

Pécs, a possible gateway city

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Abstract

When Hungary's borders were fixed after the World War I, Szeged and Pécs became towns managing the relations of Hungary with the countries in the south. In our paper we examine the factors that make Pécs suitable for the Southern intermediate role, and whether the goals and achievements of Pécs2010 European Capital of Culture programme series reinforced this position.

Pécs has an outstanding status among the Hungarian towns of county rank and it is the most powerful regional centre. Its opening towards the south, its multicultural composition, its institutionalised system of foreign affairs, and its roles in various cooperations contribute to the city's success in fulfilling the "gateway" role towards the South-Western direction.

Keywords: *Pécs, Balcan, function of transit city, regional centre, European Capital of Culture*

Rezumat. Pécs, un posibil oraș de tranzit

Când granițele Ungariei au fost fixate după Primul Război Mondial, Szeged și Pécs au devenit orașe care gestionează relațiile Ungariei cu țările din sud. În lucrarea noastră vom examina factorii care fac ca orașul Pécs să fie potrivit pentru rolul de oraș intermediar către sud, și dacă obiectivele și realizările programului Pécs2010 Capitală Europeană a Culturii i-a întărit această poziție.

Pécs are un statut remarcabil printre orașele maghiare de rang județean și este cel mai puternic centru regional. Deschiderea spre sud, multiculturalitatea, sistemul său instituționalizat al afacerilor externe, și rolurile sale în diverse colaborări contribuie la succesul orașului în îndeplinirea rolului de "poartă" spre direcția sud-vest.

Cuvinte-cheie: *Pécs, Balcani, funcția de oraș de tranzit, centru regional, Capitala Europeană a Culturii*

Introduction

Pécs, the possible gateway city of the Southern relation system

Within the borders of Hungary, created after the World War I, in geographical sense, the two leading towns managing the southern relationships are Szeged and Pécs. Their possible roles were recognized and their situation was examined early (Szabó, 1942). This paper studies Pécs.

Our hypothesis was that the town (as a settlement that has central administrative, service etc. functions) has certain capacity that allows it to fulfil an intermediary role towards the South or South-West direction. However, we suppose that there may be a lack of facilities and it is questionable to what extent the municipal government is aware of the actions needed in this respect. Moreover, it was thought to be essential to observe the role of the town in the reality of the region (South Transdanubia) and its position, which was achieved in the competition among the Hungarian cities and towns, supporting this international function.

From an European Union point of view, it is the political and cultural status of Pécs that raises interest: a city on the border of the present EU border, near the Balkans area. Pécs has functioning relationships with the Croatia that has recently joined EU and with some other countries that will not join the Union in the near future. As a Western-European town, getting in contact with those

countries is easier for Pécs; therefore, its intermediary role can be easily fulfilled too.

Pécs among the Hungarian towns of county rank

What appears as an "external environment" for city leaders? City leaders are much more interested in the competition among the cities in Hungary than in the international dimension. Its tradition comes from the urban development system of the previous state socialist regime based on distribution principles. At that time, the financial resources of the settlements were provided by the state budget and today they are still significant because the redistribution systems – partly in other constructions – have remained.

Pécs is far away from the "Development Corridor", it is the centre of the economically underdeveloped South-Transdanubian region: The driving industries of the economy in the 1990s disappeared and no new ones have taken their place. Pécs is a regional centre that received less than 2% of the foreign capital invested in Hungary within 15 years after the political transformation in 1990.

Pécs is the county seat of Baranya, where the GDP per capita barely exceeds one-third of that of the persons living in Budapest, and is almost two times lower than in Győr-Moson-Sopron county. In 1994 the GDP per capita was 84% of the national average, in 2002 it dropped to 73% and this rate is still decreasing. A remarkable discrepancy must be noted, since in spite of this negative economic

process, the city's regional position has strengthened. In the recent years, the importance of regional functions has increased. The question today is to what extent the town is able to act as a leading settlement for its region, and to promote the development of that. The leadership means tasks, additionally partly international tasks.

It is practical to review the result of this particular competition to see to what extent Pécs has been able to fulfil and strengthen its position as a regional centre, suitable for serving an international role, too.

