

EDITORIAL

In the contemporary world, characterised by political, economic and social restructuring, where technological change, globalisation, modernisation in general, and the crisis of the state (rather withdrawing from its previous central role in planning development) have a strong impact, new policies are needed for territorial management.

Capital mobility and investment are affected by continuous and fast change, while different development paradigms try to find solutions that places and regions may use to cope with global trends and be competitive. Under these circumstances, the trends of decentralisation, regionalism, community involvement, and the focus on place-based development are strongly related to external factors.

Besides taking into account the openness to exterior influences, the present paradigm of development is based on the resources of the territory, on locational advantages, on institutions, on social norms and practices, and on leadership. Leadership is either individualised (based on personal charisma) or collective (initiated by organisations, associations, political parties, etc.) and its role is to represent the social and economic interests of the community and people's common vision upon future development. In addition to these, entrepreneurial spirit and activity are crucial for sustained action.

In this context, territorial belonging and territorial attractiveness are elements with strategic relevance for development at diverse levels: local, regional, national, and macro-regional. Therefore, territorial identity is important both for building the social capital – so useful during the processes of development and territorial planning – and for the cohesion policy in the European Union and in other macro-regions of the world.

Territorial identity is associated with natural resources, landscape features, with social and economic goods, and with cultural heritage, as well as with historical background. The tangible and intangible resources of a territory are at the basis of its development, making it productive, and, above all, ensuring inhabitants' attachment from a multitude of reasons: economic, social and cultural, psychological, etc. In addition, the appearance and maintenance of cohesive communities is significant for sustainable development at diverse scales and when such communities are characterised also by institutional thickness (i.e. pro-active institutions, associations, coalitions, agencies, etc.), and their endeavours are vertically integrated into development strategies of larger scale, then the rhythm of progress increases considerably.

Moreover, the people's feeling of local or regional consciousness and pride, of belonging to a certain community, of sharing the same values, discourses, practices, and symbols will enhance development initiatives in the community and will support the effort for community, and not only for individual, well-being. More precisely, a strong sense of identity based on historical, political, social factors – rendered through shared understandings, trust and reciprocity – enhances mobilisation of internal actors and of decision-making factors involving old and new power relations, and above all, their responsibility.

To sum up, a solution for maintaining or increasing the rhythm of development could be giving priority to researching and using territorial identity as a resource, to promoting democratic participation, to supporting internal co-operation and strong connections with the exterior. All these combined lead to innovative approaches to development, to efficient problem-solving, and especially to territorial renewal, while taking into account the principle of subsidiarity.

In this conceptual context, *Territorial Identity and Development* is an online international and interdisciplinary journal, hosting the results of original empirical and theoretical scientific research on territorial identity as a resource for development, as well as book reviews exploring the diverse approaches related to this topic.

Symbolic capital (based on the functions that collective identity may acquire) and the material features of the places and regions are relevant for research in a series of scientific fields. Therefore, this journal offers young researchers, specialists and practitioners with diverse backgrounds (Geography, History, Sociology, Economy, Administrative Sciences, Architecture and Urban Planning, etc.) the possibility of sharing their research results and best practice experience, thus supporting the international exchange of knowledge.

The topics of interest are: Territorial identity and community development (rural and urban); Territorial identity and regional development; Territorial identity and territorial planning; Territorial identity and public policy; Research methodology for the study of territorial identity.

We hope that *Territorial Identity and Development* will be a source of documentation and inspiration for many years to come.

Oana-Ramona ILOVAN, PhD

Editor-in-Chief

Babeş-Bolyai University, Faculty of Geography, Cluj-Napoca, ROMANIA