

# Monograph of the Metropolitan Area Iași Premises for the Development of Moldavia

Viorica Ionașcu<sup>1</sup>, Drăguț Bogdănel<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Prof. PhD, „Dimitrie Cantemir” Christian University, Bucharest

<sup>2</sup> Univ. Assist. PhD Candidate, „Dimitrie Cantemir” Christian University, Bucharest

---

## ABSTRACT

As a result of the urban and structural concentration of the suburbs, the cities expand and get involved in the increasing processes of the adjoining areas, creating socio-spatial societies called metropolitan areas or regions.

The metropolitan area assumes the approach as a partnership system on long and medium development, focusing on the possibilities offers of living, which are necessary and relaxing for the population from the area, business opportunities, investments, arrangements for the academic and research institutions, solving the issues of the environment, attracting funds for an infrastructure etc., fundaments that allows a territorial development for more locations from the area and the immediate surroundings.

According to the Urbanism Law 350 from 2001, annex II, **the metropolitan territory** is defined as the surface situated circa the first rang districts, including the places situated till 30 km distance, where the mutual relations of influence are created, in the field of the communication means, economy, social, cultural and town infrastructure.

At the beginning of 2003, the Collaboration Agreement has been signed between the Council of the District Iasi, the Municipal Council and the Coordinators of the Program GRASP (Governance Reform and Sustainable Partnerships) regarding the approach of the development project of the metropolis.

On 8<sup>th</sup> of April 2004, The Council of the District Iasi, the Municipal Council Iasi and the Municipal Councils of the 13 enclosed villages have signed the constitution act of the Metropolitan Area of Iasi and they have created the Metropolis Council of Iasi, founding the regional development. Therefore, the development of the area can be made by elaborating a proper plan of the metropolitan territory. Its purpose is to obtain a global frame and a unitary documentation regarding the possibilities of development – in the concept of a lasting development – of this territory in a district and national context.

## KEYWORDS

development, metropolitan area, potential, plan, objectives.

## JEL Classification

R11, R13, R58

---

“Nothing is and will be more present in a society’s life than the organization of the town, which is practically synonymous with the organization of life, just like the quality of a town is all about the quality of life.”(Nicolas S., 1978)[3]

The Metropolitan Area of Iași is situated in the north-eastern part of the country, occupying the central-eastern part in Iași district.

The system of the Metropolitan Area of Iași is made up of Iași town and 13 communes (Aroneanu, Bârnova, Cuirea, Holboca, Lețcani, Miroslava, Popricani, Reditu, Schitu Duca, Tomești, Ungheni, Valea Lupului și Victoria) and 76 villages.

**The limits** of the Metropolitan Area of Iași are:

- In the **northern** part the Republic of Moldova by the river Prut;
- In the **western** part the neighbours of the communes which are part of the Metropolitan Area of Iași are the communes: Țigănași, Movileni, Românești, Dumești, Horlești, Voinești, Mogoșești;
- In the **southern** part the communes Grajduri, Dobrovăț, Vaslui district (south of commune Schitu Duca), Ciortești set the limit with the Metropolitan Area;
- In the **eastern** part the Metropolitan Area of Iași borders on Costuleni commune, Comarna commune, Țuțora commune, the Republic of Moldova by the river Prut, Golăești commune.

---

<sup>2</sup> Corresponding author: Drăguț Bogdănel - dragut\_bogdan@yahoo.com

The total surface is of 787,87 km<sup>2</sup>, of the district's surface of 5476 km<sup>2</sup> (14,4%), and the population is of 397800 inhabitants of the district's population of 834000 (47,7%).

The Metropolitan Area of Iași is characterized by the following main indicators:

	<b>The Metropolitan Area of Iași</b>	<b>% of the total Iași district</b>	<b>% of the total North-East development region</b>
▪ Total surface	787,87 square kilometres	14,4	2,1
▪ Surface of the territory occupied by human settlements/intra-village	9555 hectares		
▪ Population	397800 inhabitants	47,7	10,7
▪ Active population	169300 persons		
▪ Unemployed	20500 persons		
▪ The average habitable surface for one person	11,3 habitable square metres/person		

During 1999-2005, the overall population of the Metropolitan Area of Iași, by averages and communes, is presented in table no. II.