The significance of the cities of county rank in the Hungarian settlement town network is regularly measured. Studying the results of these surveys (Csapó, 2002, Pap, 2002) we can observe the situation, the strong points and the deficiencies of Pécs determining its chances and limits in the urban network competition.

The competition is taking place for a more powerful and complete role and regional functions (which means having certain functions over several counties!) in the recent processes of regionalisation, decentralisation and deconcentration.

The previously mentioned surveys, carried out towards the end of the millennium, demonstrated 80 regional functions. Their number grew fast in a ten-year period; from 1990 to 2000 (approximately 24 new regional institutions were established). The new functions, performed mainly on the fields of economy and service, have changed the map of regional functions (e.g. hypermarkets).

The surveys, conducted in 1992, 1995, 1998 and 2001, ranked Pécs on the highest level of a 1 to 5 point scale, together with Szeged and Debrecen. They are considered to be complete, developed or definite regional centres. The surveys clearly indicated Győr and Miskolc on the second level with some missing roles. Later some smaller differences occurred in the case of the other towns during the next surveys.

The most complete research was done by Csapó (Csapó, 2002) who studied the regional roles on plenty of fields such as the state, deconcentrated bodies, economy, infrastructure, education, culture, health care and the social field. Pécs had by far the highest scores among the towns of county rank, followed by Debrecen and Szeged. The standard deviations were extraordinary because the rest of the cities/towns stood between Hódmezővásárhely with 2 points and Pécs with 101 points.

Pécs also won the competition of new regional functions between 1990 and 2000 (it gained 27 new regional functions), followed by Szeged and Debrecen (23-23).

The result of the survey shows that a strong concentration of the regional functions has occurred in the network of towns of county rank since the

end of the communism. The winners are the circle of towns conventionally accepted as regional centres (Pécs, Szeged, Debrecen, Győr, Miskolc), also in Tamás Csapó's research findings (Csapó, 2002).

Reanalysing the surveys we can say that the period between 1990 and 2000 was a successful one for Pécs (Table 1). If we think it over a bit more, we can see that the situation is rather contradictory.

The effect of development in regional functions spread not on the relations of the whole Hungarian city network but only influenced the result of the competition among cities for the function of a regional centre mainly. The results of the survey should not be taken as absolute because though the regional functions influence the life of the settlements, they cover only certain fields of livability. Thus, they partly determine the opinions about the city.

The city's economic structure, competitiveness, international integration, employment opportunities, mainly its expansion and the local income have as strong (or even stronger) effect on the city life as the previously listed regional functions (Pap, 2002, 2006).

All in all, we can state that the town's role as a regional centre is not questionable from the professional point of view. However, it does not mean that the second biggest town of the region, Kaposvár, did not compete for its political influence. Now the political debates of the past years seem to quiet down slowly.

According to our research, the evaluation reflected in the surveys mentioned above comes not from the city's excellent achievements, but rather from the functional and general underdevelopment of the surrounding area (the region) and its towns. *Indeed, none of the Hungarian regions are expressed, represented or reflected by a regional centre as significantly as South Transdanubia by Pécs.*

It means a new dimension that the town received the title of European Capital of Culture and by this it gained place in the new circle of (European) cities. Its consequences are very positive. Though, this increasing potential can be realized only by an active policy of foreign relations.

In the 1990s we carried out researches on the approach under what conditions a city can fulfil the role of a regional centre (Pap, 2002). We assumed an ideal condition, regarding it basic at that time, and studied to what extent it was present in the Hungarian city network. It is a completely different approach from that of Tamás Csapó. In the examined group of settlements of town rank, those towns whose size, legal and administrative functions were far behind the towns of county rank, had features that made them outstanding among the settlements. Such towns are, for example, Siófok, Keszthely or Esztergom. In our study below, we also used the results of the survey conducted between 1998 and 2001.

