

Heritage as an alternative driver for sustainable development and economic recovery in South East Europe

The Sustainable Local Development in Romania - Key Issues for Heritage Sector

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Abstract

The increasing interest for local development came amid global economical, social and political changes. The globalization and the international economic crisis, the increasing phenomenon of relocation of businesses, internal structures of large industrial groups, and institutionalizing local autonomy as a European principle made the discussions about local development to be the subject of interest to the academic world, but especially for policy makers. For Romanian public policy, the sustainable local development became a strategically tool to sustain the heritage sector (public and private) and constitutes the goals of national strategies on social and economical development. Our paper aim is to reveal the level of Romanian sustainable local development in the context of European principles applied and to analyze the impact at the local communities as an important means of valuing regional and local heritage. This vision of the community about its future development should be shared with all relevant actors at local and translated into a set of specific objectives and a clear action plan to provide good governance. The paper includes some explorative conceptual aspect focused on theoretical and practical analysis of sustainable local development, using the empirical data provided by the strategic documents and by Euro stat in order to respond to the following aspects: to highlight the scientific literature concerning the sustainable local development; to analyze the legal requirements (European and Romanian rules) of local development and heritage in Romania; to analyze from economical point of view the impact of local development and the implications on the local and regional heritage.

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1. Introduction

Sustainable development is a controversial concept, with lots of meanings. A classical definition of sustainable development was produced by the Brundtland report (named *Our Common Future*) in 1987 and implies *the meeting*

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the needs of present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. This definition is considered political fudge (Middleton et. al, 1993) with the aim to gain the debate between social, economical and environmental issues. The sustainable development is a result of a link between the socio-economic issues and environmental problems to do, with the poverty and inequality about the healthy future of the humanity. From this point of view, the concept was named as unashamedly and anthropocentric (Lee, 2000). Despite all this debates, the sustainable development remains a strategically tools for the authorities at local, regional, national or global level as an interconnection between economy, environment and society (Hardi, Zdan, 1997). Even if this model was criticized like having a conceptual simplicity (Giddings, Hopwood, O'Brien, 2002), the sustainable development must be discussed as a concept at a border between people, environment and economy.

The sustainable development is based on five principles (Haughton, 1999):

- Futurity – inter-generational equity;
- Social justice – intra-generational equity;
- Bordering responsibility – geographical equity;
- Procedural equity – people treated openly and fairly;
- Interspecies equity – importance of biodiversity.

These principles give more substance to the idea of sustainable development linking the people and their needs with the environment and provide a useful basis for the different trends of this concept, including the heritage as a as a sum of visions, values, culture, people, needs, aspirations. For the present paper, the sustainable development is considered as a tool for the policy makers at local, national and European level to provide equity and to sustain the heritage sector. For our paper the heritage sector is interpreted as a sum of values of local communities about the good life, about the well-being one with each others, about how the authorities know to do the best to increase the standards of living. From this point of view, the local development strategy is a participatory tool that involves the entire community, and whose objective is to provide economic development. In most cases, local development strategy is a step in the long term, the future projection of the community. This vision of the community about its future development should be shared with all relevant actors and translated into a set of specific objectives and a clear action plan.

2. The framework of local sustainable development in Romania

In Romania, the concept makes its appearance with the emergence of territorial decentralization and de-concentration phenomena of public services. Even though in the literatures of our country the information on this concept is recent, local development policies existed before 1989, but in a different vision. The economic globalization, the international economic crisis, the increasing phenomenon of relocation of businesses, internal structures of large industrial groups, institutionalizing local autonomy led to increased interest in local development (Matei, Anghelescu, 2009). The local development is considered at the intersection of several areas of intervention, besides local economic policies and urban policies and the landscaping and other policies (Constantinescu, Sporis, 2006). The concept of local development is defined as a particular form of regional development, one in which endogenous factors are central (Coffey, Polese, 2005). In Romania, regulatory requirements on the organization and implementation of local development activities and state institutions authorized in this regard are contained in a series of acts occurring after 1989. The first regulatory matter was the local government Law no. 69/1991 concerning local public administration, organic law adopted prior to the occurrence of the act fundamentally. For reasons that require ensuring full compliance with constitutional and European original law was amended and supplemented by Law no. 24/1996, because in 2001, local public administration Law no. 69/1991, republished, to be replaced by Law no.215/2001(in effect today with some revisions). Powers conferred by the Law no. 215/2001 concerning local public administration to the authorities in the field does not solve all problems that arise in local communities, but by setting the five principles (autonomy, legality, responsibility, cooperation and solidarity), these problems can be more easily controlled and resolved. Another provisions concerning the local development were adopted through the Law no. 151/1998 on regional development in Romania and setting out: the institutional framework, principles, objectives, skills and tools of regional development policy in Romania. This law is the main instrument of governing this very important public action – local development. The distinction between local and regional development is not in the objectives contained in the underlying policies, but simply the level at which they are funded and

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