



The Prishtina strategy as a development strategy in competition with other capitals' strategies in the South-Eastern Europe

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ABSTRACT

Competitiveness is becoming more and more a regional issue-oriented to meet the needs of the economy and citizens, so economic development is essential for the survival of all cities. Economic growth, made because of an economic development plan, brings new capital to city governments by expanding the tax base to further develop as well as improve the quality of life in general. This paper aims to examine the advantages that the city of Prishtina may have in correlation with the capitals of other Southeast European countries to identify the possibilities of what different strategies and concepts have been developed and used to make a valuable crossroads and short-term and long-term effects from a cultural, economic, social and political point of view.

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Introduction

Competitiveness is becoming more and more a regional issue oriented to meet the needs of the economy and citizens, so economic development is essential for the survival of all cities. Economic growth, made because of an economic development plan, brings new capital to city governments by expanding the tax base to further develop as well as improve the quality of life in general. This enables the creation of a more suitable and competitive economic environment at the local level. Sustainable economic development is done through the Development Strategy which comes in response to rapid change, keeping under control the conditions in which stakeholders will have a constructive approach to assessing the situation, taking specific actions to enable the city so that the changes are not dramatic. Thus, the city strategy should improve regional competitiveness, based on factors such as cultural heritage, demographic movements, and social change. All Regional Development Strategies are oriented towards long-term trends that directly maintain the competitiveness of the city identified as: (1) urbanization and demography, (2) increasing inequality, (3) sustainability, (4) technological change, (5) industrial clusters and global value chains; and (6) governance. The conception of the Development Strategy is usually done by creating the appropriate climate for a sustainable development, making adequate policies in business support, the growing importance of information and communication technology, social and intellectual capital in profiling the competitiveness of cities.

To achieve competitiveness as well as social cohesion within urban development and regeneration strategies and programs, several features must be included. These features include economic growth and employment, environmental aspect, efficiency in reducing poverty rate, crime, integration of immigrants from other regions to live in the city and ethnic minorities, gender equality, demographic change, urban sprawl, architecture, culture, and good governance.

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Competitiveness is now increasingly becoming a regional issue oriented to meeting the needs of the economy and its citizens. Creating a country-friendly business environment can support the competitiveness of the city. Therefore, the modern concept of city development should be analyzed through different perspectives. The whole European perspective of the Southeast European region offers the greatest chance for the modern approach to city development. City development can be seen as a balance of different interests, those of investors, households, citizens, tourists, and government. The possibility of entering new markets is an important factor for regional development analysis. The main factors are the development of transport and information technology, while environmental issues are the last factor in all the goals described. Therefore, some development strategies of regional cities, such as Ljubljana, aim to have a high-quality environment, based on natural resources and heritage. Renewable energy is also supported by this strategy. Spatial planning, cultural heritage and demographic shifts are part of the concept of competitiveness. Of course, competitiveness is oriented towards economic development, technological progress and increasing the quality of life.

Thus, the city strategy should improve competitiveness at the regional level, based on factors such as: cultural heritage, demographic movements, and social shifts. All regional Development Strategies are oriented towards technological innovations, seeking to increase productivity and free exchange of technological capacities as well as innovations. Capitals are intensive users of energy, food, and water, given their focus on people and economic activity. Their challenge, especially in Southeast Europe, is to increase cooperation, to bring together technology and markets to become much more efficient in using the resources available. Urban performance depends not only on the content of the city with heavy infrastructure (physical capital), but also on the availability, quality of knowledge communication, as well as intellectual and social capital. This form of capital decides on urban competition

This study aims to evaluate the advantages that the city of Prishtina may have in correlation with the capitals of other Southeast European countries to identify the possibilities of what different strategies and concepts have been developed and used to make a valuable crossroads and short-term and long-term effects from a cultural, economic, social and political point of view. Another objective emphasized by the capital are conceived within the ambition to be a 'catalyst' for change in other areas, such as: tourism development; increase of domestic investments; supporting the growth of new industries; physical, regeneration; social engagement and increased pride in cities. The paper also questions the strategies and concepts that have been developed and used to do the competitiveness of successful capitals in the short and long term. In this study, the data for quantitative and qualitative analysis, obtained from research in analytical and synthetic terms with direct access to literature, scientific journals, as well as official reports published locally and abroad as:

- i. A review of primary and secondary documents on urban change and development and national urban strategies in capital cities in Southeast Europe.
- ii. A review of the literature on the meaning and measurement of urban economic competitiveness.
- iii. A review of quantitative data on the economic performance of 9 (nine) largest cities.
- iv. A postal questionnaire to economic development officials in Prishtina city.
- v. More detailed reviews of Sofia, Ljubljana, Zagreb, Prishtina, Tirana, Podgorica, Skopje, Budapest, and Sarajevo cities.

This study continues with a conceptual analysis of competitiveness of major capitals, smart cities, comparison of development strategies and finally concludes with summary of key points and recommendations.

