

## Preface

In a European space where diversity is unquestioned and increasingly provides the potential for the development of a very appealing and inspiring territorial mosaic, inequalities are becoming more entrenched and exacerbate existing problems, thus perpetuating a widespread crisis across all sectors of society. This scenario, however, must be reversed by implementing structural, yet sustainable and inclusive measures which revitalise the European territory in line with new directives from the European Commission. This is the only way to overcome the current crisis and prepare Europe to reposition its standing from a global perspective.

Effectively, through the "Europe 2020" strategy, emphasis is being placed on smart, widespread development focusing on knowledge, innovation, education and the digital society. The social aspect is further enhanced and complemented by an emphasis on inclusion, which aims to reduce unemployment and poverty. Moreover, these dynamics are also supposed to tend towards the sustainable by making increasingly efficient use of endogenous resources, while simultaneously strengthening competitiveness. Thus, a more social European economy is envisaged, in a scenario characterised by effective territorial cohesion.

The situation, however, continues to be very problematic, which is why it is imperative in Europe to institute scientific studies which empower not only the scientific community but also civil society with the capacity to intervene in the management and planning of the territory in order to transform the current situation. It is in this context that the second volume of "The Overarching Issues of the European Space", in which the European space continues to be a priority, but where an opening up to the global context is already evident, has been published. Essentially, regional policies need rethinking in order to incorporate sustainable and inclusive development from a multidisciplinary and inter-university perspective; one which does not ignore the diversity of spaces and their respective dynamics.

It is under these circumstances that the diverse issues have been approached in this publication, and dealt with in three parts. In the first section, economic as well as sustainability issues are highlighted from the point of view of effective spatial planning. The presentation focuses on various situations in Portugal, Romania, Croatia and Galicia. It is in the rural areas, however, where the most worrying scenarios are found, which is why it will come as no surprise that Chapter I begins with a rural example where population decline is clear but, as a result of a municipal strategy, the area is being revitalised. In this case, the chief driving forces are ecotourism, and the revival of local traditions and culture. Thus, efforts to implement sustainable, multi-functional development are being made by combining the restoration of activities and traditions with innovation.

Another very problematic area is that of Romania, where one finds evidence of an economy and a social framework experiencing difficulties in adapting to an increasingly globalised market. Nevertheless, revitalising strategies are emerging, especially now that policy priorities aimed at overcoming the crisis have been identified. One priority focused on transnational investments, exemplified here by a multinational corporation (MNC). Taking advantage of the weaknesses of the Romanian domestic market, and production factors as well as having access to financial assets at much more favourable terms than those obtained by Romanian companies, this transnational established itself, while simultaneously becoming partly responsible for institutionalising a very complex local framework.

Against this background, there is a need to understand the impact of the "underground economy" in Romania which covers very diverse and complex accounting activities. Family businesses have great influence on the local economy, although this varies according to the degree of development and the relative permissiveness of those holding political power. Apart from the multiplicity of activities and factors affecting the underground economy, it is politically and financially "invisible", which makes it difficult to monitor. Despite these difficulties, it was estimated that its value exceeded 37% of Romanian GDP in 2011 (NIS).

Nevertheless, Romania has potential in many areas which lend credence to sustainable development forecasts, involving areas of activity such as tourism, revitalising natural resources and landscapes, and promoting architectural or cultural resources. Industrial forestry and agro-forestry can be added to these activities, although they do require incentives. (Re)structuring the territory and developing it sustainably is the only way to overcome the prevailing weaknesses.

Given the territorial diversity of Europe, however, strategies conducive to the development of its spaces differ, as is evident in respect of the protected natural spaces in Galicia. It already has a history of environmental policy which takes account not only of the specifics of the local socio-economic context, but also policy development and cultural aspects. The main objective, however, has always been nature conservation from a multi-faceted perspective.

Conversely, although beset by numerous difficulties, agricultural areas are going to be modernised, with the emphasis on continuity, thereby linking innovation with tradition in a context where sustainability is assured. To this end, the impact of the Common Agricultural Policy needs to be addressed, highlighting the new paradigms established for the period 2014-2020, in addition to reflecting agreements concluded between EU and non-EU countries. Thus, legal mechanisms, in particular those related to intellectual property, designations of origin and matters associated with consumption, come to the fore. In effect, development of the agricultural sector has to be reconciled with the existing legal framework.

Entrepreneurship and innovation, in turn, must also exist within in a sustainable framework, and fortunately, there are many examples of success in this regard. It is against this backdrop that

mention is made of organic animal husbandry, the Bisara breed of pig being a case in point. Stocks of this indigenous breed led almost to extinction because of the intensification of livestock production are currently being built up, thereby contributing to the revitalisation of not only the local economy, but also regional and national economies, indicative of consumers' growing appetite for organic products.