Table 1: The order of the Hungarian towns of county rank

Regional functions (institutions)				
No.	Order by the number of the functions		By the weighted scores	
1	Pécs	60	Pécs	101
2	Debrecen	58	Debrecen	95
3	Szeged	56	Szeged	94
4	Miskolc	44	Miskolc	71
5	Győr	40	Győr	60
6	Szombathely	30	Veszprém	42
7	Veszprém	29	Szombathely	39
8	Kecskemét	24	Sopron	32
9	Szolnok	23	Székesfehérvár	31
10	Székesfehérvár	21	Szolnok	31
11	Kaposvár	20	Kaposvár	30
12	Sopron	19	Kecskemét	29
13	Nyíregyháza	16	Eger	21
14	Zalaegerszeg	16	Zalaegerszeg	21
15	Eger	15	Nyíregyháza	20
16	Békéscsaba	14	Békéscsaba	18
17	Szekszárd	6	Tatabánya	7
18	Tatabánya	6	Szekszárd	6
19	Nagykanizsa	4	Nagykanizsa	5
20	Dunaújváros	3	Salgótarján	5
21	Salgótarján	3	Dunaújváros	4
22	Hódmezővásárhely	2	Hódmezővásárhely	2

Source: Tamás Csapó, 2002

The South Transdanubian Region and Pécs

In the whole of Hungary, in the south-west strategic direction, the area of relations is the geographically determined South Transdanubia. History strategic routes have been constantly passing through this area, laying down the basic features of spatial structure and the situation of Pécs.

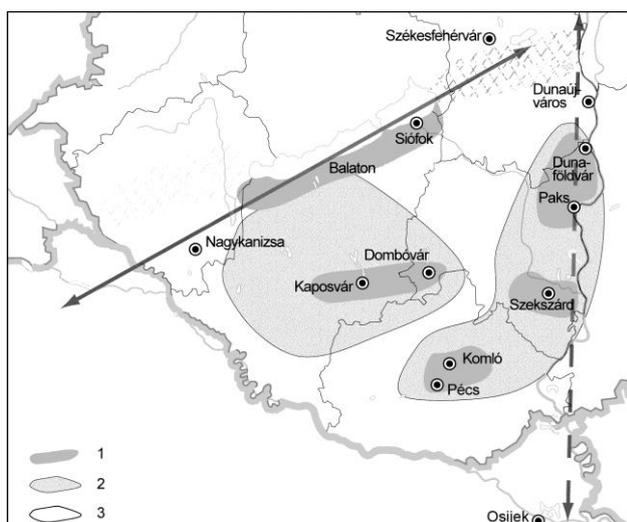


Figure 1: Structural problems of South-Transdanubia

Source: Pap, 2006, p.15

Pécs – as the map above indicates – can be found in a transitional zone between the two main spatial structural lines. Due to its population, institutional, cultural and political weight, its function as a regional centre is evident, but recently it has been questioned from several aspects with the disappearance of mining and energy sector which encouraged development in the last decades.

The changing of function (from a mining-industrial centre to a modern service-industrial centre) took place by partly spontaneous and partly planned processes. However, the lost industrial workplaces and functions could not be completely replaced by the new jobs. It might be the main reason of the present crisis and the strong impacts of the crisis.

The city in the region is represented by its administrative, health-social, commercial and educational-cultural functions. The completed retailing capacity is quite essential and significant for the whole geographical region. The educational functions are decisively connected to the university and some of the town's secondary schools. The regional function in employment lags behind the previously mentioned ones.

Other urban areas of the region have also gone through some changes. Kaposvár underwent enormous changes in the last decade. There were considerable investments in the town's

infrastructure, although as for the economic functions, the results are more moderate. The motorway construction and the new bridge over the Danube River created additional chances for Szekszárd. At the same time, the processes that would have exerted positive effects on economy and livability have not started yet.

According to the survey mentioned earlier (Csapó, 2002), the competition for regional positions has resulted as following: the first place of Pécs in the country can hardly be disputed. Kaposvár finished in the middle of the list of cities of county rank, in position 11, Szekszárd occupied the position 17 with only one of the county towns (Salgótarján) behind it. Located in South Transdanubia, but integrated into West Transdanubia, Nagykanizsa ranks 19th on the list (Zalaegerszeg, the county town of Zala, is on position 14).

