

## URBAN ATTRACTIVENESS. WHY PUT PEOPLE'S MONEY INTO CYCLING FACILITIES?

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**ABSTRACT** - Due to the advantages offered by agglomerations, human activities have always concentrated, and cities have become multifunctional places: living places, places where goods and services are produced, culture and socialisation places. Nowadays however, the negative effects produced by agglomerations often get to overbalance the positive effects and to repel people and activities. Agglomerations often become impersonal and unfamiliar. They are no longer a “lived space” and people can hardly wait to “evade” at least during the weekend. Among the development factors for which a city should be attractive, Qualified Workforce (QwF) has become the main one, due to the knowledge society we live in. In the Western societies, the QwF has met its basic, material needs, also aiming to meet the others that are linked to the Quality of Life (QoL) (safety, health, mobility, leisure, etc.). That is why the attractiveness for the development factors is more and more linked to the QoL that a city offers, the bicycle being able to bring a large number of answers in this direction. By means of this study, we will try to show the influence that the bicycle has on the urban attractiveness factors. We will find out that the bicycle influences them all and, moreover, without producing any drawbacks in other domains. It exercises however the most powerful effects on two of the most important soft factors of attractiveness, namely QoL and image. By noting the increasing importance of the soft factors in relation to the hard factors, we will be able to sustain the opportunity of investing in facilities for bicycle. Moreover, we will show that a city which aims to remain competitive on the global market of the development factors has no more choices and has to become bicycle-friendly.

**Keywords:** Urban attractiveness, development, bicycle, quality of life

### INTRODUCTION

The interest for bicycle and cycling is increasingly greater day after day due to their recreational aspect and to their usefulness. Bicycles require less space, they are less expensive, they are good for health and for the environment, they are more efficient for short journeys within the city and they present a low risk level. Some countries, such as Romania, remained behind from this point of view, both as regards the infrastructure and the mentality; the bicycle is seen as “the car of the poor” here, while especially in Northern countries, due to the evolution of values, “*the car is the bicycle of the poor*” (Mîndruță, 2010, p. 8). But it is obvious that the evolution happened in the same time: the development of the infrastructure and of the mentality, the lack of infrastructure being the item that is recognized as the most dissuasive. However, besides these technical and sociological explanations, we have to look for answers in the aspects related to the economic organization of the public and private actors regarding the bicycle. What is the role of the bicycle in attracting the development factors? What is the general economic profitability induced by the investments in the bicycle infrastructure? How does the regional space evolve from the perspective of the economic flows produced by the economy of the bicycle? Recent evolutions show us that these questions, and therefore their answers, have started to be asked scientifically and it is high time we approach them as such since the bicycle is the mode of locomotion that responds best to the requirements of development (human, sustainable and endogenous).

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The studies performed by the World Health Organization (WHO), ATOUT France, Allgemeine Deutsche Fahrrad Club (ADFC), the European Commission, the European Council and many universities in the world on the impact of the traffic have proved its effects on the environment, on health and on urban mobility. They showed that people with a certain qualification, knowledgeable people, are attracted to places with a great quality of life (a clean, safe and pleasant environment). The profile of these people was created: the urban cyclist is a 35-60 year old higher educated person having an above-average income. Moreover, these people have satisfied their basic material needs and they also want to satisfy the other needs regarding the quality of life. They chose the bicycle because it can bring solutions to many of the current urban problems and the required bicycle infrastructure can be achieved while avoiding general interest inconveniences, as shown by the development of such infrastructures in many cities in the world.

However, the problems that still exist prove that the effects are not well-known, especially because of partial implementations or of implementations that answered some emergencies, such as exceeding the pollution limits or traffic jams. The studies that were performed in this respect are very technical and targeted, they address specific effects and are limited to a direct cause-effect relation (for instance: improving the bicycle infrastructure – increase of the percentage of the journeys by bicycle – decrease of the pollution or traffic jam, in percentage). There are methodologies and correlations for the short term (ATOUT France, 2009), but not also for the long-term. As the qualitative factor is most often neglected by these technical studies, there is a lack of data, researches and know-how from social sciences in this respect, and many of the technical studies have proved only that the correlation between the modification of some structures and of effects is not linked to a direct relation because many subjective factors linked to perceptions, mentalities or image etc. intervene. The subjective aspects regarding the general increase of the quality of life and of attractiveness were not further studied and not knowing them in detail leads to a wrong quantification of the concrete effects that can be obtained by developing the facilities for bicycles.