Competitiveness of Major Capitals: A general view

Comparing cities can support investors in their choice on the one hand, it can also be an important guide for the future development of the city on the other hand. Increasing competitive pressure and adequate addressing of new challenges for urban management, planning and urban policy issues, but also urban research and analysis consider cities increasingly in competition, as the case for the ongoing discussion of global cities emerging (Sassen 2001).

Competition between cities within recent decades, the challenges and tasks of urban planning and urban policy have changed as the positioning of cities and the marketing of cities become increasingly important within global and regional competition (Jensen-Butler et al., 1997). With respect to a global level, cities and regions are facing increasing competition for high-ranking economic activities as a result of strong economic and technological changes over the past decades (Begg, 1999). Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are usually the bearers of the modern concept of development planning. Therefore, with the increase of the level of competition we improve the position of the companies in the city. The competitiveness of the city can be seen as creating good conditions for citizens and the business community. If we do not provide favourable conditions for entrepreneurs, it will be difficult to find resources to finance projects in the process of implementing the Development Strategy.

Southeast European countries are in different economic trajectories, social systems, institutions, cultures and urban systems and policies (Musterd, S., Kovács, Z. 2013). But despite this diversity, during the past decade there has been a convergence of views about the problems they face and the kinds of policy responses they should be adopting. In all countries, policy makers are grappling with the need to reduce centralisation, improve the performance of national and local governments, de-bureaucratise delivery systems and to create partnership mechanisms and cultures. Despite the institutional, financial, planning, and legislative differences, three trends that transcend national boundaries are worth noting.

The first is that the balance between national, regional, and local responsibilities and powers has been changing in many Southeast European countries (Sassen, 2002). A second general trend has been the emergence of more explicit national urban strategies in many Southeast European countries. A third trend has been growing recognition of the economic potential of and opportunities for cities (Parkinson al., 2004).

Global Trends for the Competitiveness of Capitals

Global trends that increase the competitiveness of capitals major, long-term trends that directly hold the city competitive are identified six to consider: (1) urbanization and demography, (2) growing inequality, (3) sustainability, (4) technological change, (5) industrial clusters and global value chains; and (6) governance (Kilroy, A., 2015).

Trend 1: Urbanization and Demography - people have moved from villages to cities for millennia, but never has the world been urbanized as fast and fast as it is today. Since 2010, for the first time in history, over half of the world's population lives in cities. Cities make up over 80% of global gross domestic product (GDP).

Trend 2: Increasing Inequality - market reforms and global economic integration, which have accelerated in recent decades, have provided the greatest impetus to prosperity and poverty reduction globally. But within countries due to population movements towards large cities inequality is growing.

Trend 3: Sustainability- sustainability can be defined as long-term economic development compatible with available natural resources and the preservation of the natural environment. As population and income increase, pressures on resources and the environment increase.

Trend 4: Technological change - Technological progress has always driven urbanization. It has significantly reduced transportation and communication costs. Coupled with policies to open markets, it has spread economic activity throughout the region. Capitals have been big beneficiaries: they enable firms to invest in different sectors of the economy, and bring together talented people, enabling the city to make better use of technology than any other country.

Trend 5: Industrial clusters and global value chains - Global value chains are the defining feature of twentieth century international trade. The information and communication technology (ICT) revolution and the opening of new markets have allowed the segmentation of production across borders, with different parts of the value chain located in different countries. At the same time, complex trade, and logistics systems weave production networks together to serve global markets while they are enabled by support services, especially financial, telecommunications, transport, logistics and other business services.

Trend 6: Governance - Markets are globalizing, and societies are transforming because of this trend. Technological advances may stimulate the concentration of economic activity, but they also impose decentralization of elections and decision-making. The Internet, mobile communication and social media have empowered many individuals.

Decentralizing forces - economic, social, and technological - play in favour of local government. The availability of more information, and growing expectations for transparency, accountability, and good governance, are making people more distrustful of national governments.

Complete urbanization of the city through Urban Regulatory Plans makes cities more competitive. In cultural heritage we are dealing with all the tangible and intangible cultural assets that a city has, such as: libraries, archives and museums, buildings (religious places of worship, castles, monasteries, and intangibles where various manifestations enter cultural such as: folklore, ethnographic heritage, etc.). In this regard, competitiveness is not only about the strategy used and the development of economic advantages and their dynamism, but also about the ability to develop territorial, cultural, and social capital between individuals, companies, and institutions (Campbell, T. 2013).

Smart Cities

The concept of "smart city" has been introduced as a strategic tool to surround modern urban factors of production in a common framework, as well as to underline the growing importance of information and communication technology, social and intellectual capital in profiling the competitiveness of cities. A "smart city" is a city that invests in human capital and necessarily also in the social processes of participation, education, culture, and infrastructure for new communications.

A "smart city" must provide sustainable economic development, ensure a high quality of life for all citizens, and provide responsible management of natural and social resources, through participatory governance. Therefore, future development strategies should push forward the transformation of Prishtina into a "smart city".