On the one hand the results of our survey between 1998 and 2001 partly overlap with the above mentioned ones, on the other hand, in international dimensions other settlements also appear on our "map", such as Siófok, Mohács and to some extent Szigetvár. These settlements possess features and functions (the international tourism of Siófok, the function of a port in Mohács and the cultural heritage of Szigetvár) that make them important factors when establishing international relationships.

The role of marketing in strengthening the "gateway city" function

During the years following the political transformation, the towns of Central Europe and also Hungary started using the system of way and means related to place marketing.

Nowadays, new elements have appeared besides motivating factors of place marketing activity, such as utilising constraints (being competitive rather than underdeveloped) and opportunities (numerous settlement development programmes, tender opportunities, EU supports etc.) and therefore the necessity of marketing, managed by local authorities, in regional policy has become evident.

Marketing strategy and practice have become determining tools of regional development, settlement organisation and planning.

An advantage of city marketing is that it does not only include but points out the traditional idea according to which the city should be treated as a potential or 'product', and we have to win the correspondent target group to 'consume' it. According to a modern interpretation, the city – similarly to business marketing – can (and has to) be shaped and developed in compliance with the needs of potential consumers. Consequently, regional policy is inseparably connected to the notion of city-marketing and market-oriented city-

planning, mainly through country planning and city development plans, which bear key importance in defining the dimensions of city product and therefore increase the city's real market value in the competition of regions.

Ambitions for expanding the Southern, South-Western relation system of Pécs have already appeared in the practice of city-marketing. Besides the fact that the town is mainly a residential and working place, a target for investments, it is a touristic attraction too. This is the reason why visitors and tourist represent our main target group (according to touristic terminology, a tourist is the person who spends at least one night in a given destination).

In 2010, because of geographical proximity, it was planned to enhance inbound tourism from Yugoslav countries as single-day visitors or tourists to stay several nights. The Tourism Destination Management Organisation of Pécs, established by those participating in the sector of tourism, was responsible for the marketing. Besides them, numerous other participants took part in the marketing procedure (Pécs2010 Management Centre, Hungarian Tourism Plc., Regional Marketing Directorate etc.). We critically state, that maybe it was the multitude of participants, the lack of proper cooperation between them and the belated ECC communication public procurement that resulted in the city's miscarriage, namely, Pécs could not execute commendable the city-marketing and the tourism-marketing activities. As a result of the facts mentioned above, the number of visitors and nights spent at hotels in 2010 was not sustainable; a significant decrease was perceptible in 2011.

The geopolitical efforts of Pécs, however, were encouraged by the Hungarian Tourism Plc., and the South Transdanubian Regional Marketing Directorate was responsible for directing the marketing campaign of national tourism targeting the Southern countries. The preliminary data of 2011 – in spite of the overall perceptible negative tendency – show hopeful signs.

Hungary and South Europe – the role of Pécs

Today a town with such size and functions as Pécs needs to reconsider its place and role in the international dimensions in the world, dramatically changed by globalization processes. It is particularly important to find the right spatial scales and dimensions of cooperative relationships.

In this case we are talking about a rural town located in Hungary, a country intensely concentrated in the agglomeration of the capital city. Analysing the foreign relationships of Pécs we cannot avoid surveying the foreign and foreign economic relations at state level, too.

Responsibilities and tasks are assigned to Pécs considering its geographical location, traditional relationships and the National Regional Development Concept, the so called south-west strategic dimension. This region is spanning from Bosphorus to Cape Roca, the western most point of Europe.

Below we are going to examine the town's international situation regarding two respects. One

of them is that Pécs was awarded the title of European Capital of Culture (ECC) in 2010. It means that its features had been recognized among Europe's most significant cultural cities. As being the member of the elite club of ECC cities, listed in the table below, it had the possibility to be well-known in Europe (Table 2).

