

Free Zones Development in Romania - Premises, Determining Factors and Perspectives

Ionica SOARE

ionica.soare@ugal.ro

Daniela NECHITA

dananechita2002@yahoo.it

Dunarea de Jos University of Galati

Abstract

The free zone concept appears as a separate entity in a highly complex and dynamic environment. On the one hand it is a "creation" of this environment and on the other hand it is an active component that contributes essentially to the configuration of the natural, geographic, economic, social, technological, political, legal and IT environment as well as to its dynamics. Moreover its role is distinguishable from all above mentioned perspectives, even if its action is mainly economic.

Keywords: free zone, port management, economic integration.

1. Place and role of free zones in economic and social development

In the current European context several mutations in permanent evolution are revealed and the structure of economic mechanisms, mainly determined by the evolving market trends, the requirements of modernization and diversification of goods and services, increased efforts to optimize logistics and cost-effectiveness of activities, increased quality requirements, all these in being in competition system. In this process of transformation and adaptation, all economic structures are "forced" to propose new objectives (market development, diversification of activities, maximizing profits, improving economic behavior and increase of entrepreneur safety) and to acquire new methods, new forms of organization and management, that are able to ensure not only the continuity of activities but also their revival under the circumstances of their complexity and dynamism increasing in the economic environment. The free zone, which is a complex system, has become in time a real catalyst for the economic and social life, able to initiate and develop large segments of business environment in the surrounding and adjacent area, with important contributions in stimulating both trade and economy.

The Free Zone is the most complex form of the suspensive customs regimes, a useful political tool for the countries that intend to develop an export-oriented manufacturing sector, but which do not have the required administrative and technical capacity to develop a national system that allows exporters the duty free import of equipment and materials. The law states that in a well-defined free zone regarding the national territory, goods may be brought for processing and marketing, on third markets without imposing tariff and non tariff restrictions of the customs procedures as compared with the national territory, corresponding to the space reserved for free customs zone.

The free trade zone is considered from the legal point of view a "characteristic form of economic integration which is reflected in the agreement between the Member States to remove various tariffs and non-tariff barriers from all or some of the products subject to mutual commercial exchanges", created in order to promote development and economic integration in that particular area.

In international practice, to the customs facilities are added the fiscal incentives. The free access of goods in the area, together with more liberal regime of taxes on profits made in the area are favorable conditions to attract foreign capital in the free zone. These conditions are necessary to stimulate foreign investments but they are not sufficient. To ensure success, in addition to the

facilities granted to the free zone, there should be favorable conditions for combining the capital with other factors of production (labor, raw materials) as well as an appropriate infrastructure.

Experience has shown that a factor that slows down the launch and development of these areas is provided by the exaggerated transfer of their profits to the storage activities which is detrimental to export-oriented industrial processing, presenting them as "*glorified warehouses*" that offers a number of **commercial and financial benefits** maintained over time through quality, efficiency and selectivity on the level of the existing users requirements in those areas, the most important being the following:

- ✧ exemptions from customs duties on the access of imported products in the area, provided their re-exportation or of the products processed outside the national customs territory, the reduction or exemption of taxes for the period of determination;
- ✧ tariff concessions on services and granting financial assistance;
- ✧ improving communication and uncertainty decreasing in the conduct of commercial transactions.

1.1. Free zone - a key element of the port development - between past and present

In the current Romanian space there is an old tradition regarding the significance of the free zone regime implemented in some ports and cities of the Lower Danube and Black Sea, as follows: Braila - between 1836 -1883 and later, between 1930-1940 with a limited regime without reaching the level of the past development, Galati - between 1837-1883, Tulcea - between 1880-1881, Constanta - between 1880-1883 and Sulina - between 1870-1931 and from 1978 to 1993.

Favoured by the free port regime they acted as centers of convergence and divergence of the trade flows, as links in the global commerce, especially in the transit of goods between Europe and the Near and Middle East until the first part of the 20th century, stimulated by the Treaty of Adrianople provisions in 1829 (according to which the navigation was declared free on the Danube and Black Sea. The Bosphorus and Dardanelles straits had been open for the trade of all states, the Turkish cities on the left bank of the Danube, together with islands pertaining to the shore, are ceded to the Romanian Country), the Peace Congress from Paris in 1856 (which governed the rules of navigation on the Danube, for the first time, by involving a multilateral international convention)¹³ etc.