#### The evolution of the overall population

Territorial units of the Metropolitan Area of Iași (M.A.I.)	Overall population – thousand persons							2005/1999 %
	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
<b>Total of M.A.I.</b>	<b>422,6</b>	<b>421,8</b>	<b>425,7</b>	<b>383,1</b>	<b>394,4</b>	<b>400,4</b>	<b>391,7</b>	<b>92,7</b>
of which:								
<b>Iași town</b>	<b>347,6</b>	<b>345,8</b>	<b>348,7</b>	<b>303,7</b>	<b>313,4</b>	<b>317,8</b>	<b>307,4</b>	<b>88,4</b>
<b>Rural places – total</b>	<b>75,0</b>	<b>76,0</b>	<b>77,0</b>	<b>79,4</b>	<b>81,0</b>	<b>82,6</b>	<b>84,3</b>	<b>112,4</b>
of which communes:								
Aroneanu	2,5	2,5	2,5	2,8	2,8	2,9	2,9	116,0
Bârnova	3,2	3,3	3,4	3,7	3,8	4,0	4,2	131,3
Ciurea	9,1	9,3	9,3	9,6	10,0	10,1	10,3	113,2
Holboca	12,1	12,3	12,4	11,8	12,0	12,1	12,3	101,7
Lețcani	6,3	6,4	6,5	6,4	6,4	6,5	6,6	104,8
Miroslava	6,1	6,3	6,5	7,4	7,6	8,0	8,3	136,1
Popricani	6,0	6,0	6,1	6,6	6,8	7,0	7,2	120,0
Rediu	5,7	5,7	5,8	6,5	6,7	3,7	3,8	66,7
Schitu Duca	4,1	4,1	4,1	4,5	4,5	4,5	4,5	109,8
Tomești	12,1	12,2	12,4	11,7	11,9	12,0	12,1	100,0
Ungheni	3,7	3,8	3,8	4,0	4,1	4,1	4,2	113,5
Valea Lupului	...	...	...	...	...	3,3	3,5	
Victoria	4,1	4,1	4,2	4,4	4,4	4,4	4,4	107,3

Source: the Regional Statistic Department of Iași

In 2005, the population of the Metropolitan Area of Iași decreased by 7,3% as opposed to 1999 while the population of Iași decreased by 11,6% and the population of communes increased by 12,4%. Except for REDIU commune, where the number of inhabitants decreased by 33,3%, the other communes recorded increases from 1,7% (Holboca commune) to 31,3 % (Bârnova commune).

**The share of feminine population** in the overall population of 2005 was of 51,9% as opposed to 51,4% in 1999. In the analyzed period, this indicator recorded an increase trend for Iași town, from 51,9% (1999), to 52,6% (2005). (*Mrejeru, FI, 2006*)[2]

On the whole, the share of feminine population of communes was of 49,4% during 1999-2005, inferior to the information of the overall Metropolitan Area of Iași (51,9% in 2005) and respectively to Iași town (51,6% in 2005).

As for the population **by groups of ages and sexes** by January the 1<sup>st</sup> 2006, the situation is presented in table no. III.

**The population of the Metropolitan Area of Iași by groups of ages and sexes,  
by January the 1<sup>st</sup> 2006**

**Table no. III**  
- persons -

Age	Total		Urban		Rural	
	Both sexes	of which: women	Both sexes	of which: women	Both sexes	of which: women
TOTAL	390789	202794	305978	160901	84811	41893
Aged 0 - 4	19483	9510	14488	7070	4995	2440
Aged 5-9	17841	8805	12220	6034	5621	2771
Aged 10-14	18116	8781	12693	6202	5423	2579
Aged 15-19	33947	16619	25008	12340	8939	4279
Aged 20-24	37137	18805	29584	15195	7553	3610
Aged 25-29	37543	18863	30959	15772	6584	3091
Aged 30-34	32890	16617	26275	13440	6615	3177
Aged 35-39	34040	17713	27088	14368	6952	3345
Aged 40-44	21143	11078	15998	8479	5145	2599
Aged 45-49	29944	16070	23702	13280	6242	2790
Aged 50-54	30811	16190	26086	13900	4725	2290
Aged 55-59	23384	12212	19620	10316	3764	1896
Aged 60-64	13463	7228	10888	5882	2575	1346
Aged 65-69	14774	8070	11452	6218	3322	1852
Aged 70-74	11164	6560	8410	5000	2754	1560
Aged 75-79	8383	5135	6337	3896	2046	1239
Aged 80-84	4626	3055	3458	2322	1168	733
Aged 85 and over	2170	1483	1712	1187	458	296

Source: the Regional Statistic Department of Iași

The population aged 20-64 represents 66,6% of the overall population of the Metropolitan Area of Iași, 68,2 % in the urban area and 59,2 % in the rural area.

The young population, aged between 0 to 14 holds a share of 14,2 % on the whole of the Metropolitan Area of Iași, 12,6 % in the urban area, and 18,9% in the rural area.

The population aged 65 and over holds a share of 10,5 % on the overall Metropolitan Area of Iași, 11,0% for the urban area and 11,4 % for the rural area.

**Natural growth** recorded positive values during the analyzed period, both on the whole of the Metropolitan Area of Iași and of Iași town, but also for the overall communes.

