

АЛМАНАХ

на Варненския свободен университет
„Черноризец Храбър“

СЕРИЯ

АРХИТЕКТУРА
И
СТРОИТЕЛСТВО

Книжка 6



2012

НАУЧЕН АЛМАНАХ



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Редакционна колегия

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ЧЕРНОМОРСКО АКАДЕМИЧНО СЪТРУДНИЧЕСТВО ВТОРА МЕЖДУНАРОДНА РАБОТНА СРЕЩА „ЧЕРНОМОРСКИ РЕГИОН – ИНТЕГРАЦИЯ“ ВАРНА 19-20.11.2011.....	168
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BLACK SEA REGION OF TURKEY AS AN ENGINE OF CROSS BORDER COOPERATION

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Abstract

Black Sea region of Turkey is located in north part of the country at the intersection point of three continents as a bridge between Asia-Europe and Black Sea-Mediterranean Sea. The region occupies 18% of Turkey's territory and it is the third one in terms of area size in the country. Its shape looks like a stripe by 1400 km east-west length and 100-200 km north-south length. The population of the region is 8,439,213 based on the 2010 census that 66% of whom is active population contributes to the economy. 4,137,166 people live in cities and 4,301,747 people live in villages. This makes it the only one of the seven regions of Turkey in which more people live in rural rather than urban areas.

Black Sea region has the key importance to Europe both politically and economically. Policy experts and specialists in European Commission work on opportunities and risks of regional cooperation. The region, border on Bulgaria, Romania and Greece in Europe as well as Turkey as a candidate country covers former Soviet states of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Russia. The Black Sea links north to south and east to west by connecting Europe and Asia.

Recent history of the region is also very important in its increasing interest for EU and for the world as well. In the last two decades the Black Sea basin witnessed the transformation of the former communist societies and the impact of globalization.

This paper deals with key development potentials of the region considering cross border integration as transportation, tourism, cultural and architectural heritage in the basin.

1. Introduction

Black Sea lies along the north part of Turkey and forms Black Sea region of the country (Figure 1). The region is located at the intersection point of three continents as a bridge between Asia-Europe and Black Sea-Mediterranean Sea

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(Figure 2).



Figure 1: Location of Black Sea region in Turkey



Figure 2: Main cities of Black Sea region

Black Sea region owns its name from the Black Sea and is one of the seven geographical regions in Turkey lies on east of Sakarya lowland to Georgia border. The region is third among all regions in term of size as well as east-west width and therefore it is the region of maximum local time difference in the country. Respectively, the most developed and big cities of the region are Samsun, Trabzon and Ordu.

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The population of the region is 8,439,213 based on the 2010 census that 66% of whom is active population contributes to the economy. 4,137,166 people live in cities and 4,301,747 people live in villages. This makes it the only one of the seven regions of Turkey in which more people live in rural rather than urban areas.

According to the data of State Planning Organization - SPO in 2003, Black

Sea region is ranked as 5th in the ranking of the development (SPO, 2005). The fact that most of the population of the region lives in rural areas it is less developed in urbanism, transportation networks, infrastructure, tourism etc. and needs regional development plan.

2. Economic Development of the Region

In recent years, economic development in the region has been relatively encouraging. Particularly with changes and developments in Bulgaria, Romania, and Turkey the situation is going in positive way. These three countries are not only economic leaders in the Black Sea region, but also among the fastest growing economies. Following severe economic crises in the late 1990s and early 2000s, each country has conducted intense structural reforms resulting in rapid economic development and political stability.

In the case of Bulgaria and Romania, important roles have been played by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the EU, which have provided guidance for reform and sound economic policies. This has brought economic stability and unlike the past decade, reforms are not cyclical but consistent. The main pillar of economic transformation and growth has been privatization and restricting state control. As a result, Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) is increasing each year and the Black Sea countries register annual economic growth of between 5 and 8 percent. Despite general positive trends, economic development still remains below satisfactory levels and the pace differs between each country. There are several serious concerns at the state level that are valid for all countries and are problematic for the region's development as a whole. Most importantly, barriers to market access include weakness in the rule of law, corruption, excessive bureaucracy, and ineffective judicial systems. All these factors limit the ability of local entrepreneurs and foreign investors to do business.

Economic challenges of the region can be listed as below:

- Rule of law,
- Corruption,
- Politics,
- Balance of payments,
- Agriculture dependent economy,
- Free trade agreements,
- Energy,
- Infrastructure.

