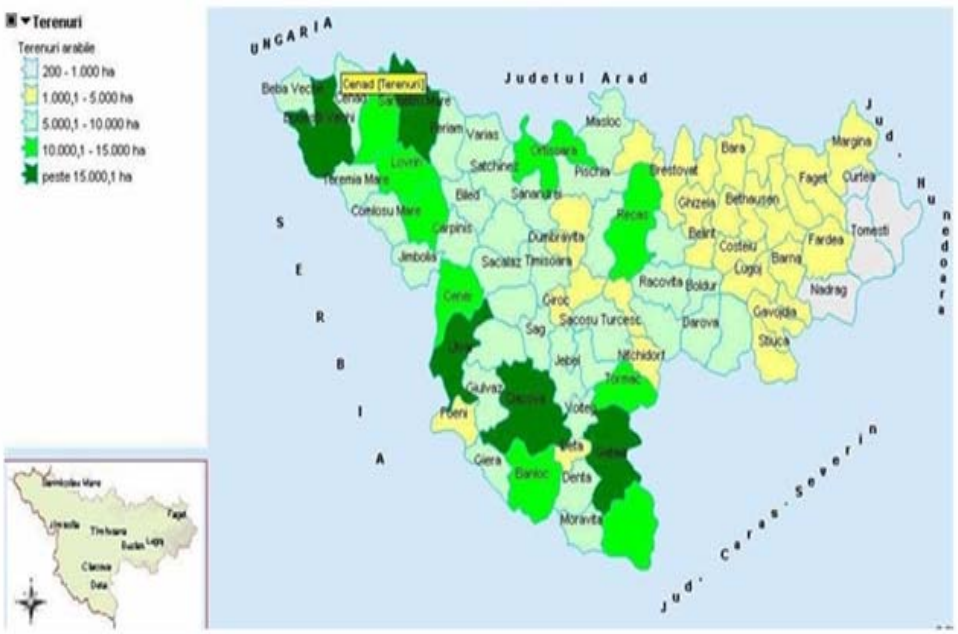


Fig. 2. Arable land structure

Considering the crop structure, we observe a specialization for cultivating wheat, barley, corn, sunflower and in the last years large farms introduced cole on vast areas. Animal breeding occupies an important place in agriculture, with priority to growing cattle, sheep and swine.

In the Microregion, livestock and especially swine breeding rank a top position in Romania through SC. SMITHFIELD. S.A., which produces a

livestock of approximately 1 million pigs per year. The breeding and fattening of cattle for sacrifice is also well represented, while the stock of milk cows decreased drastically after 1989, starting new farms being a necessity.

The transition affected both the annually cultivated surfaces and the effects of works and technologies used for obtaining products. Therefore, if until 1997 any surface was cultivated and exploited intensively, we have reached nowadays a period when a large part of the lands remained uncultivated for years. This led to a decontamination of pesticides on the land, which allows these areas to be used for ecological agriculture.

After 1989, the size and form of land exploitation suffered alterations, from forming small exploitations of 1-5 ha to subsequently reaching 200-300 ha, while a number of 14 agricultural exploitations own over 1000 ha of agrarian land.

Regarding the workforce implicated in this sector, the issue of qualification is gradually brought into discussion due to the fact that it is a matter of extreme necessity in assuring a better usage of agricultural machines and equipment. This aspect will accentuate more in the near future.

Specialized assistance in the agricultural domain is assured through the Agrarian Chambers which are subordinated to the Agrarian Direction of the Timiş County.

Industry is weakly developed at the Microregion's level. The most important firms are represented at the level of Deta and Gătaia cities and also through small local enterprises or ones belonging to foreign investors, both part of other localities. Small and medium enterprises are primarily focused on wood, milk products, bakery products, textiles, leather and metal manufactory processing. In the described area a number of 558 commercial societies with different activities were identified.

The largest firms that develop their activity in this area can be found in Deta, respectively S.C.TAKATA SA, SC. PREVENT SA, and SC TRW.SA. The 3 enterprises are of medium dimensions and have a textile profile. They were build from scratch and are now among the most modern units in Eastern Europe in this domain. These foreign capital societies have about 1900, intercepting the city's workforce and also the one from nearby localities. These societies have equipped till now approximately 2.200.000

cars with hand wheels and seat covers.

From the **traditional** crafts practiced at the Microregion's level we can find: ***cartwright, well sinker, blacksmith, wool carding, herdsman, tailor, shoemaker.*** Unfortunately, these crafts are hardly practiced nowadays, small craftsmen being in danger of extinction. Therefore, it is imposed the development of measures that will revive some of the old crafts, which can lead to the growth of the area's touristic potential. This will also represent a mean of economical development through sustaining local handicraft cooperatives.

2. COMMERCE

At the Microregion's level there are numerous commercial societies that supply the population with a large part of the necessary products. However, there is a limited number of units that commercialize products with local specificity.

3. PUBLIC SERVICES

Alimentation with drinkable water and sewage services, collecting and destroying wastage, local transportation, public illumination, TV cable and Internet, telephony and electric power distribution are assured by commercial societies in the domain, with public or private capital.

4. TOURISM AND THE AREA'S TOURISTIC OBJECTIVES

The main touristic objectives are represented by castles, museums and churches, from which we note the following: Banloc Castle, Saint Joseph Monastery from Partoş, Ciacova Castle, Săraca Monastery from Gătaia, Mociuni Mansion, Saint George Monastery in Birda. From the total of **333 historical monuments** that are in the evidence of the Culture and Cults Ministry in the Timis County there are **29 monuments** in the Timiş-Torontal Microregion.

CONCLUSIONS

Due to the fact that the Timis- Torontal, Microregion is quite weakly developed under the aspect of industry the local authorities should focus on economical development through facilitating investments, the growth of the Microregion's attractiveness through encouraging the local undertaking spirit as well as raising the workforce's competitiveness.

Agriculture, through favorable conditions and the owned workforce, must become competitive with the agriculture of the European Union. There are 18 agricultural exploitations of large dimensions that concentrate a large part of the arable land in the area. Unfortunately there is a lot of uncultivated terrain that should be rented or sold by the owners with no possibility of cultivating it. Medium sized farms should also be founded as they lack in the area.

Geographically positioned at the intersection of cross-border areas, the Microregion has an important role in the exterior merchandise commerce.

Measures for renovation and modernization of existing touristic points in the Microregion are needed, in order to enhance the existent touristic potential.

All these revival measures of the Microregion's economy can be financed from the European funds that Romania disposes of.

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