**The migratory growth** calculated on the overall Metropolitan Area of Iași recorded positive values during 1999-2003 and negative growths were recorded in the last two years. In the case of Iași town, right from 2002, this indicator has had negative values, even in the last years, of over 1000 persons (-1204 persons in 2003, of -1954 persons in 2004 and of -1328 persons in 2005). Of all 13 communes, Schitu Duca commune alone, in all analyzed years and Victoria commune, in five of the seven analyzed years recorded negative values for this indicator.

**The habitable surface** on the overall Metropolitan Area of Iași was of 4953 square metres in 2005, 17,6% more than in 1999, and in Iași town the increase was of 13,2%, while for the 13 constitutive communes of the Metropolitan Area of Iași, the increase was of 38,7 %.

The highest increase of the habitable surface was recorded in communes: Aronenanu (62,3%), Popricani(60,0%), Bârnova (45,7), Ungheni (37,8%) etc..

**The agriculture.** Given the special importance of the strategic objective of ensuring the nourishment security of the population, the agriculture is regarded as an activity of major importance for the Metropolitan Area of Iași. The Metropolitan Area of Iași has an agriculture focused both on vegetable agricultural production, and on animal agricultural production, with results situated around country averages.

From the point of view **of how the land is used**, in 1999 the situation looks like this:

#### The way the land is used in constitutive communes of the Metropolitan Area of Iași

Table no. IV

	Total hectares	of which:							
		Tillable		Vineyards		Orchards		Pastures and hayfields	
		hectares	%	hectares	%	hectares	%	hectares	%
<b>Total of which communes:</b>	<b>38402</b>	<b>23555</b>	<b>61,3</b>	<b>1966</b>	<b>5,1</b>	<b>887</b>	<b>2,3</b>	<b>11994</b>	<b>31,3</b>
Aroneanu	2988	1550	52,0	332	11,0	44	1,5	1062	35,5
Bârnova	2099	927	44,0	412	20,0	223	11,0	537	25,0
Ciurea	2694	1639	60,8	190	7,1	90	3,3	775	28,8
Holboca	4154	3274	79,0	72	2,0	18	0,4	790	18,6
Lețcani	4965	3081	62,0	109	2,0	59	1,0	1716	35,0
Popricani	5505	3495	63,0	59	1,0	125	2,0	1826	34,0
Rediu	4530	2430	54,0	199	4,0	16	0,4	1885	41,6
Schitu Duca	4868	2834	58,0	151	3,0	190	4,0	1693	35,0
Tomești	2338	955	41,0	390	17,0	122	5,0	871	37,0
Ungheni	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Valea Lupului	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Victoria	4261	3370	79,0	52	1,0	-	-	839	20,0

**Sources:** Agronomist L. Ungureanu, etc., the General Department for Agriculture and Food Industry, Iași district, the Department of Rural development, "Criteria, sub-criteria and indicators used in estimating the level of development of localities, of the district, Iași, 1999.

The tillable land holds the greatest share (61,3%), followed by pastures and hayfields (31,3%).

What we think it's worth mentioning is the fact that, as opposed to other geographical areas in the country, because of its geographical position – but also because of the equipment of some localities and of a communication network which are out of use, in the Metropolitan Area additional expenses will be necessary in the existing conditions for obtaining and especially for turning to account of agricultural products. This leads to obtaining products at cost prices 20 – 25% superior to other areas of the country. However, in order to ensure the perpetuation of the farmer profession – necessary inclusively from a strategic point of view – until the improvement of the specified conditions, additional subventions are necessary, which must be

directly provided to agricultural producers, for them to carry out their activities in competition conditions of equality with those from southern country.

**Sylviculture.** The regulations in the forest field are brought to European standards, but they are difficult to apply. The field faces the issue of over-exploitation. But this would be motivated if wood was used rationally. The matter of wood exportation (not necessarily the transborder one, but even at zone level) as raw material represents a loss to local economy. The setting up of small furniture factories would render the production efficient. The encouraging of craftsmanship would bring, through the authenticity note of these objects, an indirect contribution to local economy, by tourism development.

**Pisciculture.** The line of lakes surrounding Iași town is little rendered valuable from this point of view. The present tendency for development is outlined in the direction of promoting ecological fishing. Thus, for arrangements, they will militate not in favour of industrial fish breeding, but of using the regions for sports fishing. It is true that the field of fish breeding farms will also receive the proper attention, however this involves great ecological risks. A population of fish industrially bred undergoes continuous treatments with antibiotics in order to avoid contamination with pathogenic agents.

Nevertheless, the capitalization of lakes is a delicate matter. This entails the establishing of a concessionaire with a program – project for maintaining and rendering the respective lake valuable. In turn, this will also entail, in addition to rules and national norms, autonomous norms, which will be justified depending on its objectives.

The existence of an important number of water basins is correlated with other fields of activity in the district (water management, the supply of some localities with drinking water, the irrigation of some agricultural areas, the generation of electric power, the improvement of the microclimate etc.).