When we focus our attention on coastal areas, they are usually more densely populated and have a higher concentration of economic activities, but in a context where diversity persists, as it does in the remaining rural areas nearby. One such example is located on the Croatian coast, where water scarcity is linked to the calcareous soil (karst landscape of Dalmatia). Traditionally, intensive grazing used to take place here. This, combined with climatic changes and changes in technology and the cultural profile of its residents, has altered these landscapes completely. In extreme cases, deforestation and desertification has been observed. From the second half of the twentieth century, however, the abandonment of these soils made natural reforestation possible, bringing new life to these landscapes, albeit from a different perspective where technical and cultural innovation, combined with tradition, are evident.

Yet local and regional development is increasingly based on tourism and innovation, which is why the second part of this book is dedicated to this subject. Although tourism is more concentrated in urban centres, if in the community space until the 1990s took advantage of the economic aspects associated with it, tourism is now gradually (re)discovering the social and environmental and, increasingly, the cultural aspects. This gave rise to the Cultural Capitals of Europe, exemplified here by Guimarães, awarded the title in 2012. Implementation of these mega events has numerous consequences, covering not only the urban centre in question, but also the municipality and the region in which it is situated. Obviously, there are negative impacts, but in the case of Guimarães, the involvement of residents and local associations in the organisation had a positive effect, as can be seen from the news published in the local, regional and national press.

Directly related to tourism is the phenomenon of secondary residence. In Portugal, until 1960, this was restricted to rural areas. Then, at a later stage, which lasted until the 1980s, the growth of secondary residences became conspicuous, particularly in coastal areas. Subsequently, its expansion was undeniable, associated with tourism or leisure, whether in the rural or coastal areas and taking many different forms. This is one indicator which not only enables the detection of landscape changes, but also allows the enhancement of the cultural and economic profile of the Europeans to be confirmed.

When it is a question of focusing on the importance of tourism and its impacts as a trigger or stimulation for a rural area, one has to note the Douro Region in the north-east of Portugal. Set in an exceptional vineyard landscape, and declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, it has progressively highlighted the multi-faceted nature of agricultural holdings, combining the

production of wines with their marketing, and tourism. Thus, rural tourism and enotourism units have been established in rural areas, as have high-quality hotel properties, all of which are scattered across the landscape. The consequences were obvious; young people with technical skills were attracted to the region, but there has also been a considerable influx of tourists. These results were only possible because an appealing scenario, derived from the World Heritage designation of this space, was combined with a widespread publicity of both of the landscape and Port wine products.

If, however, we look at the extreme south-east of Europe, at Bulgaria, where the natural, social and cultural environments are different from the ones discussed above, as is the political background, we see that once again, tourism emerges as a strategy for local and regional development. As a country with an excellent architectural, historical and cultural heritage in addition to the wealth of its landscapes and natural environment, Bulgaria is one of the countries which prompted the idea of "extending the tourist map of Europe eastwards". The north-east of the country, although peripheral, has a superb heritage covering various periods of its history, which is currently being promoted in terms of tourism. This is how places of historical and cultural interest vital to the future relationships between culture, tourism, the region and development come into their own.

In this scenario which highlights not only the country's historical and cultural heritage, but also that of its economy and landscape, mention must be made of what might be termed its most famous *ex libris*: Bulgaria's Rose Valley. As the flower most emblematic of Bulgaria, the rose has enabled the transformation of Rose Valley into a cultural and historical attraction attached to which is a vast range of economic activities associated with this flower. Apart from extensive media coverage surrounding the first international exhibitions held in the USA, the technological development and improvements in production involved in the transformation process related to roses has been remarkable, and has given rise to intense local dynamism. Combining these changes with the tourist component and national pride has, in fact, led to the development of a region, and with it, the development of Bulgaria itself.

Yet it is in the urban areas that strategic focus on tourism has been most pronounced, as evidenced by the case of Santiago de Compostela, located in Galicia, in the north-west of Spain. An historic city, and a World Heritage Site since 1985, whose development is rooted in cultural and religious tourism, Santiago de Compostela has also suffered constraints as a consequence of rapid urban expansion, which has been particularly visible since the second half of the twentieth century. One such constraint is mobility in the old city centre. Despite authorities limiting road traffic and improving pedestrian routes, touristic expansion has, in fact, created challenges in terms of the flow of traffic in the old city centre, which has forced the adoption of a proactive and dynamic mobility policy. Fortunately the results are already remarkable.

If we invest in the "cultural landscape", adopting strategies for tourism development become essential. Indeed, although the interest in a landscape may be characterised by great subjectivity, its geographical location and physical substrate, the functional elements and its "cultural and symbolic messages" cannot be ignored. In this regard, the number of such landscapes is on the increase, as is their exploitation. Today, incidentally, landscapes – representations which are projected in space – can also be "created", and territorialised in entertainment and leisure environments. A case in point is theme parks, which are also discussed in this publication. Tourism, in all its diverse forms, is undeniably one of the components in global development.

By contrast, in today's society, culture and interculturalism are increasingly made up of unavoidable circumstances, when viewed from a social development perspective. This is the subject of the third part of this publication.

