

RESEARCHES REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OF TIMIȘ COUNTY

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Abstract

In this paper, the authors conducted a study on the economic development of Timiș County, as well as its SWOT analysis. The paper concludes with the Development Strategy of Timiș County, the main conclusions drawn from the conducted researches and bibliographical references. Within the paper, there are presented theoretical aspects related to rural area concept, followed by the physical- geographical characteristics of Timiș County. Throughout the paper, there are analyzed the existing demographic aspects found in Timiș County. The end part of the paper represents a translation in statistical terms of the main economic phenomena which are recorded in Timiș County. There are references made towards agriculture, forestry, industry, services, trade, tourism, as economic activities carried out in Timis County. Following these researches, at the end part of the paper, the authors have compiled a SWOT analysis of Timiș County, proposing in the same time a strategy for its development.

Key words: county, development, economic, strategy

INTRODUCTION

The paper aimed to analyze the economic development of Timis County based on conducted research and deep documentation. Theoretical aspects related to rural area concept, followed by the physical- geographical characteristics of Timiș County have been presented. Also, the existing demographic aspects have been also approached. At the end of the paper, the main economic phenomena were statistically characterized regarding the following aspects: agriculture, forestry, industry, services, trade, tourism, as economic activities carried out in Timis County.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

In order identify a development strategy of Timis County, the authors of this paper have conducted a multi-criteria analysis of its level (physical-geographical, demographic, economic and social), where upon they have prepared a SWOT analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Geographical location of Timis County gives it a privileged position as the westernmost county

of Romania. Timis County is bordered by: to the west by Serbia and Montenegro and Hungary, to the north is bordered by Arad County, to the east by Hunedoara County, to the south by Caras-Severin County.

The county is crossed by rivers Timis and Bega, and pleasant climate is temperate continental with Mediterranean influences.

In Timis County meet three major landforms, arranged gradually from the plain to the west (75 m) mountain in the east (1374 m).

Plain occupies over 50% of the county and is part of the Western Plain, the basic unit of Romania's relief. He altitudes ranging between 80 m and 200 m.

Western Hills is about 20% of the Timis County. Just as fields are characterized by their penetration in height above the relief forming depressions so-called "course", the particular landscape. Largest peaks correspond to the heights northwest of Poiana Rusca massif (800 - 1300 m), culminating with the tip Fades (1380 m).

The administrative organization of the county includes two cities (Timisoara and Lugoj), 8 cities (Buziaș Ciacova, Deta, Faget, Gataia, Jimbolia, Recaș and Sânnicolau MAre) and 85 communes. The county capital is Timisoara Municipality.



Fig. 1. Timis County Map

At Timiș County level, in the year of 2010, the total population was 679,695 people of which 353,759 women and 325,936 men number.

In urban areas there were 198,476 males and 223,774 females.

In rural areas there were 129,985 women and 127,460 of the total of 257,445. Population density (residential) is 78.2%.

In 2011, at Timis County level, the stable population was of 650,544 persons and the number of population households was of 241,098 households.

Female population is majority, representing 51.8% of the resident population.

At Timiș County level, in 2011, population density was of 78.2 inhabitants per square kilometer.

Most densely populated localities are: Timisoara (2,360.2 people per square kilometer), Dumbrăvița (381.1 inhabitants per square kilometer), Lugoj (377.0 inhabitants per square kilometer), Deta (180.7 inhabitants per square kilometer), Ghiroda (175.5 inhabitants per square kilometer), Giroc (153.3 inhabitants per square kilometer), Jimbolia (92.2 inhabitants per square kilometer), Cărpiniș (90.0 inhabitants per square kilometer), Sag (86.0 inhabitants per square kilometer), Moșnița Noua (84.2 inhabitants per square kilometer), Giarmata (83.5 inhabitants per square kilometer), Sânnicolau Mare (83.0 inhabitants per square kilometer), Tomnatic (81.4 inhabitants per square kilometer), etc.

Employed population in Timis County is of 318.6 persons (third place in the country), distributed by branches of activity mainly on industry and agriculture, as follows:

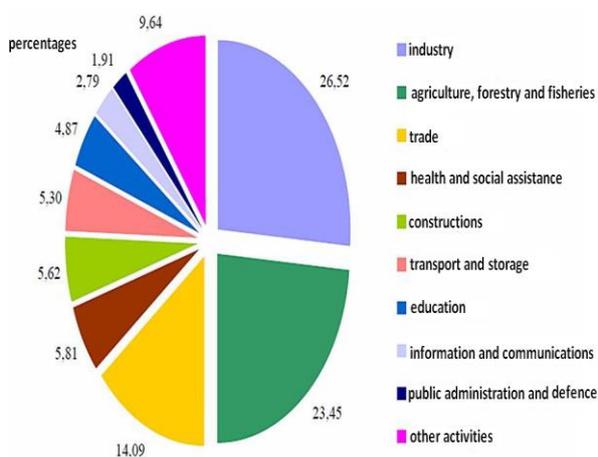


Fig. 2. Timis County population structure by branches of activity

Labor resources represent 454.8 people of which the employed civilian population - total of 318.6 people.

