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SCIENTIFIC REVIEW

## Region as a Basic Territorial Unit of Regional Development (Concepts and Types)

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**ABSTRACT** – *The authors analyze and summarize the history of the development of the region, meaning of the term region and types. The paper analyzes the regions as basic territorial units which are important for regional development, the area in which establishes and implements regional development policy. The concept of the region is seen dynamically, in a historical context. The subject of the work is focused on the study of the phenomenon of the region as a territorial unit for the preparation and implementation of regional development policy for the purpose of equitable development. The authors analyzed different concepts and underlined the most important characteristics of the idea region and its types. Based on the analysis, definitively that the region is starting and basic territorial unit for planning and implementation of sustainable policies for regional development.*

**KEY WORDS:** *region, types of regions, regional development, regional policy, regional state*

### Introduction - historical development

There are different definitions of the region, which is derived from the Latin word „regio” which means - the area, zone, region, area, space, city, region, and district. This indicates that the ancient Romans used this name indicating some space within the country without any legal impact.

Historically, the regions and the regional concept of the organization of human communities are much older than modern national states and states of nation (Lilic, S., 2009, 7-21; Komsic, J., 2009, 81-94). By nature and character, the regions are the first forms of connecting people and the human community, which identifies the space which the best expresses and realizes the interest of a community (Pavlovic, V., 1994, 52). Region as a form of physical connection, besides the territorial proximity, represents functionally and interest

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organization, which define phenomena such as culture, language, traditions, the spirit of life, the economy.

The emergence of "praregion" is caused by political factors (Todorovic, M. Tošić, B. Stojanovic, B., 2004, 24). Among these the first forms of the regions we have two different groups:

- territories that were under the rule of the powerful feudal
- territories that were totally free i.e. city-states that existed in ancient Greece (Polis Athens, Sparta) or Rome (Res Publica).

The emergence of the region is not linked to spatial-functional development. It's a result of the independence process of some urban centers, which are the result of either weak central government or even of its non-existence.

The first forms of the region like we have today, appear very early, between the fourteenth and nineteenth centuries in the South Mediterranean and central parts of the continental area (Vasic, N., 2007, 52).

In mid-nineteenth century, when we had a big socio-political changes, abolition of feudalism in the Central European countries, political unification and forming of Germany and Italy, the role of the regions also changes his meaning. The political factor loses its significance and increasingly coming a functional meaning. In the countries which had traditionally strong central government and which were typical of a unitary state (France), there is a real and less formal regionalization in which the dominant role is urbanization and expansive development of large cities, which have become centers and the main initiators of physical - functional transformation in the entire territory. On the other hand, in countries with newly created central authority (Germany and Italy), in which the political-territorial structure existed for centuries "praregions", with the impact of urbanization (rapid industrial development and the development of transport infrastructure), inherited transition autonomous operation of individual territorial units (regions ) influenced on the internal political-territorial and spatial-functional organization, which will since today, lead to the new forms of regional differences and connections.

In the Eastern and Southeastern Europe, until the modern era was not pronounced processes of regional differences. The reason for this is the centuries-long hegemony and domination of the Ottoman Empire in Eastern Europe and organization of the state as a national and strictly centralized. And in the period of socialism states remain centralized because their ideology and command economy requires a strong central government and the state. This led to the creation of political and psychological barriers to the process of regionalization. The contribution to this is the lack of the basic prerequisites of a functional character (dominant urbanization, poor transport infrastructure, the government is entirely at the central level).

### Meaning of the term "*Region*"

Region (Vujaklija, M 1991, 2 .; Markovic, J., Pavlovic, M., 1995, 3-4) means:

- Region - geographical meaning: region, landscape, city, area, region or layer;
- Region - social, political (administrative) meanings: area, province, territory, social order;

- Region - medical significance: part of the body or the layer of air.

In a broader sense it can be a territory, province, prefecture, district or administrative area. For smaller areas in geography used the term "micro-region". Regions can be conditionally divided into:

- Physiognomic regions - (ie. A homogenous which have its own distinctive appearance and physiognomy, thanks to the homogeneity of the environment and social processes);
- Functional regions - (an important feature given the elements of spatial organization, ie. the consequences of men working);
- Nodal regions - (based on territorial entity with its own center around which gravitates to its environment; Latin "nodus" - node).

The region (geographical meaning) is territorial entity with its own geographic structure which is framed in space and time, and that is difference from other units. The regional geography studying and describing the regions. Her work is to allocate a regional entity, limit, describe and establish the causal link between the natural and social factors that have influenced education. On that occasion, regional geography serves methods of study, such as analysis, synthesis, mapping and fieldwork.

