

GENERAL PROGNOSIS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY OF VARNA TILL 2030 /RESEARCH ESSAY/

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ABSTRACT: THE RICH HISTORY OF THE CITY DETERMINED THE RAPID DEVELOPMENT OF THE CITY AS A NATURAL CULTURAL - ECONOMIC CENTER OF THE NORTH - EASTERN BULGARIA. THANKS TO THIS, NAS3LENIETO CITY IS CONSTANTLY GROWING, AND PARTICULARLY ENHANCES THIS PROCESS IN RECENT YEARS. UNLIKE OTHER BULGARIAN CITIES OF VARNA AND IS A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE, CONDITIONAL ON BEING AN INTERNATIONAL SHOPPING CENTER TRANSPORT; HAS A HIGHLY DEVELOPED CULTURE; THERE IS A HUGE TOURIST POTENTIAL.

KEY WORDS: HISTORY, POPULATION, PORT CENTER, SHOPPING CENTER, CULTURAL CENTER, FUTURE DEVELOPMENT, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

THE earliest traces of human presence in Varna are attested from the Old Stone Age. It is known that on the coast of the Bay of Varna, where the old part of the town is now, was located the fortress of Odessos, which is the Greek translation of the older name – Varna.

AFTER the liberation in Varna the Turkish and Greek population still dominates. Bulgarians, Jews, Armenians, Tatars and Gagauz live along with them in the city. Up to the middle of the 19th century the Bulgarians were an insignificant part of the population of Varna. Liberation found Varna with no more than 3500 Bulgarians in a total population of 21 000 people.

ONLY after the liberation, when the fortress wall was destroyed and many Bulgarians resettled from North Dobrogea, Bessarabia, Thrace and Macedonia, did EniMahalle, i.e. the Bulgarian neighborhood, develop. In the late 19th and early 20th century eight neighborhoods could be distinguished in Varna in terms of ethnic background. Based on their size they could be arranged in the following way: Turkish, Greek, Gagauz, Armenian, Jewish, Bulgarian, Tatar and Gypsy.

AFTER the liberation the town developed as a major commercial, port and industrial center. Some of the biggest cotton textile, shipbuilding and ship repair enterprises were built. Between 1883 and 1885 the famous Orient Express passed through Varna.

ON June 10, 1921 Varna was officially declared a seaside resort by a three-member committee, serving as the municipal government. At the state level, this act was confirmed by a royal decree issued in 1925. The construction of modern sea baths started as early as May 7 in the same year. In the year of their opening – 1926, the sea baths attracted 12 000 visitors who increased to 38 000 the next year, and in 1928 reached 40 000 in number. The trend

continued during the next decade as the number of vacationers varied in the range between 30 000 – 50 000 people. The share of foreign tourists also increased. According to estimates by the municipality, tourists brought in between 180-200 million lev in the local economy which was of great importance for the development of the economic life in the city. The growing flow of people in the city led to infrastructure development.

FROM December 20, 1949 to October 20, 1956 the city was named "Stalin" after the name of Joseph Stalin. Due to the great migration to the city, the council of ministers limited the advance of new citizens to the city of Stalin. The late 1950s were marked by active events of expansion and development of the sea garden. The construction of the resort St. Constantine (Druzhba) started on December 1, 1955, followed by Golden Sands in August 1956. The construction of new hotels in St. Constantine began in 1956, but the resort was designed as a whole only in the late 1960s.

THE City of Varna and the Municipality of Varna have a high level of development and significant potential for further growth.

THE factors that will determine the future development of the city are:

-Location – access to the Black Sea, the location of the road between Europe and Asia, a front "door" to the country and the European Union.

-High domestic and international transport accessibility – a meeting place and communication and transport facilities, availability of port and airport. Varna is the largest input output hub of the country, connecting the eastern and central Europe by sea to Russia, Ukraine, and the rest of the world.

-Educational and Cultural Center – Varna is one of the major scientific and cultural centers of the country. The five universities in the city welcome more than 30 600 Bulgarian and foreign students. The development of universities and research institutes is essential for the economic, cultural and social development of the region.

-Tourism potential – Varna Municipality has a unique potential for development of diverse tourist packages. In many cases the presence of tourist resources is favorable for the development of nature-friendly and modern industries in highly efficient niches.

OUR prognosis for the economic development have a strong probabilistic nature as the processes in the economy and spatial development of environment are with a high degree of unpredictability, even in the near future.

THE projected average annual growth rates of the economy are high – 5-8%, but realistic, while maintaining current investment interest in the town and municipality. Having realized the projected rates, the city and municipality will reach a level of development of about 60% of the EU average. The current level is about 37%.

IT is envisaged that industries such as shipbuilding, ship repair and others linking science to production which are traditional but promising for the city will enjoy accelerated development.

IT is expected that the share of knowledge-intensive industries in the structure of the industry, which are now 4.1 percent will increase to 22-25%.

TOURISM in the municipality has very good indices and great perspectives for development. There are opportunities for the growth of the tourist flow which are related with service improvement and training of employees in tourism, developing new types of tourism

such as yacht tourism, and increasing the number of foreign tourists with the attraction of overseas markets.

THE development of ICT will expand the opportunities for the development of new job opportunities – telework, telemedicine, tele-education, e-banking. Knowledge as well as labour and competition are globalized.

THE sectors which are expected to attract most investments over the period of this prognosis are transport, storage, and communications. Commercial – storage plants and areas will be gradually transformed into commercially complex specialized centers with a concentration of commercial staff, visitors and goods, which raises a number of urban problems. In the master plan, the new logistics development of the city is determined by reserve land in the west and south of Varna.

ENVIRONMENT and its quality are essential for the improvement of the quality of life of the population, as well as for the increase in the investment interest in the city. The problem city vs. nature is quite complex. The green areas are the main carriers of nature in the urban structure.

THE rapid development of the city in the recent years has consumed a significant portion of the green areas which cause reduction in the qualities of the resort. Therefore maintaining the existing parks with a city-wide importance it is necessary to select quality indicators in relation to public works, landscape and vegetation. The construction of parks that are covered with sports facilities, parks that are specialized, offering high-end entertainment and tourist packages, is envisaged. Serious development of tourism in Varna Municipality is expected along the southern bank of the Varna lake, where we foresee improvement of the environmental conditions. The development of a rowing channel is in the making. Fishing villages will be developed in their traditional places. Golf courses, marina, combined with other sports and entertainment sites will be built, too.

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