The following administrative territories have important piscicultural areas and need actions for re-arrangement: Miroslava (Ezăreni – PHARE project, Dumbrava, Bârca), Lețcani (Cogeasca), Aroneanu.

The **industrial** phenomenon, which can be viewed as a catalyser of urban development, a method of increasing the frequency of daily flows and, implicitly, of the living standard, was and still is the element of development of human settlement.

During 1999-2005, at the level of the whole Metropolitan Area, an increase in the share of private initiative is being felt, inclusively in the fields which were less interesting before, like the industry of primary products and the power industry or the metallurgic industry and the industry of metallic constructions.

➤ **The highly vertically integrated branches are:**

- the industry of threads and synthetic fibres;
- the cotton processing industry;
- the metallurgic industry.

**The industrial branches which are horizontally integrated** have a better situation, because in this case the source of raw materials is near processing centres and there is a possibility of rhythmical supply, at minimum costs.

**Services** represent the most diversified field of economic activities, which occupies various areas of development and tends to draw a great part of the active population. The share of the population in the tertiary sector is important for diagnosing the living standard of the area to which it refers.

In the Metropolitan Area, Iași town is the main actor in the tertiary field. The tradition of this town as a great cultural and university centre, the administrative-financial establishments, health protection, as well as a large number of companies carrying out services consolidate the role of Iași town as a polarizing centre.

After a first stage which, starting immediately after 1989 has brought a series of rapid corrections, especially in the trade field, the development of the tertiary field becomes more and more perceptibly

dependent on the reorganization of productive sectors, on privatization and on the level of income by inhabitant, recording an important increase.

The increase in the share of services was not achieved to the detriment of the absolute value volume of primary and secondary outputs but, on the contrary, in the conditions of their increase. The attainment of a percentage structure propitious to the services field, under the circumstances of a decrease of primary and secondary output is not a sign of a healthy economic growth, but rather of states of crisis, of pseudo-tertiarization and pseudo-modernization at a low technological level.

**The relaunching of the development of services** must generally be approached from a triple perspective:

- the reinvigoration of some activities with great potential for occupation and for added value: the industry of leisure, internal and especially international tourism, agro-tourism and rural tourism;
- the motivation for developing services closely related to the operation of market economy: banking, financial services and insurances; public and private services of intermediation on the labour market; services of research-development, inclusively services of technological transfer and technological spreading; social welfare for handicapped persons or services at their residence;
- the penetration and maintaining on the international market of services of a market share with rapid development (data processing, communications, banks, insurances, consulting, education a.s.o.).

The most dynamic fields among services are: trade, transportation, telecommunications, output and office data processing, tourism, financial-banking services and insurances, consulting of services for the population etc.

The service activities, which are more and more dependent on the information traffic, can be classified into three categories, namely:

- **Basic services** – common inclusively to areas serving limited areas of the size of a state or of several administrative territories and including:
  - trade and carrying out services;
  - health and social welfare;
  - education.
- **Infrastructural services** refer to activities related to the establishment and exploitation of the infrastructure and are specific to centres serving areas which cover several administrative territories – inter-commune or balance centres. This category includes fields like: transportations; telecommunications, culture, recreation/sports.
- **Administrative services** specific to great centres, which are district residence, serving large, near areas, or areas which exceed the surface of the district territory. This category includes: financial-banking services, information processing.

#### ➤ **Basic services**

In the case of education and social welfare services, we can speak of a close interdependence between them on one hand and the necessary equipment for the development of the education process and respectively for ensuring health services, on the other hand.

To conclude, we can state that the economic revitalization of the Metropolitan Area is achieved thorough: the development of strong points (university centre, culture, exploitation), the stimulation of the enterprising spirit.

At the beginning of 2003, the Contract of collaboration between the District Council of Iași, the Townhall and the Coordinators of the GRASP program (Governance Reform and Sustainable Partnerships) was signed, with reference to the approach on the project of metropolitan development.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of April 2004, the District Council of Iași, the Townhall of Iași and the Townhalls of the 13 surrounding communes signed the act of constitution of the Metropolitan Area of Iași and formed the Metropolitan Council of Iași.

The initiators of the project referring to the creation and development of the metropolitan areas also aimed at:

- the decongestion of great cities;
- the unitary architectural development;
- accessing, by association, the European funds intended for regional development;
- creating civilized living conditions for the inhabitants of the metropolitan areas.

**The advantages** of the development of a metropolitan area:

- the decongestion of the town, of urban agglomeration;
- the fulfilment of the demand of population for dwellings;
- the creation of higher budgetary funds for localities with a small income;
- the increase of the economic benefits for investors resulted from a greater activity in the area;
- the improvement of the technical-urbanistic and transportation infrastructure;
- the creation of work places by attracting investors;
- the growth of the living standard of the population;
- the regional development by the increase of investments in the infrastructure;
- the extension of networks of utilities;
- the accessing of the structural funds of the European Union.