Table 2: Previous European Capitals of Culture according to Eurostat

Year	Name	Country	Population (in thousand)*	Administrative rank
1985	Athens	GR	3,188/746	Capital city
1986	Florence	IT	367	Regional centre
1987	Amsterdam	NL	1,021/743	Capital city
1988	Berlin	DE	3,395	Capital city
1989	Paris	FR	9,645/2,154	Capital city
1990	Glasgow	SC	632	Biggest city
1991	Dublin	IR	506	Capital city
1992	Madrid	ES	3,129	Capital city
1993	Antwerp	BE	461	County
1994	Lisbon	PO	565	Capital city
1995	Luxembourg	LU	76	Capital city
1996	Copenhagen	DK	1,085	Capital city
1997	Thessaloniki	GR	801/364	Regional centre
1998	Stockholm	SE	1,212/782	Capital city
1999	Weimar	DE	65	County seat
2000	Avignon	FR	91	County seat
2000	Bergen	NO	218	County seat
2000	Bologna	IT	374	Regional centre
2000	Brussels	BE	145	Capital city
2000	Helsinki	FI	561	Capital city
2000	Cracow	PL	757	Voivodina centre
2000	Reykjavik	IC	116	Capital city
2000	Prague	CZ	1182	Capital city
2000	Santiago	ES	93	Regional centre
2001	Porto	PO	263	Regional centre
2001	Rotterdam	NL	992/589	County seat
2002	Bruges	BE	117	Regional centre
2002	Salamanca	ES	353	County seat
2003	Graz	AT	245	Regional centre
2004	Geneva	IT	620	Regional centre
2004	Lille	FR	225	Regional centre
2005	Cork	IR	119	Regional centre
2006	Patras	GR	186	Regional centre
2007	Luxembourg	LU	76	Capital city
2007	Sibiu	RO	155	County seat
2008	Liverpool	EN	478	5 th biggest city
2008	Stavanger	NO	177	County seat
2009	Linz	AT	188	Regional centre
2010	Pécs	HU	157	Regional centre
2010	Essen	DE	585	County seat
2010	Istanbul	TR	8,803	Biggest city

**in case of significant difference first the agglomeration then the population of administrative area
Source: Norbert Pap – Péter Reményi (2007) 2008*

In 2010 the honoured title-holders of ECC were Essen, Pécs and Istanbul. The chosen cities (the countries were given) could be related to the Danube region. The choice of cities also referred to the importance of the Balkans and Eurasian Turkey.

Its symbolic message was clear; Pécs can accomplish an European mission if it acts as an intermediary between Europe and the quite different Balkans and Turkey. In addition, it is expressed by

the motto of ECC (Borderless City) and the title "Gateway to the Balkans".

The foundations of the ECC concept were determined in 5 pillars, 2 of which could serve as a basis for strengthening the South-Western intermediary role of Pécs:

- Pécs is a multicultural city. In the past Latin, Turkish, German, Croatian, and Hungarian cultures were layered; today Pécs is the most important location of German, Croatian and Gipsy cultures in Hungary.

- Pécs is a cultural gateway to the Balkan, a part of Europe that has not joined the Union yet (Borderless City 2005. p25. Pécs 2005 Európa Centrum KHT.).

The tender of Pécs highlighted specific cultural experiences of the European frontier. One of its main aims was to refer to the joint meaning of independence and interconnectivity within the scope of cultural development at the frontier, and to reevaluate the standard notions of centre and periphery. Pécs reinforced the idea according to which we should not only think in terms of a nation-state but in terms of transnational regions too. The aims of developing the Southern cultural area and appointing Pécs as a dominant cultural centre were formulated in the spirit of previous ideas. This function may be established by new cultural institutions (Kodály Concert Hall and Conference Centre or the Zsolnay Cultural Quarter) built within the framework of ECC.

When consciously preparing for this role, three so-called messages for Europe were composed within the ECC concept:

- The Pécs2010 European Capital of Culture wanted to show the cultural experience of a European borderland – the Southern area reaching from Trieste through Tuzla to Timișoara – very distinct from the Western ones;

- Pécs is a gateway town to the Balkans: It may be the first European Capital of Culture that brings the colourful culture of the Balkans into its programme;

- The Pécs2010 ECC highly desires to deal with cultural heritages of East-Central European socialism.