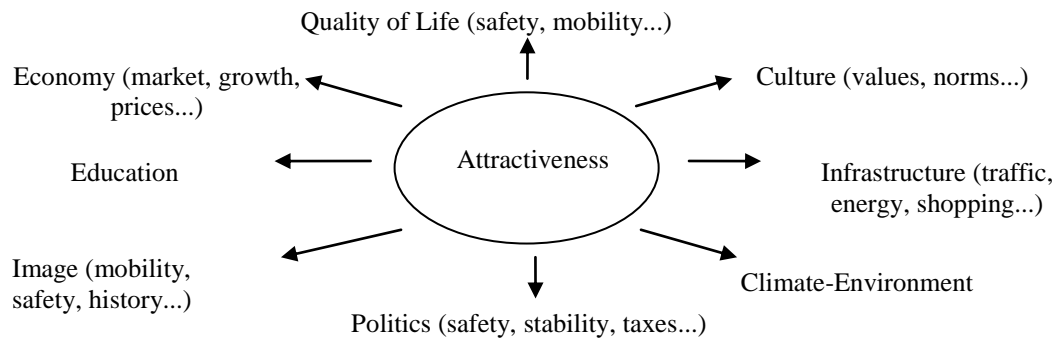
### **URBAN ATTRACTIVENESS**

The concentration of the population in cities is a basic indicator of the attractiveness of the city, the power to attract people and ideas being one of the characteristics of the cities throughout history (Brandmuller & Feldmann, 2008). The population decreases in some cities and increases in others, but, in addition to the natural dynamics, there are many migratory flows. Cities lost their uniqueness because of globalization; they got to compete on a global market in order to attract and to maintain resources. In order to do this, cities have to offer conditions for the internal resources to remain and develop their activities here, and external resources should find better possibilities for development than in other places. Generally speaking, these resources are investments, qualified workforce and tourists. These three categories bring money, activities and dynamism in the region and pay taxes. Cities where life is nicer are also economically successful (Tremblay & Proulx, 2004). The aesthetic qualities of a city function as catalysers for the economic growth; that is why cities invest in culture, leisure, shopping, mobility and environment. *“A city is not only a geographical concept, a spatial determination, an agglomeration of buildings and offices. A city breathes the urban atmosphere. Traditionally, cities are centres of trade, activities, art, culture, past and future. The urban atmosphere is determined by a labyrinth of dynamic changes between all these functions, between work and leisure, individuality and collectivity, public and private services”* (Van Baxtel, cit. Vles, 2011-2014, p. 6.). That is why, the more mobile people, companies and tourists become, due to the technological, social and political development, the larger the scale at which the competition is played between cities is. *„The city is in fact a collection of locations”* (ibid.) because people, companies and tourists take into consideration a large number of factors in order to come and settle in a city. That is why every city needs a balance between its diverse functions (living place, place to be visited or place for economic activities), especially that monofunctionality has proved its limits (ibid., p. 8). And this harmony should be completed by the social one; both the social and the physical environment influence people’s life.

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The development of cities is more and more closely linked to their attractiveness because regions and cities are now in an open competition on a free market. Attractiveness however should not be taken for competitiveness because competitiveness regards especially the economic, quantitative aspect, while the urban attractiveness includes the first aspect but goes on further, towards qualitative aspects, such as the quality of life or the image of the city. That is why development strategies should concentrate on the economic, cultural, social and environmental aspects in order to create a welcoming and safe climate for people, since it is through them that the economic stability and the success of the city are guaranteed for the future.

“When urban conditions are right, people can be inspired to think, plan and act creatively” (Landry, 2000). They will get involved in the life of their city and they will be motivated to take part in problem solving. That is why creativity, motivation and involvement of people become the main resources for the development of a city, replacing the old ones, such as natural resources or access to the market. “We now know how to build roads, bridges and sewage systems... Today the challenge is how to understand the city as a “synthetic whole”; to see it as a living organism and so being able to bring the seemingly disparate together” (ibid.). That is why priorities come from democracy and governance, from social capital and from the quality of life. “Building civic capacity and leadership is a software infrastructure as essential as roads and airports” (ibid.).