**The disadvantages** of the development of metropolitan areas:

- the rise in the price of lands as a consequence of real estate speculation;
- coming across difficulties of management;
- the increase of local taxes for the localities included in the metropolitan area;
- the degradation of the environment as a consequence of the agglomeration of dwellings;
- loss of local autonomy.

➤ From the SWOT analysis, as part of the “Strategy of local development of Iași” (*Iași Townhall*) [8], correlated with the existing strategy of the Metropolitan Area of Iași, the following propitious/inauspicious aspects result in the following fields:

- the studies carried out so far and the conclusions of the discussions between partners revealed the necessity of advancing for the National Plan of Development of the present proposal for the consolidation of the East-West relation by the expansion of the 4<sup>th</sup> European corridor to the 9<sup>th</sup> corridor, by developing a passage of traffic on this direction;
- the creation of this connection represents a political decision of historic proportion and with an economic and social impact of the same measure on the balance of Romania’s territorial accessibility, the opening of access to markets, the affirmation of the role of the Metropolitan Area of Iași in the regional, national and European context, as a pole of development at the future border of the European Union, the facilitation of regional, national and international alliances, as well as the concentration of efforts for accessing the financing sources for the promotion and the implementation of common projects, the end of Moldova’s period of lack of balance and isolation, as against the majority of countries;
- the impact of this promoted crucial political decision, consists in structuring and consolidating the processes of regional and national development and affects the development of the districts along the historical axes of development (Iași, Neamț, Harghita, Mureș, Cluj, Bihor) connecting Moldova to Transylvania, the entire Moldova, the development of the North-East, Centre Development Regions, with great consequences for the transborder social economic relations; such an intervention is to re-balance the accessibility at national level and to prepare the necessary conditions for Romania’s lasting development as a member of the European Union.

**Strong points:**

- The strategic position (as against the Eastern border);
- The most important position in the North-Eastern region of development;
- Educated communities, open for dialogue and co-operation;
- Cultural, artistic, scientific, patrimony and tourist values;
- A portfolio of free land for investments.

**Weak points:**

- The lack of experts in the field of strategic planning;
- An indefinite juridical situation with reference to some lands;
- The management of waste products.

➤ **Economic development****Strong points:**

- ✓ Traditional university centre;
- ✓ Important research-projection establishments;
- ✓ An international airport;
- ✓ A developed road infrastructure;
- ✓ Locality at the border;
- ✓ Tradition in ready-made clothing, in the machine-building and metallurgic industry, pharmaceutical and food industry;
- ✓ Traditions in the fruit growing and viticulture;
- ✓ Tillable soils with high productiveness;
- ✓ A large water surface (great potential for fish breeding);
- ✓ Developed financial banking services;
- ✓ An important trade centre;
- ✓ Organizers of National and International markets;
- ✓ The existence of International cultural centres (to provide business relationships with potential foreign investors);
- ✓ The existence of a conference centre.

**Weak points:**

- ✓ Limited material resources;
- ✓ A reduced flexibility of labour;
- ✓ The deficiency of lands for investments in the urban area and the insufficient equipment with utilities of the lands in the metropolitan area;
- ✓ The lack of fiscal facilities for investors;
- ✓ The insufficient development of the business infrastructure (the exhibition centre and the Cargo terminal are in the planning stage);
- ✓ The immobilization of industrial spaces;
- ✓ The lack of cohesion with the business community;
- ✓ The insufficient communication between universities and the small and middle enterprises;
- ✓ The lack of enterprising partnerships;
- ✓ The lack of a connection with Western and Central Europe (the East-West highway; the connection the Baltic Sea – the Black Sea);
- ✓ The high share of the secondary sector (industry and constructions);
- ✓ An insufficient development of the services;

- ✓ The poor turning to account and promotion of autochthonous products;
- ✓ The community's incapacity of using the existing intellect locally;
- ✓ A difficult and long procedure of obtaining notices and authorizations.

➤ **Infrastructure and environment**

**Strong points:**

- ✓ An international airport;
- ✓ A developed tourist infrastructure;
- ✓ A developed network of facilities in the urban area (water – 97 %. gas, electricity);
- ✓ A developed cultural infrastructure;
- ✓ The railway transportation compatible with that of Eastern Europe.

**Weak points:**

- ✓ Lack of Cargo terminal;
- ✓ An insufficiently developed railway network;
- ✓ The lack of a belt highway;
- ✓ The lack of East-West highway;
- ✓ A great percentage of streets requiring modernization works;
- ✓ A deficitary community transportation;
- ✓ Insufficient and not modernized amusement areas and sports grounds;
- ✓ The exploitation over the standardized duration of feed and distribution pipes, which leads to repeated damages with important loss of water;
- ✓ Pumping spaces equipped with equipment with low efficiency and exceeded period of operation;
- ✓ The very low level of equipment with utilities in the rural area;
- ✓ An obsolete sewerage system in some districts of the town;
- ✓ A health infrastructure which is not modernized;
- ✓ A deficient management of waste products;
- ✓ A poor quality of tourist services.