The mentality of messages for Europe influenced the structure of cultural programmes in 2010 too. Pécs materialized intensive cooperation with the cities of Osijek, Zagreb, Samobor, Pula, Novi Sad, Kanjiža, Tuzla, Lendava, Arad and Istanbul.

Pécs became the first European Capital of Culture that opened towards the colourfulness of the Balkans, helped the country in expanding its South-West European cultural and administrative relation system.

The influence of the Danube-Drava-Sava Euro-region is moderate, it cannot be measured in the life of either the city or the wider area. The significance of Pécs has increased in value because it has better

position as a town of an EU member state in the management of cooperation. However, tangible results and advantages – according to the interviews made during the survey – cannot be pointed out. Apart from this, the primary scope of international relations can be found in this dimension, though the topics, the methods and the purpose of cooperation are questionable.

In the period of 2007-2013, the current CADSES transnational cooperation area of the EU with the aim of territorial development was divided into a northern and a southern part. Hungary participates in both. The Managing Authority and secretariat for SEES (*South East European Space*) is located in Budapest. It offers Pécs certain advantages in the South East European Space. With the further development of the Danube-Drava-Sava cooperation, with the popularity and relationships gained as an ECC and with creating international institutions and functions it may have a chance to fulfil cultural (and educational) functions of the region.

The town's institutionalized system of foreign relations

In our study we have looked at the network of institutional relations in a wide range of international relationships. We have elaborated the relations in three institutional dimensions (*Pécs 1. as a town of county rank, 2. as the centre of Baranya County, 3. as the centre of the South Transdanubian region*).

First, we have studied the partner relationships of Pécs, as a town of county rank (TCR). The partners have assessed the importance of their relationships on a five-point scale in the strategy of external relations of the South Transdanubian region. In the survey the TCR gave 24 relations and assessed them. Six out of them – the French, the North American, the Israeli and the Turkish – located far away from Pécs – were assessed less "important" while the other 18 as "very important". Eight out of the eighteen are ECC.

The size and functional distribution of the cities are various; they do not reflect any particular strategies. The population of the largest city is nearly 10 million, two of them are capital cities and the rest are different in size and function. With such broad differences in size and functions, the question arises how long the relationships can last in the future.

In geographical distribution the biggest group is the South East European Space (with 10 partner relationships altogether). Central Europe has five relationships. One city indicates the significance of Northern Europe (the Finnish relation), while three mark the importance of Western Europe (the British, the Dutch and the French relations). There is one city from Southern Europe (the Italian relation) and

the others are outside Europe (two from the Middle East and two from North America).

The space efficiency principle seems to apply to the geographical distribution of partner relationships. The consideration of how important a relationship is in inverse altogether proportion to the distance. Moreover, the number of the relations changes proportionally to the distance. The network of partner relationships is the densest in South East Europe and it corresponds to the perceived role of Pécs as a gateway town to this macro-region.

The town (as the obvious centre of Baranya County) is closely linked to the county's international relationships even if they are institutionally not connected to the municipality of Pécs. It has smaller significance.

The institutional centre of Baranya County in Pécs possesses 19 partner relationships. On a five-pointed scale there are partners at each level. The space efficiency principle also applies here, so the number of the partners falls proportionally to the distance. Analysing the geographical distribution, it turns out that the South East European relations of strategic importance are remarkably missing and the rate of mentioning them is rather low, too. The developed Central and Western European Spaces received special attention.

The role of Pécs as the central space in the South Transdanubian region is also relevant. Due to the underdevelopment of the institutional system and its relatively short history, the manifold relationships must be treated with reservations, because they basically belong to the regional development agency, a public company (called South Transdanubian Regional Development Council and Agency). Forty-four partner relationships can be found on the list, but the partners' status and the characteristics of the relationships are extremely varied. Besides the potentially high-profile relationships, several non-institutionalized relations with less significance are on the list, too. On the whole, the application of the principle of space efficiency can also be seen in this case. The relationships have been primarily established with Central and Western European partners according to the orientation of the agency motivated by the EU tender system for allocating funds.