Regarding economic development, privatization, attracting FDI, and modernization of infrastructure should be at the forefront of all government agendas. In addition, restructuring the inefficient industries and encouraging entrepreneurship will stimulate growth and decrease the large current account deficits of the states in the Black sea area.

3. Strategic Key Points of the Region

Black Sea region has the key importance to Europe both politically and

economically. Policy experts and specialists in European Commission work on opportunities and risks of regional cooperation. The region, border on Bulgaria, Romania and Greece in Europe as well as Turkey as a candidate country covers former Soviet states of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine and Russia. The Black Sea links north to south and east to west by connecting Europe and Asia.

Recent history of the region is also very important in its increasing interest for EU and for the world as well. In the last two decades the Black Sea basin witnessed the transformation of the former communist societies and the impact of globalization.

Strategically the region is complicated and often meets disputes; however, the German Marshall Fund (GMF) considers the region as "a vital part of the southern flank in the Euro-Atlantic community against the potential instability in the Middle East". On the other hand according to the Bertelsmann Foundation's analysis, if EU is taken into consideration, Black Sea region is bottleneck of energy resources but the focal point of various cultures and dominations. Its strategic location, between the hydrocarbon reserves of the Caspian basin and energy-hungry Europe, places the Black Sea in a unique position. Oil, gas, transport and trade routes are all crucial in explaining its increasing importance.

Although the region is in high importance the real priorities, needs and potentials are still undervalued. It can be regarded with unsuccessful and ineffective vision for the future planning. Obviously, reassessment of the region itself by its natural resources, geographic position, development potential and its priorities and risks is crucially important. This will provide all actors involved with a better understanding of what can be done, as well as allowing them to develop innovative approaches to problems, thus enhancing the region's development.

All these facts show the strategic importance and potential for developing of the Black Sea region as well as cross border integration.

This paper deals with key development potentials of the region considering cross border integration as transportation, tourism, cultural and architectural heritage in the basin.

3.1 Transportation

By its strategically important location the region has a potential for developing transportation and logistics networks among the continents it integrates. There exists a developed regional motorway network and several highway connections to foreign countries. It is possible to reach from Balkans to Caucasus, Central Asia and Middle East by land transport. However the region has high potential for sea transport and maritime routes current usage is still poor and it is necessary to be improved. The region has an international potential to be a distribution and collection center for Europe, Balkans, Black Sea, Caucasus, Central Asia, Middle East, and North African countries. Regional dynamics make logistic an extremely important sector for regional economic development. In this context, Eastern Black Sea has many advantages in logistics and transportation.

- By Land Road; to the West and Balkans, to Iran, Iraq, Syria, Jordan, Georgia, Middle East and Gulf Countries,

- By RO-RO; to Italy, Russia and Asia, and other Black Sea Countries.

With its 540 km coastal line, the Eastern Black Sea region offers convenience for maritime facilities. Nevertheless, maritime transportation/shipping is not widespread. Total number of active seaports and piers (landing space) are 12 in the region. Some prominent ones are Giresun, Trabzon, Rize, Çayeli and Hopa ports.

3.2 Tourism

Eastern Black Sea has a very special position for Turkey through its warm climate, mountains, wide forests and glorious nature. Its peculiar characteristics creates possibilities for alternative tourism types, like water tourism, health and congress tourism, eco tourism, winter tourism, nature sports, and so on. It is possible to say that the nature of the region is still untouched and very rich with its ecology and endemic flora. Besides the natural beauties the long history of the region dated B.C. is another point of attraction. There are many cultural properties from Christian and Ottoman period.

Those who dislike the heat and humidity of the summer in the Mediterranean and Aegean regions of Turkey, escape to the plateau of the mountains in the Black Sea region which are almost permanently cloudy and receive immense amounts of rain and are very attractive with rich flora and fauna, forests, crater lakes, waterfalls, rivers, streams, mountain and nature walk, rafting, canoe and winter sports, hunting and fishing, grass skiing, healing water and local dishes.

Black Sea region is one of the richest areas in terms of rivers in Turkey. Kızılırmak River (Red river), the longest river of Turkey lies on Black Sea region and dumped into the Black Sea. Çoruh river with its length of 376 km is one of the world's fastest-flowing and the deepest river. Other important rivers of the region are Yeşilirmak and Sakarya rivers. Beside rivers there are so many natural and artificial lakes in the region. The most attractive natural lakes are Çağa, Melen (Efteni) and Abant.