In determination of the region it is necessary to establish its borders because of delimitation and for more precise determination of geographic content. It is best when the boundaries are natural, but also we often have borders of states which are unnatural and non-ethnic. To extract of the neighboring region is sufficient and less, especially pronounced differences in their geographical inventory (for example, Banat and Bačka separates the Tisza, but with all the similarities of these two Vojvodina region show large differences). The border of region is often broad, imprecise zone of permeation. But, for determination of quantity of some geographical region, it is necessary to define the boundary in the form of lines. Without that, would not know the surface of region, number of people and villages, fields and forests fund, membership of a factory or length of roads. The limits are necessary, but that are often disputed. The borders of the Pannonian area towards the mountain-valley Basin area is determined by the contour line of 800 m, because the north side of the Dinaric watershed, stepped down to the lowlands, whose altitude is greater for some in coastal lowlands. Limit of the Adriatic area for the mountain-valley-basin macro-region is conditionally determined by the contour line of 500 m, with respect to the zero point of the sea level and the fact that the 500 m height of some low mountains. The ambiguous, vague and undefined border regions, changes their name and frame, make it difficult or impossible comparative views of the region and analyzing information about them. It is difficult even for recognized (traditional, natural, economic, ethnic, and historical) geographical units.

In the Serbian geographical terminology have been adopted and international generally accepted names for the regions - micro-region, sub region, mesoregion and macro-region.

Each region consists of two main factors - regions and areas. The region is spatially individual natural entity which concludes geomorphological, climatic, hydrological and pedological factors, while the area is the space with prominent socio-economic and anthropological characteristics (population, economy and settlements). The region is therefore an integrated region and area, ie. the complex heterogeneous space with comprehensive geographic content (Ink, N, 2005, 87).

In political-territorial sense, there are interpretations that the region represents determination and hedge part of the country as a separate entities with established institutions. The broader meaning would be that this non-institutional hedge certain space which with some of its properties represent the region (Jovicic, M., 1993, 964), which represents the optimal rounded complex, which is characterized by uniqueness: economic, geographical and transport nature, the interconnection of parts region and similar conditions for independent existence and development (Jovicic, M., 1996, 87).

In political sciences, the interpretation of the region is based on social and political criteria which defining the region as a unit large enough to be within its framework organized by various forms of social life and can politically be strong enough to be a kind of counterbalance to the central government, and not to endanger the territorial integrity of the state. Central authorities tend to have authority over more areas of life, people and especially, of resources, and the regional government prevents them to do that (Stanovčić, V. 1999, 40).

In sociological sense the region represents the interaction of different political, economic, ecological, cultural, mentality factors, which allows different interpretations of the concept of regions in the modern state. The region may be considered as: air-geographical area, supranational political economy as a whole and etc. (Avramovic, Z. 2001, 194).

In cultural sense in determination of the essence of the region a major role has social, i.e. collective psychology, since he is not only a physical fact and with time starts to becomes the collective consciousness. People live in a particular area and develop a sense of self, gain awareness of the interconnectedness and belonging, identified themselves with the interests of the region and allocate more material and spiritual symbols that express those interests and the sense of belonging together (Veljanovski, R, 1998, 50-51).

Economically, the region is defined as a part of the territory of a country, which is characterized by geographical entity and economic homogeneity, inter-regional division of labor and product orientation, and generates around one or more industrial centers. The region should be by sufficient size to available natural resources and human potential in the given socio-economic conditions, facilitate the creation of economic development, and specialization with the simultaneous development of production complex on the territory (Group of authors, 2001, 589). We could say that it is territorially rounded part of a state regardless of its size.

The region contains the common features of the entire economy and therefore exhibit the following general principles of development and follow common goals that connect the parts into a whole system. With regard to the specifics of the area as well as the diversity of interests of the population, appear some regional goals which do not match at all with the interests of the economy as a whole. Development's factors of the region are: population, area, natural resources, infrastructure, manufacturing, etc. (Group of authors, 1984, 695).

In the process of defining the concept of a region, we can say that on the one hand, it contains features that connect him with the whole country, and on the other hand, contains features that make it specific and can give him dimensions more than have the state. The Western Balkans, Eastern and Central Europe, include parts of several countries: the Pannonian region, the Danube region.

In terms of the Europe, the region represents the basic economic-territorial unit for planning and implementing development policies. We could say that "the European concept of the region" was created in order to implement the regional policy of the European Union in all its member states.