One of the problems concerns demographic change, its trends and their implications, as illustrated in the case of Galicia. Analysis of the demographic picture during the twentieth century and beginning of this one reveals a very asymmetric evolution, marked by emigration and by the urbanisation process experienced since 1960. There is, effectively, a clear distinction in the Galician territory between the western, coastal area, where the progressive urban concentration has positively differentiated this space, and the rest of the territory, strikingly characterised as it is by sharp depopulation, especially in more peripheral areas. Projecting current data to the 2030 horizon only serves to accentuate these territorial asymmetries. This is a frequently recurring image in the European space. Will implementation of new strategies associated with Horizon 2020 reverse this trend?

Even when the analysis is confined to examining features of the social context and socio-cultural profile of Europeans, and the more pronounced historical differences in central and northern Europe are set aside, in the face of high unemployment and extreme inequalities highlighted by the current crisis, the risks of social exclusion are set to increase further. This provides compelling reasons for the state and society to invest in new forms of social intervention. We have therefore highlighted the potential strengths of a solidarity-based/social economy which promotes employment and entrepreneurship, strengthens social cohesion and citizenship, and effectively combats social exclusion. To this end, entrepreneurship has to be combined with innovation, but in a context where social responsibility constitutes a policy aimed at combating unemployment, poverty and social exclusion. With a solidarity-based economy, jobs are created which contribute to local development, most often embodied in initiatives such as outreach services, microcredit programmes and volunteering. This brings a new paradigm of solidarity involving social and territorial intervention to the fore.

In turn, following the growing relevance of mobility, particularly in Europe, there has been an increase in intercultural contact and cohabitation with cultural diversity on the one hand, while on

the other, an increased incidence of conflicts involving discrimination and racism. Given the undeniable cultural plurality due to the existence of large migration flows, different cultures with different identities are cohabiting effectively, but there are also numerous stereotypes, prejudices and instances of discrimination. Mitigating these conflicts requires the active promotion of peaceful coexistence and the acquisition of intercultural skills.

When focusing on the importance of literacy and technical training as a means of social inclusion, an analysis of its current impact is required, but so, too, is a retrospective view to corroborate in what way this aspect has always been significant, albeit very different, especially in social terms. An excellent example arises when discussing the importance of books in the structuring of modern Europe, divided between two distinct attitudes: the Catholic and the Protestant. This aspect was analysed by examining the thematic make-up of libraries and the different ways of reading, which highlighted different paths and hence unequal outcomes in this European structure.

By repositioning ourselves in the present, however, when teaching geography, we must question its importance in making rural areas more dynamic, whether the focus is on tourism or industrial development. By training teachers of geography and history at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at the University of Porto, various competences have been developed, which, using particular examples, demonstrate how prospective teachers can apply motivational teaching emphasising the development of Portuguese rural areas in practice.

Training is therefore a key component in today's society. This is confirmed when one reconsiders the problem of social exclusion people of "Romani" ethnicity, a social group with strong representation in countries of the former Communist Bloc. After the collapse of the Communist Bloc, conditions were created for the institutionalisation of extremism, including violence against the Romani. In a set of circumstances where industrial decline was undeniable and the lack of literacy and training, together with a high rate of unemployment, became the chief issues relevant to this social group, Gypsies came to depend on social support, yet were suffering extensive restrictions. Given the above, it became necessary to assess the degree of their inclusion in Croatian society, or, conversely, the level of xenophobia. To this end, we applied the Bogardus social distance scale in Medimurje County where Gypsies have a large representation. It was concluded that in areas where the physical distance between the ethnic "Romani" and the resident population is reduced and inter-ethnic contacts are frequent, the social distance increases.

But this problem of lack of inclusion is not the only one in Europe; there are many examples, and occurrences of conflicts. One such conflict which had a strong impact occurred in Kosovo. Kosovo, a territory which has suffered the effects of a history full of vicissitudes, unilaterally declared itself independent from Serbia in 2008, which caused various reactions internationally.

It was recognised as an independent nation by 90 countries, 22 of which are member states of the European Union. With a very weak economy and a Muslim population of about 2 million people, mostly ethnic Albanians, Kosovo exemplifies one conflict which remains latent in Europe, but which requires attention and consensual resolution, and one which will need to combine the social aspect with environmental, economic, and political considerations.

In short, in a European space where the territorial and cultural pluralities are indisputable, this publication ventures to promote a multidisciplinary and inter-university approach, and involves the collaboration of Bulgarian, Romanian, Croatian, Spanish and Portuguese experts. Although territories which differ markedly from one another have been highlighted, this publication is based on comparative studies which exemplify problematic situations, but more importantly, showcase development strategies worthy of implementation. Indeed, despite the obstacles to be overcome and very different histories and prevailing policy frameworks, innovative measures are emerging and new development strategies are being implemented, regardless of the country to which they relate. Thus, the potential inherent in indigenous, local resources and distinctive heritage, rethinking territorial politics can be realised, from the perspective of creating synergies to preserve the environment, and bring structure to spatial planning, social cohesion and economic recovery.

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