As a result of the free port regime establishment in Braila and Galati (creating places where goods and imported products could be stored without paying customs)¹⁴, the number of vessels had been continuously increasing until 1856, when the European Center for Democracy (ECD) was set up, from 449 vessels entered the port of Braila in 1837 their number reached in 1847 at 1383 and from 622 vessels entered in the Galati port in 1837 to 1064 vessels in 1847 (146 were English and Anglo-Ionian); (since 1839, immediately after the acknowledgement of the free port regime, the weight of Moldova's foreign trade conducted through the Galati port exceeded 50%, and had been continuously increasing, reaching 99.2% in 1847. In this respect, Braila became the center of foreign trade for the Romanian Country as Galati was for Moldova, as a result of geographical position near the sea and within the principalities: Galati - the southernmost city of Moldavia at the mouth of Siret, Braila in the north-eastern extremity of the Romanian Country. The two ports remain specialized in the export of grain after 1859 especially in the Ottoman Empire, Austria-Hungary, France and Italy, used for the import of cotton, wool and leather-made colonial products.

Around 1875, the economic importance of Braila and Galati free zones had been gradually reduced due to the continuous pressure from the governments of Germany and Austria-Hungary in order to enjoy the export liberalization of their own goods on Romanian territory due to special agreements¹⁵. To this purpose, they looked for setting up an outlet through its own production and

¹³ ***, *Istoria României*, Vol. IV, București, 1964, p. 256

¹⁴ C. C. Giurescu, Dinu C. Giurescu, *Scurtă istorie a Românilor*, București, 1977, p. 258

¹⁵ Gh. Caraiani, L. Brotac, *Zonele libere*, vol I, 1992, p. 39.

on the other hand to counteract the dominance and penetration in the Central Europe of goods coming from England and other countries, which under the free zones circumstances in ports of Galati and Braila could successfully compete with the German and Austro-Hungarian exports¹⁶. The two ports had held the rule of all ports on the Lower Danube until 1877.

After the War of Independence, when Dobrogea became part of the Principalities, until the First World War, the country's policy makers were concerned about the regulation of the navigation rules and trade measures to develop trade in goods as a new state requirement for international recognition. The signing of the navigation treaties and conventions by Romania with 12 countries (Germany - 1877, 1893, 1904, Italy - 1878, 1906, UK - 1880, 1892, Belgium - 1880, Netherlands, 1881, Turkey - 1887 Bulgaria - 1907 France - 1907, Norway - 1910, Sweden - 1910, Montenegro - 1911, USA - 1881), some with a large weigh of international maritime shipping, stimulated on the one hand the presence of these country's vessels in Romanian ports and on the other hand it facilitated the setting up of the reciprocal and safety conditions for the Romanian shipping companies in the ports of those countries mentioned above¹⁷.

These aspects, among other facilities, explained to a great extent the intensity of river-sea navigation and implicitly of the port traffic by increasing the number of sea and river vessels entering/leaving the ports under increasingly numerous flags. Thus it can be easily inferred the geographical and economic importance of the three previously-specified ports and the development of the maritime transport on the Danube, Braila port being the end of the sea routes, Galati and Sulina ports were either starting or ending ports and for the most shipping routes, Tulcea was only on the route itineraries, with few optional stops. Therefore the shipping companies made a fortune on the export account. If Deutsche Levante-Line (DLL) company had been a fairly successful business for 10 years in Romanian ports (including Constanta), only a total of 24 vessels¹⁸, it is obvious that "Austrian Lloyd" company that owned 60 ships in 1900, being set up since 1836, brought a much greater contribution to increasing freight traffic in this area. Between 1st January and 31st December 1900, the port of Sulina was transited by 41 boats owned by Loyd Company with a total tonnage of 55,780tons¹⁹.