Employees - total of 210.5 thousand of people of which the majority work in industry 80.3 thousand persons, followed by agriculture, forestry and fishing of 71.6 thousand and 45.7 thousand work in wholesale and retail, repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles.

Registered unemployed in 2010 are a total of 12,367 of which 5,678 women; of total unemployed 8,111 people receive unemployment benefits of which 3,558 are women. In 2011, at Timis County level there were 6,280 unemployed persons.

Unemployment rate in the county of Timis is 3.7% in 2010 and 1.9% in 2011.

Timis County has rich natural resources: oil, natural gas, manganese, basalt, marble, building materials, mineral and thermal water, wood, wildlife, etc.

Agriculture is well developed especially in Timis and Arad Counties, located in Western Plain of the country.

Timis County ranks first in the country both in terms of agricultural area (702,066 ha) and arable land (533,122 ha).

Timis County enjoys a diverse and complex industry, here being the place where many

investors, domestic and foreign make their presence.

The main industry branches are: machine building, electrotechnical and electronic, chemical and petrochemical, textile, leather and footwear, wood processing, building materials, food industry.

In Timis County people have higher living standards and a comfortable traditionally living, being characterized by a high share of homes with plumbing, wiring and central heating.

Table 1. SWOT Analysis of Timis County

Strengths	Weaknesses
GDP per capita in the county is higher than the national average, on the second place by country after Bucharest Municipality	Reduced number of SMEs in rural and remote areas
The diversity of business areas of companies	Increasing trend in the number of unemployed due to economic crisis
Industrial tradition of the county	Insufficient cooperation between industry and cooperation
Strong development of the private sector in trade and services	Reduced number of companies that have implemented management systems at international standards
Low unemployment compared to other counties	Labor productivity within the enterprises is below the national average
Development above the national average in terms of technology information use within the enterprises	Industry decline in the mining and metals businesses
Strong competition in the small business	High staff fluctuation between different economic sectors

Timis County development strategy is based on several strategic goals and basic objectives, such as follows:

Strategic Objectives:

1. Improving living standards;
2. Creating new jobs;
3. Protection and regeneration of environment;
4. Increase local competitiveness internationally.

Table 2. SWOT Analysis of Timis County

Opportunities	Threads
The development in Timisoara City of a center to promote economic relations between CEFTA member countries	Invasion of market with imported products
Increasing investors number	Decreasing within the rate of privatization process
Simplifying customs procedures and visa regime	The possibility of maladjustment by economic agents to quality conditions imposed by the EU
Increasing the number of SMEs that are generating new jobs	The development of underground economy
The existence of some production spaces and of some production capacities unused	Tax policy is continuously changing and this fact makes difficult the effective planning of a business
Development and improvement of labor legislation	Illegal employed labor force
Increasing business competitiveness by investing in R &D-innovation projects	

Specific objectives:

Agriculture:

- workforce training for agriculture and complementary services;
- protecting the rural space as ecological living space and stimulating the production of organic food, revitalizing and preserving social structures typical to rural life;
- fostering the development of health system in rural areas.

Industry:

- modernization and development of physical infrastructure;
- Improving and adapting the level of qualification - retraining in the field of workforce;
- creating an environment conducive to innovative activities in the field of business support infrastructure.

Services:

- workforce training to improve the quality of services;
- creating a suitable information environment by diversify the quality of infrastructure;

- diversification of education correlated with the growing trend of service sector;
- encouragement of private initiative in the field of health services.

Tourism:

- Strengthening the economic basis of tourism through improving the quality of infrastructure of tourist services;
- creating new jobs and workforce training to improve the quality of tourism services;
- revival of spas and treatment emplacements in order to improve the offer of leisure services and health maintenance.

CONCLUSIONS

- Timis County ranks first in terms of living indicators level, GDP per capita is about 40 % higher than the national average.
- However there are large differences in terms of development between urban and rural space, the latter one is facing problems especially linked to poor infrastructure development. Therefore there is risen the need of developing some effective investment programs to develop infrastructure in these areas. There are still many localities and villages where, for example, there is no running water, sewer or gas distribution network.
- Another issue of Timis County is represented by labor migration to EU countries, a phenomenon with negative impact on the manufacturing industry of the county. It may be mentioned as well the migration of rural youth to cities or to other countries where they have found other ways of living than those offered in the place of birth. These aspects make necessary to find measures to motivate the workforce, to increase the attractiveness of work in the country, both in cities and in rural areas.

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