**Figure 1. Factors of attractiveness**  
Source: R. E. Guebler, Ch. Moeller, 2006, p. 51

There are many studies that compare the various locations in the world, the most relevant being those performed by Healey&Backer, Mercer, World Economic Forum, Credit Suisse or BAK Basel Economics. They are all thoroughly performed, but their results can be very different depending on the factors that were taken into consideration and on the way they were evaluated. However, these factors can be grouped by major fields, as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1. Hard and soft location factors**

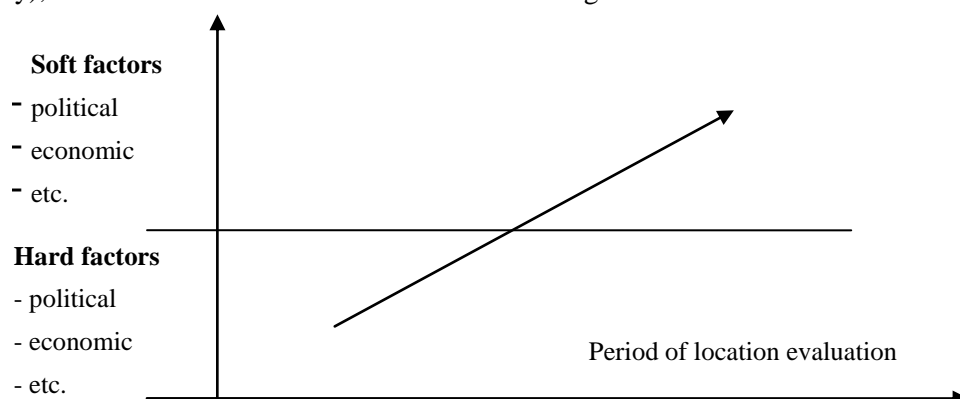
Hard location factors	Soft location factors
- EU-compatibility	- Human resources
- Macroeconomic factors	- Qualification of human resources
- Level of education	- Acceptance of a multicultural society
- Technologies and services	- Cultural offer
- Market	- Leisure offer
- Taxes	- Environment
- Living costs, etc.	- Health and recreation
	- Safety, etc.

Source: R. E. Guebler, Ch. Moeller, 2006, p. 52

However, the localization factors are divided into soft and hard factors in all the specific literature. Hard factors are those which are objectively measurable and which can be directly

influenced, while soft factors are subjective and emotionally impregnated. These are often indirectly measurable and modifiable only in the long run. Hard factors are mostly quantitative and soft factors are mostly qualitative.

But what should be noted is the fact that in time qualitative factors became more important than quantitative factors because the latter have a transitory character. As a general rule however, it is considered that hard factors are more important in a first stage of evaluation of the location; for instance, for a company that looks for an investment place, the hard factors (taxes, outlet, costs, production factors) can have a direct influence on the economic and financial results. The final decision for the investment is nevertheless made according to the soft factors (quality of life, image, safety), as R. E. Gubler and Ch. Moller show us in Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** *Hard and soft location factors in the decisional process*

Source: R. E. Guebler, Ch. Moeller, 2006, p. 54

Therefore, the qualitative factors (the possibility to reduce the transactional costs, the quality of the workforce,...) become more important than the quantitative ones (taxes, various stimulants) due to the long-term development possibilities, which means that the location is now thought of in terms of quality of place more than in terms of costs (OECD, 2011, p. 5).

### QUALITY OF LIFE

*“Choosing the location in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is governed by a set of rules that are different from those of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the past century the location possibilities were first optimized according to the company needs. In the knowledge-based economy of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, where the comparative advantage of the company is predominantly determined by the creativity of the workforce, the people’s location preferences, especially the preferences of the qualified people, come to the fore”* (ibid.).

Many studies were performed in order to understand the quality of life and to classify cities according to certain indicators. These are chosen according to what is intended to be studied. For instance, Graves (1976) studies the migration between the regions, Rosen (1979), Roback et al. (1982) or Blomquist (1988), try to see what the determining factors for localisation are. The main factors that were studied by categories are the following: health services, safety, climate, pollution, demography, market conditions. Starting from the '90s, in studies such as those of Cheshire and Hay (1989), Gyourko and Tracy (1991), Staver and Leven (1992), Sufian (1993) or Giannias (1998), we can notice an increase of the importance of some factors such as the existence of green areas, the use of renewable energies or cultural facilities. The first study where mobility appears as an important localization factor is that of Sufian (1993), but which refers to the traffic fluidity. It is only in 2002 and then in 2006 that Florida and Shapiro respectively, followed by the European Cities Monitor Report, integrate the aspects of sustainable mobility in their analyses<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> A summary of these studies, together with the criteria that make up the various factors that were taken into consideration, can be followed in: D. Lambrini, B. Biagi, V. Royuela, *Quality of Life in the Economic and Urban Economic Literature*, in: Social Indicators Research, 2007, 84:1-25.