Braila and Galati ports became due to their access to the Danube a gate of Europe for the goods exported by Western and Central European countries until the complete abolishment of the free zones system according to the Law of 3 February 1883²⁰. The problem of reconstituting the free zone in Braila port was resumed in 1930, especially to stimulate import and develop a series of specific free zone activities, taking into account the surplus of port facilities which were not used properly during that period²¹. The increased freight shipping in Galati and Braila ports was also due to the commercial traffic on roads converging to ports and the building of the Galati-Bucharest railway with derivatives to ports.

The free zone regime acquired by the Sulina port between 1870-1913 constituted a potential source of refreshing and development of its activities, particularly on account of the goods transit made in Central Europe with the Near and Middle East relations. It also had an important role in export and import. It had the role of an intermediary in the exchange relations between Western countries and the entire area of the Lower Danube. It had acted as a stopping point for the Western European products to regions such as Hungary and Bulgaria Serbia, and to some extent, it was the market for the products of those countries. Nevertheless, the existence of the free port regime of the Sulina port was approved by the governments of Germany and Austria-Hungary who wanted to

¹⁶ Gh. Caraiani, L. Brotac, *Zonele libere*, vol I, 1992, p. 39.

¹⁷ Valentin Ciorbea, Carmen Atanasiu, op. cit, p. 83, 84

¹⁸ export (mii mărci): în anul 1890- 10.626, în anul 1895 - 11.955, în 1896 -20.745, în 1897 - 11.240, în 1898 - 8.368, în 1899-4.414, în 1900-9.259; import (mii mărci); în 1890 - 1.050, în 1895 - 1.410, în 1896 - 1.710, în 1897 - 2.482, în 1898 - 3.355, în 1899 - 2.424, în 1900 - 1.409 după M.D. Ionescu, *Dobrogea*, în pragul veacului al XX-lea, București, 1904, p. 899

¹⁹ Commission Européene du Danube, *Statistique navigation à l' embouchures du Danube en 1900*

²⁰ Gh. Caraiani, L. Brotac, *Zonele libere*, vol I, 1992, p 38.

²¹ Gh. Caraiani, L. Brotac, *Zonele libere*, vol I, 1992, p 38.

liberalize the goods export on the Romanian territory, and on the other hand, counteracting the penetration in the Central Europe of goods from England and other countries²².

Sulina is the only port on the maritime Danube that received the free zone status over the centuries, a relatively long period of time, motivated by the favorable geographical position of the Danube flowing into the Black Sea, the need for trade development (which, although had favorable conditions was lagging behind due to the Turkish occupation) and the better supply of population and economic development of this area of the country²³: 312,469 tons were loaded 193 cargo ships in the port of Sulina in 1900. Thus, the situation of ships arriving in the port and the cargo tonnage operated after 1870, briefly explains the transformation in such a short time of the Sulina port as an important commercial center.

As a result of the analysis we presented and taking into account the structure and quantity of exported goods, we may deduct the following structure of the specialized activities conducted in the ports: Braila - cereal port, Galati - cereal port displaying the tendency of specializing in the timber export, Sulina - specializing in exports of cereals and other goods, considered the "port of Braila port (the Sulina port activity depended on that of Braila's, where the heavy traffic volumes during the flourishing period of the port led to the accumulation of stocks and early loading barges for Sulina²⁴).

The Sulina port acquired a great development through ECD's: the Sulina Channel was deepened and consolidated, two new piers for ships (of 27 m and 37m in length) were built in 1901, it was the only elevators-equipped port in the last decade of the nineteenth century, 10 elevators being in operation at that time, later on 26 elevators were registered with for the rapid handling of large amounts of grain²⁵.

1.2. The evolution of free zones in terms of port activities

During the interwar period, the Lower Danube ports were influenced by economic trends that underwent significant changes due to the recent emerging countries on the map of Europe after 1919, the new borders boosting the customs policies as well as guidance and direction of the transit trade which were maintained at an optimum level of activity. The maritime Danube ports ran less as a base for the transit trade of the new states (Austria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Holland), which were oriented towards the development of navigation and trade ties with Eastern countries because of competition the other ports (Trieste, Fiume, Gdynia). It should be mentioned here that the measures that facilitated this type of trade were adopted and were applied too slowly²⁶.