The institution of the region in some legal systems and institutions of the state is not present, while others are trying to introduce the concept of the region in its constitutional and legal system.

We could define region as a community in which the boundaries are not drawn, but they recognize and respect each other. It represents a form of organization of people who are halfway between the local community and the state, which can be determined by a number of criteria such as: geographical and territorial, cultural, traditional, ethnic-linguistic, topographic, climatic, industrial and urban, administrative, political, statistical, economic and others.

We can conclude that this term is not clearly defined, and there is no one definition and one only meaning of that. Often in the literature, we can find the interpretation that the region represents the highest level of the local government (Đorđević, S. 2002, 60). If we look at the German federal unit we will see that they are referred to the regions even though they have a government which with her own nature and authority does not represent the level of local government (Đorđević, S. 2002, 81). Also, often we can hear that the parts of the territory of a country called regions even though they do not represent the level of government. When we talk about regional policy of the European Union, the region can be considered as only one city but sometimes the whole country.

## Types of regions

In the literature we have to concepts of the regions:

- A. **Broader (wider) concept** - the region is bounded by non-institutional space in some properties (cultural, historical, geographic, demographic, language and so on.) is a special region (Matić, M. Podunavac, M, 1993, 65) (territorial unit), which has a specific regional identity in order to preserve these specifics as special interest (Matić, M. Podunavac, M, 1993, 67). This broader definition of the concept of a region can be understood as a simple division of the country into territorial units in some ways, where the division does not necessarily have to do with the system of government or with the political system of the country. This can be: a geographic location (Aland Islands, Greenland); common historical, cultural and economic characteristics; specific cultural identity shaped multi-ethnic composition of the population (Spain, Italy); distinctive ethnic composition of the population (Scotland, Wales). In international terms the region is determined by the space that bind some similar characteristics, which is different from the environment and makes it more countries that share common characteristics or interests, such as for example the Western Balkans. This concept is based on the natural and social facts.

- B. **Narrower concept** - the region is bounded by space specific for some properties, except that it is an element regularly existing political-territorial division. He is a political element with a clearly defined status in law or constitution.

In the narrower concept we have some different types:

- 1) **Administrative - statistical region**- institutional bounded territory which is the level of government. Division into regions with their regional government (political) and those who do not (administrative and statistical).The regions which do not have power can differ on administrative (administrative) and statistical-planning regions. In the administrative regions at the level of the defined area, there are state bodies, i.e. administration which are local office of the central authorities which are necessary for the operation and enforcement authorities. These regions represent devolution. In Serbia there name is district. These subdivisions are often the basis for the establishment of statistical regions in accordance with the NUTS classification. In some countries this type of regions coincides with statistical regions. In countries where these administrative regions smaller, usually statistical regions formed by merging several administrative regions. Statistical region can, but need not, be both administrative (administrative), which for him in this case says that the region is non-administrative territorial unit. Statistical regions are also known as: economic, analytical and functional development. The states have defined territory for the policy or for the collection of certain statistical data. At the end of the 50s, France has created administrative and planning regions and regionalization carried out in order to facilitate governance and management. Due to modern changes in economic and political fields, regions receive a number of new functions, naturally retaining old ones. In this type of regions include those from which it implements EU regional policy. Earlier traditional unitary state (Ireland, Greece), create administrative bodies at the level of those regions in order to harmonize with European Union criteria for the realization of regional policy and achieving regional development and use of dedicated funds (Đorđević, S. 2004, 5). These processes of strengthen of the region may lead to the formation of political regions.
- 2) **Administrative (governing) region** - serves as a territory within the state in which they operate distraction central authorities. They are formed as a form of dispersion. They have a hallmark of sub-state level of state authority organization. This form is characteristic of a unitary state. It is a form of administrative decentralization. The affairs of state i.e. of public administration does not perform only one organizational unit, but a higher number. For this reason, we have definition of administrative territories that represent the area in which operates one organizational unit of the central authorities which means administrative region which has not its own legal personality, political power i.e. has not government, powers, autonomous regional finance and cannot be constitute like a separate level of autonomous public authorities. In such units they do not make any policy, but is implemented regional policy of the Government. These administrative regions

over time and often served as a basis for future political or statistical regionalization. As an example of these administrative regions in our country can make parallels with districts that exactly and only serve the purpose of the administration (they coincide with NUTS3 in our country).