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In the economic field, D. Lambrini, B. Biagi and V. Royuela, sustain the idea according to which the quality of life can be compared to a trade good, because it is rare, and people are ready to transaction other goods for it. Moreover, QoL can be considered a public good and it should be allocated community resources. The individual satisfaction comes from the consumption of goods and public or private services, from the consumption of leisure, clean air, a safe and healthy environment, which represent together the physical and social characteristics of the location. These actually represent one of the strong points of the attractiveness for the satisfaction of people and of entrepreneurs. That is why the quality of life is more and more associated to the social welfare concept, although traditionally this was especially associated with some financial factors linked to the level of prices or to the cost of living. That is why for A. Sen the quality of life becomes "*the real possibilities you have regarding the life you lead*" (A. Sen, cit. Lambrini, Biagi, Royuela, *Ibid.*, p. 4). Thus, all the equipment, services, goods and characteristics that a city offers represent the advantage of the location or "*the packet of goods that is necessary for the "consumer" of urban space*" (*ibid.*).

### IMAGE

Pollution and agglomeration affect the image of the city. This has consequences on attracting managerial expertise and, in general, qualified workforce, which, being mobile at global level, has many possibilities available. This image, which is first of all conditioned by the quality of life in the city and in the region, plays an important role in the process of the placement of an investment. It can reduce the uncertainty and risk levels and can have a positive effect on the investor's trademark. An important part of this image is made up by the quality of life (Brossard, 1996, p. 211); the best example can be offered by the large number of Romanian doctors who emigrate because of the general offer of other regions, although they have a very good material status.

The increase in the competition between cities forces them to differentiate and, therefore, to redefine themselves in relation to the State and to the other cities; they have to position themselves in the regional, State or global setting and to communicate their image both inside and outside. For instance, the Nordrhein-Westphalen Land conducted a strong campaign in order to change the image of the Ruhr Basin from an old industrial area into a dynamic one that offers a very good quality of life. Another example was Hamburg which, by a campaign entitled "Hamburg is in the middle" escaped the peripheral image by which it had been characterized for a long time.

The image has often a decisive influence on the localization decision, both for companies and for people; that is why local authorities should take steps to renovate centres, to revitalize spaces and to promote culture as basic elements of the image of a city (Vles, 2011-2014, p. 21). The image plays an important role in choosing the place where people live, work and spend their free time, and most often this decision is made on subjective bases. The people's perception of the region (image) or of the city matters irrespective of whether it is about preconceived ideas or about correct information (Hospers, 2003). But, just as for any product, the image of the city should be based on something real; although publicity can create a product, the lack of compatibility between the promoted image and the product will be perceived as deception and, in the case of a city, where the investment can be the life of the human or of the company, it has no chance. The Oresund region is often given as an example of success due to the huge investments in the quality of life. Investments in human needs such as health, socialisation and leisure led to excellent results at economic level, the general promotion of the region having as slogan "*Oresund – the human capital*", which underlines both the orientation towards the human capital and the fact that it is the capital where people can be people, not only production factors.

### THE BICYCLE INFLUENCE ON THE ATTRACTIVENESS FACTORS

Investments in bicycle facilities represent a modern direction of investment because, if we consider the regional development definition, we will be able to notice that bicycle usage responds to its wishes and also that it is an instrument which achieves the harmony between the needs of the regional development and the needs of modern people (health, mobility, socialisation, dynamism, etc.). Regional development is a "*holistic process whereby the natural, economic, cultural and social*

resources in the region are used to improve the life of the population of that region so that the comparative and competitive advantages offered by its different characteristics are used” (Dybe, 2003, p. 43). Thus, the regional development in relation to bicycles is human because it allows everyone to improve their possibilities to satisfy their needs; those who want to be mobile on bicycles, those who want to make savings can make it, those who need to protect the environment have this option, those who need to breathe fresher air are satisfied, etc. At the same time, it is sustainable because it does not consume fossil resources and a lot of space, and it is endogenous because it makes a better use of local resources.