However the port cargo traffic for 1938 showed that the port Braila recorded the highest values, about 1800 thousand tons (of which about 1000 thousand tons of cereals, followed far from ores²⁷, metals, food and coal), Galati, about 700 thousand tonnes (of which wood represented about 300 thousand tons, followed by grain, minerals, food), Sulina about 50 thousand tons (cereals having the greatest weigh), Tulcea about 35 thousand tonnes (mainly cereals)²⁸; the increased freight traffic in 1938 was due to the tax reduction on the gross tonnage of vessels ECD, but also to the establishment of shipping lines by R.M.C.

The high freight traffic recorded by the Braila port can be justified by the status of free port between 1930-1940 (with limited regime)²⁹ and the navigation system of the Danube, that in this particular port the Danube management began or ended by European Commission of the Danube

²² Gh. Caraiani, L. Brotac, *Zonele libere*, vol I, 1992, p 38.

²³ Gh. Caraiani, L. Brotac, *Zonele libere*, vol I, 1992, p 39

²⁴ Paul Demetriad, *Portul Brăila în 1931 - activitatea actuală față de anii precedenți*, Brăila, 1932, p. 17

²⁵ N. Bârdeanu, D. Nicolaescu, *Contribuții la istoria marinei române*, vol. I, București, 1979, p.241

²⁶ Constantin Cheramidoglu, *Considerații privind comerțul de tranzit derulat prin porturile de la Dunărea de Jos în perioada interbelică*, v. Analele Dobrogei, serie nouă, Anul VI, nr. 1, Constanța 2000

²⁷ altă sursă (Gruparea urbană Galați - Brăila, p. 141) prevede balast materiale de construcții

²⁸ Cr. Stan, Alexandra Ghenovici, Aurelia Pașoi, *Geografia orașelor și industriei, din Geografia văii Dunării românești*, București, 1969, p. 705

²⁹ Gh. Caraiani, L. Brotac, *Zonele libere*, vol. I, 1992, p. 37.

(ECD) and tacitly by the International Commission of the Danube (ICD) for the up river part from Ulm, set up as the result of the Paris Convention (July 23, 1921); ECD having the registered office in Sulina and CID in Vienna were a permanent justification of the great powers entitlement to enter the Black Sea and the Danube, meaning actually that the winners of 1918 installed in two different points where they could have control on both the Danube and the Black Sea at the same time. Thus the higher river traffic in the port of Braila can be justified, thereby increasing the total freight traffic and a higher one in the port of Galati.

According to the Law 84/1992 on the free zones of Romania, the idea of establishing some free zones is resumed in order to promote the international trade and attract foreign capital for new technologies as well as for increasing opportunities for international economic use of resources through which investors would be attracted by granting tax and customs facilities (zero duty, exemption from paying taxes, VAD exemption etc.).

A year later, due to the Governmental Decision (GD) no. 156/1993 the *Sulina Free Zone* is established, which was actually the first free zone (with an area of 100.9 hectares), *Constanta South and Basarabi Free Zone* according to GD 410/16 in August 1993 with a area of 134.6 hectares, *Galati Free Zone* according GD No. 190/26 April 1994 (with an area of 136.98 hectares), *Braila Free Zone* - GD no.330/22 June 1994 (originally with an area of 65.1 ha), *Giurgiu Free Zone* by GD. 788/11 September 1996 (160 ha), *Curtici-Arad Free Zone* by GD. 449 / 8 June 1999 (90 ha).

2. The importance of free zones for Romanian economy

The free zones mentioned so far are according to the applicable law part of the Romanian territory and the national law is applied to them. They are clearly defined and surrounded, they have customs supervision (conducted only within the specified areas) and the access control to these free zones is performed by free zones customs and frontier-guards. According to the Government Decision to establish free zones, it is approved the regulation of organization and operation, operating system as well as the means required for custom and frontier-guard supervision. The administration of free zones is carried out by their governments, which are organized and function as autonomous administrations and coordination of the free zones activities shall be exercised by the Agency of free zones within the Ministry of Transportation.