The assessment of an area's **tourist potential** is carried out taking into consideration both the natural and the anthropic potential.

As for the Metropolitan Area of Iași, the tourist potential is less extensive with reference to natural values, but a lot more abundant in values created by human. In this area, the cultural components of the tourist potential are particularly remarked, while the natural ones are rather modestly noticed.

The great majority of tourist objectives are concentrated in Iași. In its turn, Iași has a near area which is abundant enough in tourist attractions, especially those related to natural background.

Apart from those mentioned, the balneary-therapeutic tourism, sports tourism and weekend tourism have also developed.

- *The balneary-therapeutic tourism*

This form of tourism of the Metropolitan Area of Iași presents interest, which extends nationally because of the acknowledged value of medicine in Iași, by the balneary and recovery centre in Băile Nicola and the Recovery Hospital of Iași; the promotion of climate in the forest areas of Bârnova for people hospitalized over longer periods of time in Bârnova Sanatorium, but also for those who leave town in weekends for this area.

- *Sports tourism*

Sports tourism is placed inside the hunting areas in the forests South of Iași; the tourism stimulated by sports competitions within the perimeter of the lakes of Aroneanu (Aroneanu lakes), air contests of the Moldova Aeronautic Club, sports competitions in the arenas of the city, tourist-focused competitions etc..

- *Weekend tourism*

Around Iași **amusement tourism** is carried out in the forest areas of Paun, Repedea, south Bârnova, and within the administrative limits at Ciric, Breazu, Cetățuia. The direction of the national road 24 from the exit of Iași to Pietrăria – Poieni – Schitul Duca is considered a particularly picturesque route. Similarly appreciated, from the landscape point of view is the forest of Dobrovăț commune. The main attraction, forests, which also have recreation and amusement functions, beside the scientific interest. In Iași there are recreation areas of national notoriety: the public gardens of Copou district, the Botanical Garden, the Exhibition Garden, Copou Garden, the Agronomy Square.

### **Anthropic tourist resources**

The tourist demand is given by the tourist potential of a certain destination and is influenced by economic, political, social-demographic factors and not least by the level of culture.

Thus, tourism in the Metropolitan Area of Iași has social, economic, family and personal motivations.

The types of tourism carried out in the Metropolitan Area of Iași are: cultural tourism, ecclesiastic tourism, museology tourism and ethnographic tourism.

#### *Cultural tourism*

Cultural tourism is supported by the presence of historical monuments.

Iași is the city of great ideas, of the first important union, of the first theatre show performed in Romanian and of the first memorial literal museum (Bojdeuca lui Țicău, The hovel of Țicău). Iași is still undoubtedly the cultural capital of the country.

#### *Ecclesiastic tourism*

Iași city, blessed with the prayers and the relics of Saint Paraschiva and adorned with many churches and monasteries becomes more of a place of pilgrimage, spirituality and Christian culture. The monasteries and churches of Iași and within the vicinity, some of them known in all the country contribute to the development of ecclesiastic tourism.

#### *Museology tourism*

Iași town is an important museum centre formed by an accumulation of a real treasure of objects of historical, artistic, ethnographic, literal value a.s.o. Among the main museums there are: the museum Complex “the Palace of Culture” (including the Moldova’s Museum of History, the Art Museum, the Ethnographic Museum, the Polytechnic Museum), the Moldova’s Museum of Literature, the Museum of Natural History, the Museum of the National Theatre, the Museum of the Union etc.

The elaboration of **the Plan of arrangement of the metropolitan territory** aimed at obtaining a global background and a unitary documentation on the possibilities of development – in the concept of a lasting development – of this territory in a district and national context.

At **economic and social** level, the study aims at contributing to:

- achieving a structure of the network of localities to ensure a harmonious distribution of the population, of work places and of public equipment with a territorial role, based on coherent policies of decentralization of competences among local communities;
- the regional integration of this territory in the national economy, in general;
- the establishing of priorities of intervention with reference to the development of economic activities, important endowment of the territory, the technical-urban endowment and equipment of localities;
- the rehabilitation, the protection and the conservation of elements of the natural environment.

The study represents a material offering investors useful information on material and human resources with immediate possibilities for turning to account, but also a material for the achievement of **particular objectives in special areas to be arranged**, such as:

- urban areas, which require the putting into practice of a methodology of the plans for soil occupation and for the application of the measures of directing economic activities for the benefit of living standards of inhabitants. The capitalization of the architectural patrimony, of monuments and sites must be integrated in a general policy of arrangement of the territory;
- rural areas, for which the priority resides in the creation of acceptable living conditions in villages on an economic, social, cultural, ecological level and also from the point of view of the equipment infrastructures, especially in sub-developed and peripheral areas;
- border areas require, more than others, a policy of coordination between states. This policy must allow an opening of the frontiers, the setting up of procedures of consulting and trans-border cooperation and of common utilization of the infrastructure equipment.