The European programme *Bypad* allows comparing the amounts that municipalities invested in the bicycle infrastructure ([www.bypad.org](http://www.bypad.org)). Thus, The Netherlands invests a little more than 10 Euros/year/capita and in Germany, the average is of 5 Euros/year; this amount is used as a point of reference by many other countries, even if investments in the bicycle infrastructure have an older history in Germany. National investments are added to these amounts invested by municipalities, as follows:

**Table 2.** National budget/inhabitant/year for cycling policies in 2002

NL	S	N	CH	GB	F	RO
2.33	1.2	10.72	9.33	1.92	0.08	0

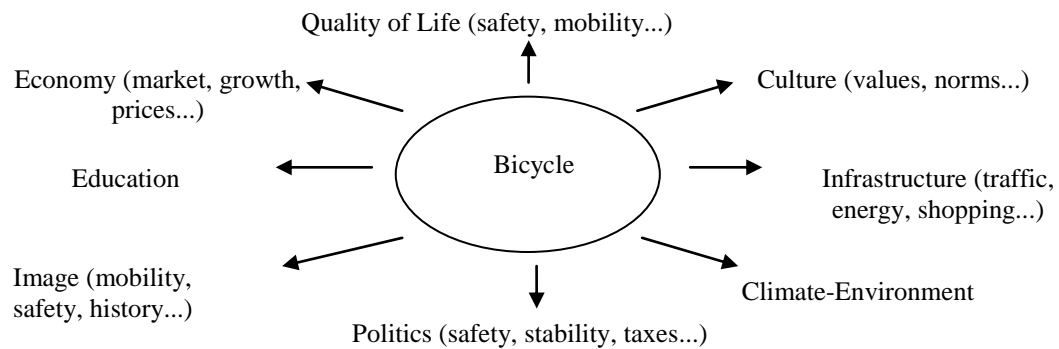
Source: The EU’s Council of Transport Ministers, *Politiques nationales en faveur du vélo*, Ed. de l’OCDE, 2004, p. 27

The effort for the cycling planning in a country like Romania should be considerable in order to catch up with our neighbours in the West and these investments not only that they would be long-term beneficial for the development, but they would also lead to the creation of a large number of jobs for the short term; experts agree (Mititean, 2007) that an amount of 5 Euros/year/inhabitant would be a great beginning for our country. Australia and the United States invest 26 Euros/year/capita in order to reduce the gaps in this field because they understood that not investing in cycling facilities will cost a lot in the future. Time, money, health and especially the quality of life are lost. Moreover, we have to take into account the gains obtained by the local communities in spatial planning, communicating, project management, image, etc. These represent investment domains that create jobs. Moreover, the study performed by the *American League of Bicyclists* shows that the number of jobs created this way is not lower as compared to other investment domains. Moreover, this study shows that the building of the bicycle infrastructure creates two times more jobs per allocated amount as compared to the building of the car infrastructure<sup>3</sup>.

The bicycle influence on the image is extremely powerful because the city where bicycles are used for travelling is seen as a safer and cleaner city that creates other values besides the material ones. One actually influences the other: safety comes from the fact that bicycle travelling improves the traffic conditions, but it is also true that people are stimulated to travel by bicycle when they feel safe. What is obvious is that in a dangerous city people would be tempted to circulate in armoured cars and not by bicycle. As regards the cleanliness of the city, it is related to making the air clean, but also to the general cleanliness because bicycle users are generally aware of all the environmental problems. The third element, the values that a cycling city creates, is an extremely important one as regards the creation of its image: investors know that bicyclists are a healthier and more dynamic category of people and they know that if employees come to work by bicycle, they will be able to save money, time and space. But it is especially about sharing common values, values that differ from the individual material values, which can lead to the creation of a better and more powerful enterprise culture and to the building up of the social capital. And, as regards the QwF, the qualities that it wants to find in the city and that the bicycle image offers are those of human values, such as solidarity and sociability.

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.bikeleague.org/resources/reports/report\\_economics.php](http://www.bikeleague.org/resources/reports/report_economics.php).

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**Figure 3.** *Bicycle influence on the attractiveness factors*  
Source: adapted after R. E. Guebler, Ch. Moeller, 2006, p. 51

The economy of the bicycle is multisectoral by its nature, but such an analysis can be oriented on three major directions:

- Economic domains that are directly linked to the bicycle: industry, commercialization, infrastructure, events, rentals, bicycle-sharing, etc.
- Domains that are influenced by the bicycle: tourism, transportation.
- The positive external effects on health, mobility, environment and territorial planning, especially in the public space.