The establishment of free zones as a concentration in this part of Romania it seems not be coincidental except the Arad-Curtici Free Zone which is located in the west of the country. A comparison analysis of the spatial distribution of free zones and of the current ones from the south - south-eastern Romanian space and of choice locations, indicate an orientation towards Romania's major natural elements like - Danube and Black Sea - as essential factors in boosting the activities of the free zones perimeters.

2.1. Elements of the free port zones development

The geographical display has an important role in the emergence and free zones development. We should not forget that Romania has a special place among the Danube riverside, besides it provides traffic maintenance services throughout the Lower Danube, is privileged to own the main arms in the Black Sea and Danube Delta Black Sea. Keeping traffic on the Danube, on its largest portion, is an international responsibility and Europe depends to a large extent on our country's capacity to provide river access to other nations.

Certain aspects³⁰ should be mentioned here that greatly influenced the decisions to set up the free zones and the choice of basically the same locations:

- ✧ the resumption of a successful tradition, highlighted and acknowledged on the European level until the interwar period, 5 were the free zones back then, 5 are the free zones this time as well,

³⁰ Ionica Soare, *Spațiul dunărean fluvio-maritim. Studiu de geografie umană și economică*, Editura NÉrgo, Galați, 2004, p. 295, 306, 307

the choice of establishing settlements are generally the same, Tulcea being substituted by Giurgiu,

- ✧ the existence of a significant potential for skilled labor, available at relatively lower costs as compared with the West European market thus being one of the main reasons for stimulating foreign investment;
- ✧ direct access to the Rhine-Danube Trans-European navigation waterway (completed by the finalizing and exploitation of the Main-Danube canal or the Europa canal between the towns of Bamberg and Kelheim in 1992, but also the Danube-Black Sea Canal in 1984) and also its easy connection to various trans-European sea routes or light rail or roads, there is already a increased track railway line (specific to USSR) whose terminus is near Galati and which could be extended to Braila;
- ✧ free zones location along the Danube (Braila, Galati and Sulina to the maritime Danube) near Romania's borders with Moldova, Ukraine and Bulgaria, so 3 out of 5 neighboring states to our country but also the presence of other free zones along the Danube outside the Romanian space (Russia, Belgrade and Novi Sad, Linz, Vienna);
- ✧ attracting and increasing transit traffic through Romania also due to the appropriate facilities and equipment available in the ports, the available capacity in Romanian shipyards to ensure the repair, shipbuilding and any type of freight (bulk liquid or solid, general cargo or containers, etc.), for instance the free zone in the port of Constanta-South will be one of the most important centers of containers transshipment with a capacity of 700,000 containers per year, therefore the accomplishment of the transshipment point in the modern maritime Constanta-South port provides a major advantage to those firms that use the Danube-Rhine waterway;
- ✧ the existence of a network of economic entities specialized in the transport and communication exploitation in domestic and international freight forwarding, ship agency in the chartering and customs operations (such as: Romtrans NAVLOMAR, NAVROM) when the free zones were set up;
- ✧ incentives granted by Law no. 84/21 July 1992 on the free zones (published in Official Gazette no. 182/1992) for those who will perform their activity within these free zones (land and buildings may be leased or rented to Romanian or foreign individuals or juridical persons on maximum 50 years, means of transport, goods and other goods from abroad or to be transported in other countries that enter or leave the free zones are exempted from customs duties and taxes, economic entities that operate in free zones are exempt from tax on goods movement, excise and income tax throughout their activities, goods from a free zone may be transported to another free zone without payment of customs duties, means of transport, goods and other commodities are admitted free of restrictions in the country of origin, source or destination country, except for goods covered by law or the international conventions which involve Romania, etc.).

We therefore conclude by stating that the Danube-Black Sea region has constituted an important geopolitical axis that is continuously increasing for the entire European Union. The purpose of establishing a free zone is to promote economic development by attracting foreign capital investment, to ensure prosperity in general and regional economic recovery by the dynamic and positive effects that it has on the economic and social level. For example, the first companies that have taken the risk in a new free zone are being closely monitorized by many others, that is why their success or failure will become the success or failure of that particular zone, this being a lengthy process until confidence is gained, after that the area enjoying rapid development.