- 3) **Political region** - specific for the existence of democratically elected and fully rounded authorities. They enjoy political self-government and autonomy. They are formed as a form of territorial decentralization of power. This means that for the performance of tasks assigned to the region formed by the regional authorities, which are directly elected by the citizens of the region. In this way, the region, with its system of government and administration, with the powers allocated to it and a certain degree of autonomy that belongs to it, is the decentralization of power and middle level management. Depending on the powers and the status he has, the region may represent a level of local government, federal unit, and some combination of these two cases (regions in Italy and Spain). It is important that political region includes the legal personality, a certain set of competencies and public finance, i.e. a certain degree of freedom and autonomy in governance. They can be only in certain parts of the national territory (asymmetrical regionalism-examples are our autonomous provinces (Vojvodina and Kosovo and Metohija), Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales) or on the entire territory of the state (a symmetrical regionalism-essential precondition for European Regional Policy).

The Assembly of European Regions (the pan-European organization founded in 1985, which promotes regional level management and ensures the possibility of participation of the region at the international level) adopted a "Declaration on Regionalism in Europe", in which the region is recognized as a territory which is the subject of public law established at the level below central government and who has been given political self-government and as such is recognized by the constitution or by law. The declaration means that the region should be established by the constitution or by law under which he is guaranteed autonomy, authority and organizational structure.

Political regionalization (Stačetić, V, 2009, 10-11), is the process of forming a political regions and giving some kind of power and responsibilities from the central government to regional authorities. In depend of that powers and responsibilities we can recognize different types of regionalization.

According to the degree of autonomy from the central government, political regions can be:

- regions with characteristics of regional governments;
- regions incurred in devolution as a territorial autonomous units;
- regions which the state provide form of regional state.

According to the method of generation:

- regions which are generated through the expression of administrative-territorial division of the unitary state as a special form of local government (Greece, Portugal);

- regions which arise in the process of adapting existing forms of territorial organization, with the principles of the regional organization of the state (Sweden, Germany, the Netherlands);
- regions (Spain, Italy), which represent a form of "institutional regionalization, which involves introducing regions in the structure of government as a political entity that contain the feature of decentralized authorities but the main quality of political autonomy" (Radovic, Z, 2000, 33-40; Radovic Z, 2000, 57).

Important political characteristics of the region are: legal status, the definition of regional, finance and competencies.

Based on the legal status of act which include definition and determined region, regionalization, can be:

- constitutional category – for example Italy, in which constitution is a number of the region and the name of the region and are partly regulated by regional competences, rights and obligations. In Article 114 of the Constitution of the Italian Republic states that the Italian Republic consists of municipalities, provinces, metropolitan cities, regions and countries. Article 117 specifies the responsibilities of the State, and everything else belongs to the competence of the region.
- legal category - which is the case in France, Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia. The French regions are weaker than the Italian because they have no legislative power, the greater is degree of control of the central government.

This regional power vary from country to country, and we can say that we distinguish five models in the European Union:

- constitutional regions with state powers (Germany, Austria, Belgium, Switzerland);
- regions with wide political and administrative autonomy (Spain, Italy);
- regions in decentralized countries (France, the Netherlands, Poland, Czech Republic);
- regions whose authority is formed indirectly through districts (Ireland);
- small states whose size corresponds to the size of the region.

Allow for the practice of European countries, the Council of Europe has tried to make a kind of classification models and is so identified several types of regions, building on the types of authorization, the degree of representative democracy and the legal basis for regionalization (Report on European practice and recent developments in the field of regional self-government, the CDLR, 2006):

- regions with powers to adopt acts of the original legislation, which the existence is not guaranteed by the constitution or federal legislation (Spain, Scotland in the UK);
- regions which have the right to adopt acts of primary legislation, whose existence is guaranteed by the Constitution or federal arrangement (Belgium, Italy);
- regions with powers to legislate within the framework of national legislation, which the existence is not guaranteed by the Constitution (Wales in the UK, Poland);



- regions which have the power to make decisions, but they have no legislative powers, with the assemblies which they are directly elected (Denmark, Sweden, France, Turkey and the metropolitan area of London in the UK);
- regions that have the power to make decisions, but not the laws, which the Assembly is not elected directly and local governments make them (Finland, Latvia).
- There are different regional systems of government, but for all we can identify some common features;
- regions are part of the territorial structures (federation, regional or unitary state);
- they have the highest level of organization of local self-government, and on the other hand have some other states duties;
- regions can be the basis of the movement for national independence and in the field conflicts arise to the central government for fear of possible secession (Scotland and Wales in the UK, Catalonia and the Basque Country in Spain, Quebec, Canada, Brittany in France, etc.).