There are four natural parks in the region boundaries. These are Maçka Altındere natural park within Trabzon province, Ilgaz Mountains natural park within Kastamonu and Çankırı provinces, Yedigöller (Seven Lakes) national park within Bolu, Zonguldak and Rize provinces and Kaçkar Mountains national park within Artvin province. Covering an area of 51,500 hectares Kaçkar Mountains itself has been declared as a national park in 1994.

Region is located within the boundaries of the four national parks. These are the province of Trabzon Maçka Altındere National Park, with the province of Kastamonu Ilgaz Mountain National Park is located in the province of Çankırı, which are adjacent to areas of Bolu province of Zonguldak province established a large part of Seven Lakes National Park and the town of Rize Camlihemsin, a part of the small town of Yusufeli in Artvin within the boundaries of the Kaçkar Mountains National Park. Covering an area of 51,500 hectares has been declared a national park in 1994 Kaçkar Mountains. Turkey, which is one of 33 National Park

area Hatila Valley National Park area within the boundaries of the central district, Hatila Hatila Valley Stream, and includes many side creeks. Karagol Sahara National Park, Turkey is one of 33 National Park area and is located within the boundaries of the town of Artvin Savsat consists of two separate field: These Karagol and the Sahara plateau.

3.3 Cultural and Architectural Heritage

The Black Sea geo-cultural region, as crossroads and a bond between Europe and Asia, East and West since early times, has its own specific features. Here different cultures, traditions and religions have intertwined, influenced and enriched each other. This gives the Black Sea area a prominent place of its own on the global cultural scene.

The Sumela Monastery is one of the most important heritage attractions in the region. The monastery is a Greek Orthodox monastery, standing at the foot of steep cliff facing the Altındere valley near to Trabzon city. The altitude of the construction is approximately 1200 m and it is a major tourist attraction of Altındere national park (Figure 3).



Figure 3: The Sumela monastery

Many monuments from this area have been inscribed on the World Heritage List which was established under the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage adopted by UNESCO Member States in 1972. Hagia Sophia in Istanbul is one of the most important listed buildings (Figure 4).



Figure 4: Hagia Sophia, Istanbul

Safranbolu is another UNESCO site, Site, the last and largest repository of 19th century, half-timbered Ottoman houses (Figure 5).



Figure 5: The view of Safranbolu

Beside heritage properties listed in the UNESCO Black Sea region includes the important vernacular architectural examples of Turkey. Traditional timber framed masonry infilled structures are the attraction and architectural heritage of the region as well as of Turkey. There are many well preserved buildings in the region constructed with different local traditional techniques and materials.

4. Conclusions

Black Sea basin as an important potential for developing cross border interrelations need to tackle tasks together with all border countries and allow NGOs and civil society to play role in shaping solutions. Universities, academicians and researchers should be integrated in practical works and projects in order to be a part of real solutions and development strategies in the region. Resources of cooperation might be listed as powerful subjects with creative aims, improvement of infrastructure, raising awareness of common history and roots in terms of culture, science and education particularly in young population. Taking into account these key points of cooperation the priorities of short term and long term action plan are protection of cultural heritage and natural resources, improvement of social, transportation, technical and touristic infrastructure.

Increasing importance of the region shows the essential need to meet emerging challenges and reinterpret the existing ones. The current strategic key points mentioned in the previous paragraphs encapsulate the main issues and the need to address the challenges they pose. All these are interconnected and trying to address one without dealing with the others is not possible or in other words wouldn't be really functional.

By addressing these key points this paper aims to contribute to joint vision and a common strategy for the Black Sea region by developing new aspect in areas of key concern. The goal is to provide input for new vision and long term strategy for the Black Sea as an engine of cross border cooperation. The priority areas are considered as in the list below:

- Strengthening of information, communication, transport, accessibility and connectivity and trade links within the region,
- Development of tourism initiatives and tourism networks to support traditional products and culture,
- Improvement of transport and infrastructure networks, their integration and planning of new cross border transport networks,
- Development of information data base for protecting the ecosystem,
- Support educational relations and establishing of cultural networking among Black Sea basin communities,
- Promoting of the cross border cooperation for a sustainable development of the Black Sea basin and its inclusion in the educational process.

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проф. д-р Павел Павлов

Предпечат и компютърен дизайн
ИК «ГЕА ПРИНТ» Варна

Формат: 16/70/100
Печатни коли: 18

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