According to many authors, most initiating countries and local authorities have made profits due to these free zones depending on a number of factors. The main factor is the host country's economic development³¹. This level of economic development has been reflected in the free zones activities.

³¹ Elena Enache, *Managementul zonelor libere contemporane*, Independența Economică, 1998, p. 121.

At the beginning of the 3rd millennium, according to Law no. 345 of June 1, 2002, on VAT and Law no. 414 of June 26, 2002 on income taxes, that are intended to accelerate Romania's adhesion to the EU it can be demonstrated that our state system there is a collapse and its effects will have a negative impact as well as the significant loss of investments, reducing the export volume, trade deficit increase etc. The new laws will make existence of free zones in Romania virtually useless.

The audit report on free zones activities, which the Romanian Court of Accounts concluded in early 2008, contains several aspects should be mentioned here³²:

- ✧ the last three years that preceded the adhesion, but also the first year of EU membership were considered among the weakest, being marked by the worsening of most indicators that assess the free zones attractiveness: from lowering the free zones income to massive exodus of investors from these special-status entities, the main motivation for this withdrawal decision being the tax incentives elimination as well as the lack of balance and coherence of the specific legislation;
- ✧ between 2004 and 2006 on average approximately 500 economic entities had worked in all six free zones, indicator that displayed a decreasing trend, shown in 2007 as well; the average withdrawals from free zones was 85 per year, which meant an average annual rate of 17%, the maximum percentage was reached in Brăila Free Zone in 2005 and in Giurgiu Free Zone in 2006, by 21% and 31%;
- ✧ Giurgiu Free Zone is nominated as the zone with the highest number of companies which have chosen to liquidate their business in Romania and yet it is the most powerful of the six free zones, being an attractive location for companies like Flamingo Computers, Ager Business Tech, MB Distribution Hyundai Auto Romania, IMSAT, Shipyard ATG LLC; Sulina Free Zone is the opposite, its attractiveness degree being almost null.

2.2. Determining factors of the port areas development in the current economic context

In the size of each free zone recorded activity it is reflected the geographical position in the country, the connection to the easiest means of communication, overlapping of legislative acts with different contents which reduce the attractiveness degree. For example, Sulina Free Zone is also disadvantaged by frequent use Danube-Black Sea Canal (shorter way and reduced cost to the Sulina canal) by naval carriers, the high transit fees charged by the state from naval carriers who use the Sulina canal like those resulted from a misunderstanding, that led to the ownership act (establishing land ownership) blocking by Sulina Free Zone Administration who did not allow any concession although application have been filed.

On the world level, there are a number of factors³³ both for the Romanian-free zones and for the Free Economic Zones (FEZ) that will shape their character in the future: increased competition in export-oriented investments, reduced response time from order to delivery from months to weeks in many industrial sectors, considerations related to technological transfer and skilled workforce and developing links between FEZ and the local economy, intention for industrial base expansion in many FEZ, development of regional economic blocs and promotion of interregional trade, increasing importance of international service activity; urge to make FEZ facilities and benefits available nationwide, committed orientation to FEZ development in the private sector.

Yet the discrepancy between the FEZ concept in the Romanian space and that of the European Union, as stated in a press release by Romania's chief negotiator with the EU (Leonard Orban), may have as a consequence the disappearance of free zones in Romania beginning with 1 January 2011³⁴. Although there are such zones in the community space, they are located outside Europe, usually on islands that are one of the EU Member States integrated parts, the choice of their location being determined by social arguments. Although the incentives reduction granted to free zones started from January 1, 2005, when the income tax was raised from 5% to 16%, few still

³² www.sfin.ro/articol_12570/zona/libere

³³ Romeo Ionescu, *Objectives, Advantages and Efficacy Economic Free Zones (EFZs)*, în *EuroEconomica*, Nr.19, 200, p. 26

³⁴ <http://www.wall-street.ro/articol/Economie/>

remained in force (exemptions from customs duties, VAT exemption, the excise duties exemptions on goods entering the free perimeter), following that after 2010 these will be granted to the companies that operate in the 6 functional free zones (South-Constanta, Galati, Braila, Sulina, Giurgiu and Arad-Curtici). In Romania the following idea is circulating - free zones should make the transition to an industrial park scheme rather than to be brought to the stage of "bankruptcy".