The bicycle industry is made up of an important number of actors, the economic chain extending from producers of raw materials, to those who create the equipment, the various wear parts and last but not least those who assemble the various components. The latter represent the main actors in the bicycle economy in relation to the customers; they are those who design the models and create the interface with the upstream production. The global market of bicycles sees an annual increase of 4-6%; in 2009 this represented more than 130 million units. In the US the bicycle economy amounts to 133 billion dollars and it creates about 1.1 million jobs (<http://www.worldometers.info/bicycles>).

Many impact domains of the economy of the bicycle, such as mobility, tourism, infrastructure or the events organized for bicycles, present a major interest for the urban attractiveness. The creation of the bicycle infrastructures facilitates the blending of the landmarks into the surrounding area because bicycles allow for the integration of humans in this area while cars only link two or several such places. Bicyclists can stop anywhere on their itinerary (and they are more tempted to do so) so that the offered services can escape the constraint of centrality. The studies performed by the *American League of Bicyclists* or by ADFC showed that the sales of shops saw an average increase of 20% in places where bicycle paths were created. Furthermore, the bicycle infrastructure is cheaper than the car infrastructure and so it is more affordable for the small cities. Besides the advantage offered to mobility in general, it is obvious that more individualized mobility needs can be taken into account in this case, thus increasing the integration degree of the urban areas.

The bicycle influence on the political factor can be important due to the positive impact it has on democracy, which ensures increased safety and stability. Through the human values that the bicycle promotes, it pushes towards the relativization of the material values, which are most often the source of the inequalities of the government-related political actions. It also has an important influence on the idea of power which, from an individual power, closed in a car or in an office, becomes a power that is shared in the community and is used for a common purpose. It also ensures a long-term thinking, the solidarity and the objectives including the future generations. Moreover, besides stability and safety at political level, the bicycle also influences the level of taxes and fees because of the endogenisation of the production factors and because of the reduction of the dependency on external resources (European Commission, 2007).

The education, in its turn, is influenced by the openness and by the dynamism that the bicycle generates; bicyclists are much more attentive to what happens around because their environment is

much larger, not being closed in a metal box. From an early age, bicyclists are used to talk to one another, to exchange opinions and to confront with new things. And studies show that students and children who ride the bicycle during the day obtain better results at school (Allgemeine Deutsche Fahrradclub). Moreover, the bicycle is an excellent instrument for the non-formal education forms, bringing people closer to nature, facilitating mobility and offering people a larger perspective on the sense of life, taking them out of the status of simple consumers and proving them that the world can be much more than a simple market. Moreover, anyone can ride the bicycle because cycling does not require specially allocated time, as in the case of exercising, since cycling can be done while going to school or to work. As people are healthier, they will also be more hardworking and more creative.

The bicycle represents the ideal mode of transport for tourism because from the bicycle the eyes, the ears and the nose can be equally impressed. For many Europeans, the possibility to use the bicycle represents a very important reason when choosing their holiday destination, and the impact on the holiday area justifies the investments that were made for receiving the touring cyclists. The studies performed in the *Mayrhofen* resort in Austria and in *Portes du Soleil* in France<sup>4</sup> show that the average expenditure level of the touring cyclist is of 90 Euros/day/person, with an average stay of de 5.3 nights, while the average expenditure level of tourists in general is of 79 Euros/day/person and the average stay is of 4.2 nights. The ski holidays – which increase these averages – are also taken into consideration here. By comparing, we have the possibility to highlight the increasing interest of many tourist areas for cycling facilities, respectively for bicycle touring, which can change the destiny of some regions. In this regard, we mention that in the Saguenay-Lac Saint Jean region in Canada, the average stay of tourists was of 2.5 nights; tourists were attracted by the Indian villages, by the large number of waterfalls, by the rivers, by the flora and the fauna around that lake. After the implementation of the “*La Veloroute des Bleuets*” bicycle touring circuit, the average length of a stay increased to 5.7 nights. This project proves that a region can change as product on the tourist market, it can increase its attractiveness and it can reorientate the flows of tourists. Another example which speaks for itself is the Interreg project entitled “*Cycling without frontiers*”. Through this project, the region situated at the border between Austria, Hungary and Slovakia managed to escape the peripheral situation by which it had been characterized because of the lack of touristic and industrial major interest points. The area changed its destiny by the implementation of a cross-border network of bicycle touring next to which many other tourist attraction points are activating, such as manufacturing and craft attractions. From a peripheral region in the middle of Europe it has now become one of the major attraction places for the population of Vienna and Bratislava.