The existence of political regions within a country is its internal affair. Although this form of state organization and decentralization recommended by the region, though there is no obligation to actually implement this. When we talk about economic regions, all EU members must be regionalized to be able to use the funds from the EU funds.

The statistical division of the country on this regions is also called regionalization, but it is not regionalization in terms of decentralization when introduced regions in establishing the regional authority and gives a certain autonomy. This statistical or economic regionalization of the country should be carried out with respect for the principles laid down as a standard for the whole of the European Union. It is the formation of a hierarchical structure of territorial units that are supposed to represent an effective instrument to balance all of the units within the state. Based on this classification collecting some dates, analyzing the situation and propose measures regional policy of the European Union. The introduction of these regions will be based on so-called. NUTS classification established as the standard for all members of the European Union.

Various forms of the region in the practice of some states exist in the same time: in Spain, there are 26 statistics (NUTS level 1 and 2) regions and 16 territorial-political region; in the UK has 49 statistics (NUTS level 1 and 2) in the region, during the process of creation (i.e. devolution), three territorial and political regions (Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland); in France there are only administrative regions and that 27 of them, and in some states of the European Union exist only statistical regions.

We can conclude that for Spain the regions are question (attempts) for survival, and for France the only term is unacceptable when we talk about Corsica, which is called a "territorial collectivity", while all other territories in France are administrative regions. In the French law exist an exception, it is accepted that one part of the territory and the population lives, has a special treatment because of its historical and geographical linguistic-cultural characteristics, and is officially (1991) established a special status for Corsica (the "territorial collectivity of Corsica"). Status of Corsica represents an entirely original solution and has enabled France to more clearly perceive the specific requirements of the population of a

particular region, which will have an impact on the attitude of the state towards other minority communities.

For the institutionally strengthening of the region the state is responsible, and state defines the regions and their functions constitution or law, which they will have the right but also the responsibility to manage an important part of the economic, political and cultural development of society, which beyond the capabilities of local communities and complicated central government institutions.

## **Conclusion**

For the European concept of the region in the context of the implementation of regional policy and regional development of the European Union, it is not necessary that the State party is organized on the principles of regional states, such as for example Spain and Italy. Regional orderly state, are peculiar form of institutional organization of the state characterized by the division of powers between different levels of government organizations. The division of responsibilities among different levels of government organization is also the specific form of restricting government because under the equivalent functions of state government establishes more of those in authority, including the competence conferred and differ in content, scope and quality. Regionally organized state is a specific form of complex state characterized by a diversity of shapes and specific relations between the state (central government) and the autonomous communities (regions).

We could conclude that the region with the European concept only has significance as an economic, statistical functional territorial integrity, which can be classified in the developed or the underdeveloped region, for implementation of regional policies. This is particularly important for the development of backward regions which have very small attention. As can be seen by the percentage of the EU budget that is spent on starting and acceleration in economic growth of lagging regions. For new members in which are poorest regions, this should be an excellent opportunity for a much faster development than would be the case if the poorer countries are developing with own resources. A big responsibility is on the member states when we talk about products and expected results. That includes the creation of conditions and organizational structure like as funds that the region has or some available resources, be use on the best way.

In the end, we could perform a unique conclusion that regional development policy is a policy with clearly articulated objectives in relation to the regions, with the establishment of which regions qualify for that purpose or how the region can receive money depending on the degree of development. This means that when we talk about regional development policy of the European Union, it should be borne in mind that that is not only about regional development in the narrow sense, but rather an effort to achieve connectivity in the European Union by reducing the existing differences in levels of development between its regions.

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## Region kao osnovna teritorijalna jedinica regionalnog razvoja (koncept i vrste)

**REZIME** – Autori analiziraju i daju pregled istorije razvoja regiona, značenja pojma regiona, vrste regiona. Rad se bavi analizom regiona kao osnovne teritorijalne jedinice značajne za regionalni razvoj, teritorije na kojoj se utvrđuje u primenjuje politika regionalnog razvoja. Koncept regiona sagledan je dinamički, u istorijskom kontekstu. Predmet rada usmeren je na proučavanje fenomena regiona kao teritorijalne jedinice za pripremu i primenu politike regionalnog razvoja u svrhu ravnomernijeg razvoja. Analizirani su različiti koncepti i podvučene najznačajnije karakteristike pojma regiona i njegovih vrsta. Na osnovu analize zaključeno je da je region polazna i osnovna teritorijalna jedinica za planiranje i sprovođenje održive politike regionalnog razvoja.

**KLJUČNE REČI:** region, održiv razvoj, politika regionalnog razvoja

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