Also, globally, a series of **tendencies** are recorded which are specific to the last period, such as moving FEZ interest from advanced capitalist countries, especially to overcome non-tariff barriers in the international trade within this group of countries, increased tendency of activity diversification and adaptation to the current market requirements, involvement in a greater extent, particularly in free industrial zones of firms specialized in research and development to promote the state-of-the-art techniques of export production. Regarding the new FEZ promotion the general effort can be taken into consideration to attract initial investment of a limited number of first class companies, which would "trigger" an effort of engaging potential investors among others, the unprecedented proliferation of free zones in various developing regions in order to obtain the benefits related to the export based on freely convertible currency in the foreign debt liquidation efforts.

3. Conclusions

Romanian free zones are regarded as a factor of social and economic rivalry, since in addition to the specific activities, they bring about the development of some related services, financial and banking capital movements, hotels, catering, consulting as well as the development of SMEs, which operate on their territory, having a major role in developing external economic relations. In the current business environment, these free zones should focus on the overall management and to develop the capacity to tackle issues related to products, services, costs and markets in a much more critical manner than ever. In addition, they will have to implement concise development strategies which are applicable on a long term.

References

1. BĂRLĂDEANU, N., NICOLAESCU, D., *Contribuții la Istoria Marinei Române, vol. I, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, București 1979*
 2. CARAIANI, Gheorghe, CAZACU, Cornel, *Zonele libere, Editura Economică, București, 1995*
 3. CHERAMIDOGLU, Constantin, *Considerații privind comerțul de tranzit derulat prin porturile de la Dunărea de Jos în perioada interbelică, v. Analele Dobrogei, serie nouă, Anul VI, nr. 1, Constanța, 2000*
 4. CIORBEA, V., ATANASIU, Carmen, *Flota maritimă comercială română - un secol de istorie modernă 1895-1995, Editura Fundației „Andrei Șaguna”, Constanța, 1995.*
 5. DEMETRIAD, Paul, *Portul Brăila în 1931 - activitatea actuală față de anii precedenți, Editura „Analele Brăilei”, Brăila, 1932.*
 6. ENACHE, Elena, *Managementul zonelor libere contemporane, Independența Economică, 1998, p. 121.*
 7. GIURESCU, C. Constantin, GIURESCU, C. Dinu, *Scurtă istorie a românilor, Editura Științifică și Enciclopedică, București, 1977.*
 8. IONESCU, M.D., *Dobrogea, în pragul veacului al XX-lea, Atelierele Grafice "I. V. Socec", București, 1904.*
 9. IONESCU, Romeo, *Objectives, Advantages and Efficacy Economic Free Zones (EFZs), în EuroEconomica, Nr.19, 2007, Tipografia Zigotto Galați, 2007, p. 26*
 10. SOARE, Ionica, *Spațiul dunărean fluvio-maritim. Studiu de geografie umană și economică, Editura N□□□Ergo, Galați, 2004*
 11. STANCIU, Ștefan, *România și Comisia Europeană a Dunării, Editura PAX AURA MUNDI, Galați, 2002.*
http://www.sfin.ro/articol_12570/zone/libere
<http://www.wall-street.ro/articol/Economie/>
- ***, *Commission Européenne du Danube, Statistique navigation à l' embouchures du Danube en 1900*
***, *Istoria României, Vol. III, Editura Academiei R.S.R, București, 1964.*
***, *Istoria României, Vol. IV, Editura Academiei R.S.R, București, 1964*
***, *Geografia Văii Dunării Românești, Editura Academiei R.S.R, București, 1969*
***, *Peuce, vol. II, Muzeul Delta Dunării, Tulcea, 1971*