**In conclusion**, regions which have progressed from historical perspectives, risking to be left behind, as a consequence of the changes in the economic foundation, need differentiated aid as against disparities of the living conditions and the labour in different areas and regions. These declining areas require specific policies, promoted as a priority by local administration and the other factors involved in the activity of territorial arrangement.

In order to revitalize and develop the role of a regional capital for the development of the Metropolitan Area of Iași, the following **strategic objectives** are to be achieved:

- the elaboration of common strategies of development for all administrative territorial units included in the Metropolitan Area;
- the creation of the conditions for the Metropolitan Area of Iași to become a pole of development allotted for the entire national and European region, under the form of: a logistic centre, diversified services, lasting economic development, professionally and civically very well trained labour, qualitative environment, the development of an open community having prestige and an important local identity;
- creating strategic alliances and ensuring the belonging to knowledge networks;
- redefining and consolidating the roles of administrative territorial units in the region, on average and long term, as a policy of development for Moldova, Romania and the future border Area in the Eastern part of the European Union;
- economic development for each of the metropolitan partners at a fast rate and balanced structures;
- harmonious development of the metropolitan territorial areas;
- the development of cultural identity of all communities members of the metropolitan area;
- ensuring performing and competitive public services in all territorial units;
- the development of the accessibility between the localities of the entire area as well as of the accessibility of the Metropolitan Area of Iași for the rest of the regions in Romania and for regions over the border;
- the development of the performances of metropolitan public administrations;
- the improvement of the living conditions of the population in the Metropolitan Area;
- the increase of the access of communities to different resources (including governmental funds, funds for European integration, international funds);
- the establishment and development of partnerships at national and international level.

In the new metropolitan context, Iași town has the central role in promoting the image, the essence of the specificity and of the prestige of the area at national and European level; **the programs of urban regeneration** are powerful instruments of approaching the identity, patrimony, economic values and are

based on the approach in regional, inter-institutional and inter-sectorial partnership, of the development and the consolidation of the roles of the Metropolitan Area of Iași in the territory.

The Town hall of Iași town and the District Council bring an essential contribution in the revitalization of the patrimony through programs aiming at business development, restoring patrimony objectives with historical and architectural values, the general revitalization of urban image.

As a result of a marketing study regarding services of urban regeneration in Romania, initiated by the Embassy of Great Britain in Bucharest and worked out by the Agency of Metropolitan Development of Iași, the Metropolitan Area of Iași was selected for the introduction of a **project of urban regeneration**. In this context, the Embassy of Great Britain and the Department for Trade and Investments, the Association the Metropolitan Area of Iași and the Town hall of Iași town joined their efforts for the success of the project developed by the Agency for Metropolitan Development.

The project started in July 2007 with a visit of the decision factors of the Town hall of Iași town for an exchange of experience in some of Great Britain's cities known for their success with urban regeneration. The experience of Great Britain's cities in this field produced contributions of international value and represents an important source of inspiration for local authorities in Romania and Romanian experts in the fields of urbanism and urban management.

An important step in approaching regeneration programs is the structuring of metropolitan partnerships and the acknowledgement of priority projects which can be the subject of regeneration funds. Starting from the inventory of evolution trends and of development potential, the key local and metropolitan factors are those which structure the strategic measure for lasting development and economic and social regeneration.

In October 2007 the partners within the project organized the first work meeting focused on the initiation of the partnership and on the grounding of the regeneration projects for the Metropolitan Area of Iași, in the Great Hall of the Town hall. The Seminar and the Workshop aim at creating an adaptable and creative system of partnerships among urban actors involved in the integrated regeneration, the local and metropolitan economic development, based on common purposes and projects, systems which should provide information, exchanges of experience, specific professional techniques for the development and the consolidation of the capacity to act together for urban regeneration.

The objectives have been approved by Local Councils and by the District Council of Iași.

In this area, the authorities presented numerous projects of regional development, for the development of transportation infrastructure, of social development, all these having beneficial effects on the quality of life of the population in this area. (*Radu, M., 2008, p. 11*).

#### ➤ **Objectives by target fields**

The Metropolitan Area is part of the North-East Region. This is the first of the eight areas of development in point of size. Based on the Regional Profile and on the SWOT analysis the following strategic directions have been identified, for the achievement of the final objective:

- The development of enterprises and businesses;
- Human resources;
- The promotion and the attractiveness of the region.

#### **The development of enterprises and businesses**

A strategic importance is given to the provision and selective development of the existing industrial potential to promote the placement of new industrial, innovative branches, as well as branches with high productivity in the Metropolitan Area.