The three institutional relationships only partly show orientation correspondence. The relationships of TCR are partly consistent with the macro-regional centre function. Furthermore, strategic consideration cannot be experienced except for the principle of space efficiency. The county and regional leadership does not carry out tasks defined by the macro-regional centre role in forming foreign relationships.

Cross-border relationships of settlements and regions

The ECC programme in 2010 helped to sell the "cultural economy" of the town and its region in a broader market. In this approach it is worth examining what these potential market areas were and what relations they had with Pécs. Six territorial dimensions, cooperation areas of special quality had been differentiated that we would like to introduce below (Pap, 2008).

"Romans in Hungary and the Christian Heritage" dimension

One of the prides of the region and Pécs is the World Heritage site of the Early Christian Cemetery (*first of all the Cella Septichora*). Its image-forming significance is quite apparent, although its role as a tourist attracting destination is not that remarkable. Besides the Hungarian ones, the Croatian, the North-Italian and the Austrian territories were potential cooperative market areas where the common cultural heritage and the similar (Catholic) roots with previous contacts could provide the base of cooperation. This is the region where the Mary cult shrines occur in large numbers. The region shows a considerable overlap between the regions and settlements of the so called *Southern Cultural Zone concept in ECC competition*.

The Danubian dimension

In this case the Danubian dimension means that for centuries the region has been connected to the cultural, transportation and innovative corridor of the region along the banks of the Danube River. The fact that a German city, Essen was chosen to be one of the other three European Capitals of Culture in 2010 is a peculiar circumstance. The Germans living in the Danubian region (see *Drang nach Osten, Donauschwaben, Schwäbische Türker*) played a decisive role in the urban and economic development, the process of forming bourgeoisie and adapting to the European systems in this particular region, thus establishing strong links among the Balkans, Central Europe and the European Core Area. The effects of these results are still alive today; it is enough to mention for example the presence of the several German joint ventures in the region. The primary target areas of economic relations development - beside the Carpathian Basin - may be in Austria and in South Germany.

The Western Balkan dimension

In the past centuries the Danubian region witnessed not only the migration of German settlers making businesses and creating lasting cultural values, but from the south to north several other ethnic groups chased by the Turkish invasion or together with the Turks entered the region as well.

That is why it is possible to establish links to the Balkans dimension. Its cultural-social contents are present in different forms in Hungary (e.g. minority culture).

This dimension still exists today with cross-border cooperation, euro-regional organization and with commercial and tourism networks. The Croatian, Bosnian, Montenegrin, Bulgarian, Greek etc. relations also exist in the region, and there are still numerous possibilities to enhance them. For the economy of Pécs the dimension as a target market, business partnership and (for the cultural industry) content/topic can mean an access point. However, this chance is questioned by the fact that this spatial/cultural dimension has slowly disappeared from the ECC programme.

The Turkish-Islamic dimension

The only non-EU member of the ECC project for 2010 was Istanbul. The size of this immense city (population: 9 million – including the agglomeration: 19 million) and its economic and cultural potential are bigger than the same potentials of Hungary. The issues of security in connection with the Turkish, the Eastern (Romania, Bulgaria) and the Western Balkans process of accession draw the attention of the EU to the Turkish-Islamic dimension. The South Transdanubian region possesses Turkish-Islamic material (mainly architectural) and cultural heritage due to the Turkish occupation in Hungary. This fact provides possibilities for displaying this particular dimension by the means of the cultural industry of Pécs. Those countries waiting for the accession or those which stand on various stages of the accession process are on a lower “integration level” than Hungary. In regard to certain educational and cultural services Pécs has favourable possibilities for cooperation with the Western Balkans.

The Protestant dimension

The uniqueness of the South Transdanubian region is that many of its areas lagging behind and its inner peripheries are dominated by the Protestant tradition, in fact, Protestantism is the chief source of their material-cultural heritage. The Protestant communities of the Ormánság, Zselic and Sárköz micro-regions exist even today. By their in-migration to Pécs a considerable Protestant community has been established here as well.