Bicycle touring and bicycle-based events represent only a niche on the global market of tourism and of events, but its ascendant trend and the importance of the incomes that were obtained from these investments make it worth to be taken into consideration anywhere. The bicycle touring activities eliminate the gaps between the major tourist places, as well as those between the seasons, as it is shown by the bicycle touring flows in Germany or in some recognized tourist destinations such as Ibiza, Cyprus and the Canary Islands, which increased their season with four-five months per year. It is obvious that under these conditions the profitability of the other activities also increases. This is true especially as tourists associate the bicycle infrastructure investments to a healthy, safe and clean environment. Moreover, the facilities for bicycles have an important effect on the quality of the touristic places, mainly:

- a better possibility for mobility and stay;
- a better answer to the expectations of tourists with a “green” mentality;
- a better adaptation to the style of modern, dynamic holidays.

The calculations performed by ATOUT France (2009, p. 274) also showed that bicycle tourists generate a turnover of 5.6 billion Euros per year in France and they ensure 50,000 jobs, out of which 28,000 are direct jobs (the others are created in related activities such as building, agricultural products, laundries and other services). Moreover, *The American League of Bicyclists* shows that the bicycle infrastructure attracts other investments, especially those with a great added value, due to a

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<sup>4</sup> European Cyclist’s Federation, Various Research Reports, [www.ecf.org](http://www.ecf.org).



stress-free space, to relaxation possibilities and to a safe and healthy environment for families<sup>5</sup>. It is obvious that when choosing the place for the establishment of a company, the quality of life in the region is more and more taken into account because it influences the attraction of QwF.

### CONCLUSIONS

Cities are competing on the investment market and, from a marketing point of view they have the possibility to act on several variables, which are components of the "region" product. These are its characteristics and its potential, the business climate and the market size, the infrastructure and the workforce quality and the image of the region (Brossard, 1996, p. 227). The bicycle offers a city the possibility to improve all these variables without having any negative effect and it can modify the destiny of some regions and cities, as we saw in some examples. The classic example of a bicycle-oriented agglomeration is the city of Portland, USA. The true bicycle culture that exists in this city led to the formulation of bicycle policies which became a tradition a long time ago. Due to these policies, the city not only that it has become the "cycling city" of the USA, but it also benefits from a bicycle-friendly design from the point of view of architecture and territorial planning. *The United Bicycle Institute* was established here and it teaches everything about the techniques and facilities for bicycles and it is not a wonder that, in 2008, 143 bicycle and bicycle part manufacturers were activating in the city region, some of them being Kinesis, Mountain Cycle and Chris King Precision Components ([www.altaplanning.com](http://www.altaplanning.com)). "Those who find it hard to put on a bicycle chain, will find it even harder to imagine what this industry means to Portland" (ibid.) the mayor of this city used to say, being proud of the economic development of the local bicycle industry, as well as of the fact that people enjoy a much better quality of life than in many other richer cities.

"Through planning a city decides what public goods it wants... Planning is a political process, because it is about choices; because it is about choices it is about values; because it is about values it is cultural as culture at its core is a value sorting process" (Landry, 2000, p.11). To conclude, the idea of promoting attractiveness through cycling can include the immediate advantages that cycling offers, as well as a community stimulating effect that is capable to gather energies and to offer a common vision for the future. The activities that are generated attract people, money and image, thus playing a stimulating role in the urban space. Forming even small attraction points on this basis can lead to the formation of regional centres, which further have the chance to develop into cultural and identity centres.

By taking into consideration all bicycle-related aspects, we can finally assert that the bicycle represents a future direction due to the answers that it brings regarding the improvement of the possibilities to satisfy the development needs. By considering the impulses that the bicycle offers to the regional economy and to its possibilities for harmonious development throughout the territory, local and regional authorities should take into consideration the contribution of bicycles in a much more professional manner when creating future development policies.

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<sup>5</sup> [http://www.bikeleague.org/resources/reports/report\\_economics.php](http://www.bikeleague.org/resources/reports/report_economics.php).

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