To ensure the balanced development of the region it is necessary to achieve a cooperation of the enterprises for the purpose of vertical and horizontal integration, the development of marketing and consulting activities for the formation and development of managerial, enterprising and consulting

competences, as well as the supporting of the field of research-development and of technological transfer, the promotion of clean technologies and of those based on material recycling.

It is necessary to develop the food economy in an integrated manner for manufacturing specific products, by setting up regional enterprises to process agricultural raw material and by expanding the existing enterprises.

The strategy aims at a capitalization of the tourist capital by productive investments in tourism and the stimulation of the field of carrying out services in tourism and the rural area.

The agriculture and rural development will be stimulated by setting up efficient ecological farms, the creation of networks of turning to account and collecting specific products, the development of services and the capitalization of the water surface.

- **Human resources**

Starting from the reality that the Metropolitan Area is an area with diverse, but limited natural resources, we consider human capital as the main value of the area.

The investment in human resources is one of the priority objectives of the strategy of development.

The satisfying of the demand of labour at the highest standard, for the economy, the promotion of local investments and the reinvigoration of the economic role of the small and medium enterprises will be achieved by co-ordinated development of a system of education, training and re-training.

The unemployment matter will be dealt with as efficiently as possible, for the purpose of ensuring the improvement of the equality of chances for employment of different social categories involved.

- **The promotion and the attractiveness of the region**

The essential point of the objective is to surpass the region's condition of isolation as well as to remove the idea of a region inadequate for the business environment, by turning to account of natural, human and social conditions.

This strategic objective aims at efficiently turning to account the advantages and the specificity of the region, by creating, promoting and supporting a representative image to attract and persuade both potential investors and tourists.

The means of emphasizing the region's potential of attractiveness consist in animating the economic life, promoting tourism and trade, the rural area and specific products, improving the accessibility in mountain areas, the sensitization, training and educating of the population in the spirit of knowledge, respecting and supporting natural, historical, cultural and ambient values.

A space with plentiful traditions in multiple fields, the Metropolitan Area is the frame propitious to the reinvigoration of specific professions, the promotion of traditional customs, of the natural background, of the cultural and spiritual identity with economic benefits for the community and which offer local colour for attracting tourists.

- **Economic objectives:**

- the economic re-launching of the area;
- the capitalization of the tourist potential.

- **Social objectives:**

- the capitalization of working resources;
- the revaluation of the urban network in the territory;
- the improvement of inhabiting conditions;
- the improvement of social-cultural endowment in the territory

- **Environmental objectives:**

- adopting the principles of lasting development;
- the superior capitalization of the natural potential;
- the elimination of all sources of pollution and the conservation of the biodiversity.

➤ **Programs of actions by target fields:**

- The modernization of local and regional infrastructure of road transportation;
- The modernization of the airport infrastructure;
- The rehabilitation and modernization of the environmental infrastructure;
- The development of the power infrastructure;
- The development and modernization of data processing infrastructure;
- The rehabilitation and modernization of educational, social and health infrastructure;
- The rehabilitation and modernization of tourism infrastructure;
- The capitalization of the tourist potential by the development of new tourist services and specific actions;
- The development of the rural infrastructure;
- The development of the alternative economic activities in the rural field;
- The development of human resources and social services;
- Support for acquiring enterprising competences;
- The development of services offered to the integrated system of training the disadvantaged category;
- Support for professional qualification/re-conversion of the population;
- The consolidation of the administration's capacity and rendering efficient the management of structural funds;
- The development of the existing services and the setting up of new adequate community services;
- Supporting non-governmental organizations.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

1. Bogdan, W., A., *Iași, historical and social monograph, illustrated*, Iași, 2004
2. Mrejeru, Fl., etc., Project "Plan of arrangement of the metropolitan territory", Iași, *General memorials*, 2006
3. Nicolas Schoffer, *Town of the future and the cybernetics*, Meridiane Publishing House, Bucharest, 1978, p. 18
4. Radu, M., *Today the first money of the structural funds will be offered*, Cotidianul, Business, 22<sup>nd</sup> of April 2008, p. 11
5. The District Council of Iași, "Iași District, Invest in Iași", Foton Publishing House – Brahms International, Iași
6. The District Council of Iași, "The strategy of development of Iași district 2007-2013", 2005
7. The Regional Statistic Department of Iași, "The locality record": Iași town and the 13 communes, 1999-2005
8. The Regional Statistic Department of Iași, "The population by groups of age, sex, localities by January the 1<sup>st</sup> 2006"
9. The Regional Statistic Department of Iași, "The settled population by groups of age, sex, localities by July the 1<sup>st</sup> 2004"
10. Iași Townhall, "*Iași – the town of inspiration, the Plan of strategic development, Iași – analysis and town-planning view, the Portfolio of Projects, the Situation of the day, SWOT analysis*"