The traditional architecture and culture of the South Transdanubian region is mainly of Protestant nature. In the region’s cultural image the significance of this heritage exceeds by large the proportion of the present number of Protestants.

The Protestant dimension can be activated only if the Hungarians of Protestant tradition living outside the country (but still in the Carpathian Basin) and in East Hungary enter the market of the region’s

cultural industry. *(It is extremely important for us that the Hungarians living the closest to Hungary in Slavonia and Voivodina, and the greatest number of Hungarian ethnic minority living in Romania are mainly of Protestant tradition.)*

This dimension offers the possibility for cultural identities for those Swiss, Dutch and other northern Protestant communities that traditionally show interest in Hungary, thus forming a significant, solvent market segment for the cultural industry.

For Pécs and its region the increased awareness in this dimension may induce other market relations and investments.

The dimension of wine

From the three biggest southern peninsulas of Europe, the Iberian and the Italian Peninsula are the true centres of wine-production. The climatic and other production capabilities and the professional-cultural heritage provide the prosperity of this particular economic sector. The production circumstances in the Balkan Peninsula are at least as advantageous as the above mentioned endowments. However, in many aspects the Balkan Peninsula is lagging behind these regions. The most characteristic product of Pécs and the region is the wine and the related services of cultural content. On the one hand, the establishment of viticulture was connected to the Roman times, on the other hand, to the South Slavic groups escaping from the Turkish invasion. The issue to make relationships with other cities and regions of similar capabilities in this dimension also arises.

With more precise segmentations the target groups can be defined and the advantages can be realized by applying the proper means to it.

Potential Place of Pécs in Foreign Relations

The town of Pécs needs to pay attention to two main factors in its development strategy: one is geographical and the other is functional. In regard to its geographical location, historical traditions and macro regional tasks given after the national and the EU’s relations strategy, Pécs has to develop its relationships and capabilities towards the Balkans and Southern Europe where it can use its comparative advantages. In other directions it has to face stronger competitors with better capabilities. However, in relations with the Balkans and Southern Europe it has no rivals. In addition, its Hungarian regional leadership is obvious, too.

Analysing the macro-regional interstate and inter society relationships we can specify certain deficiencies, gaps that the city can fill in. These deficiencies could have been defined according to the analysis introduced in this book. Several areas can be identified. The first of them is in the southern neighbourhood of Pécs.

In this case the town may fulfil the role of a cultural and educational development sub-centre in the period of 2007-2013 in the EU's territorial development (*where Hungary received leadership*) in the southern part of the former CADSES, now South East European Space. Besides the Managing Authority and secretariat in Budapest, Pécs might be entrusted with cultural tasks suitable for its profile.

The ECC programme had paramount importance accomplishing the above mentioned purposes but at the time of our study we could not see concrete results and evidences that the city was able to exploit the opportunities. The delay in the developments had already determined the opinions about it. The planned institutions and investments offer potentially enormous capabilities. However, it is certain that not the events and the year of 2010 but the structures also operating after 2010 will determine the place of Pécs in foreign relations.

Conclusion

Pécs, the fifth biggest town in Hungary has outstanding functions in the Hungarian urban network. Being the closest among the Hungarian large towns to the Balkans, it serves as a natural gateway town to the newly joint Croatia and to the other states of the Balkans Peninsula waiting for the accession to the European Union. It is also a well developed and multifunctional regional centre, whose role in the development of Hungarian regionalism is unquestionable. After Budapest, Pécs is the Hungarian town with the most varied and colourful cultural traditions, with the largest number of cultural assets from the ethnic minority traditions and religious heritage through industrial heritage right to the trends in contemporary arts. This diverse cultural heritage was recognised by the

European Union when Pécs was awarded the European Capital of Culture of 2010 (more exactly, one of the capitals of culture, the other two cities being Essen in Germany and Istanbul in Turkey, a candidate country of the EU to which Pécs and the wider region of South Transdanubia serves as a natural gateway of the core areas of the European Union). The European Capital of Culture year was a powerful tool for Pécs to place itself on the cultural map of Europe and to gain a new image as a strong cultural town, opposed to the former industrial town image.

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