While in most of the development strategies of the capitals in Southeast Europe, Ljubljana, Zagreb, Sofia, Budapest, Skopje, Podgorica, Sarajevo, it is decisive to set priorities for the development of these cities in correlation with international competition, this happens by planning and implementing actions necessary to increase the importance of foreign investment, easy access of international businesses and that by creating new jobs in cities. The following table gives some indicators of the size of cities in the region of Southeast Europe, starting from the number of inhabitants, the area of cities and the density of the population living in these cities. From this it results that we have cities with a large population, as well as other cities which have a significant population.

Table 1: Demographic data of capital cities in Southeast Europe

City	No. of residents	Km2	residents/km2
Prishtina	204,721	523	391
Tirana	494,996	1,652	535
Skopje	595,926	571.46	1,042
Budapest	1,768,913	525.2	3,368
Ljubljana	295,504	164	1,712
Zagreb	884,878	641	1,259
Podgorica	156,000	129	1,209
Sofia	1,281,120	892	1,412
Sarajevo	696,731	327.12	2,131

Source: Edited by the author (2020).

While Budapest and Sofia are metropolises Tirana, Zagreb, Sarajevo, and Skopje have an approximate population level, Pristina and Podgorica are at a lower level in terms of indicators, such as population.

Comparison of the Development Strategies

Based on the comparison of the Development Strategies of Skopje and Pristina, the budget differences of these two strategies are noticed. While the Skopje Development Strategy, which contains projects in the total amount of € 234,132,250, where the sources of funding are as follows: from own sources 30,970,250 or 13.23% of the total, € 9,010,000 from international sources, or 3.86%, as and 194,152,000 or 82.92% from the state budget, while in Prishtina's strategy the ratio of government grants to own investments is extremely low.

The three main priorities in economic development strategies in most regional capitals can be summarized as follows:

- i) improving high quality education and know-how.
- ii) raising the quality of life, as well as creating a pleasant and safe living environment.
- iii) internationalization of city spaces and interconnection with global networks.

The economic development of the Municipality of Prishtina can be divided into several phases.

The first phase of ethnic division and non-investment in the Municipality in the period 1990-1999 (dominated by the then Serbian government. The second phase; the period after the liberation of Kosovo and the entry of NATO troops as well as the establishment of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) known as the period of fulfillment of emergencies for refugees returning from forced exile. The third phase is known as the period of consolidation of local institutions in 2000 and central ones in 2001. This period has resulted in the creation of the budget at the local and national level, which budget could not even close to 'meet the needs for the recovery of great damage and the enormous destruction that has occurred during earlier periods. The fourth phase is related to the further consolidation of the local government, now without an international administrator, which consequently has the drafting and approval of the Prishtina Development Strategy. The current phase, which is known as the transition phase to a Typical new development phase, focusing on major projects such as: increasing the capacity of drinking water supply throughout the day for the citizens of Pristina, the project of cogeneration of district heating for residents and the extension of the network to new parts of the city, as well as investments in city rings.

The project for the improvement of the water supply and the construction of the new water treatment plant is a very important project for the Municipality itself and for its citizens. This project has enabled water in the future to be no longer an obstacle to a dignified life and an obstacle to economic development in the city. This project in the amount of 35 million euros, is financed by: own resources of the Municipality of 5 million euros, in co-financing with the European Commission (ECLO) - 5 million euros, and the Regional Water Company "RWC Prishtina" with 20 million euros as loan from the German Development Bank (KfW).

The main benefit of this project is the total rehabilitation of the primary water supply network, the elimination of physical losses, which until this project was 52.00% of production, as well as the increase of production capacity from 700 liters per second to 1400 liters per second when there is completed the project. Whereas, regarding the Central Heating Cogeneration Project, the Municipality of Prishtina has managed to provide funding sources in the amount of 30,025,000.00 euros, namely: 13,825,000.00 from the European Commission, 11 million euros from the German Government, through the German Bank for Development (6 million of which are grants, while 5 million are loans guaranteed by the Municipality and the Government of Kosovo with an interest rate of 7.8%), 1.8 million euros from the Swedish Government, 1.5 million euros from the Government of Luxembourg, and 2 million from the own resources of the Municipality of Prishtina

Project objectives: This project has rehabilitated the district heating system of Prishtina, serving customers with sustainable heating, high efficiency and affecting the ecologically better environment. Through this project it is achieved to save fuel - fuel oil, as a

reduction of high costs that this fuel has. It is worth mentioning the fact that the central heating system of Prishtina is connected through an 11 km pipeline, with heat exchangers and steam extraction from the Kosovo B Power Plant (Obiliq).

The benefits of the co-generation project are:

- i. Reduction of operating cost of heat production by about 50.00%.
- ii. Replacement of fuel oil with steam extracted from the Power Plant "Kosova B".
- iii. Improving air quality for Prishtina residents by reducing CO₂ and other harmful gases.
- iv. Reducing the demand for electricity for heating, thus reducing electricity consumption.

The project, which will require numerous financial resources, is the construction of the City Ring with a length of 26 km, at a cost of about 160 million euros, for which the project needs a much greater coordination with the Government of Kosovo, respectively the Ministry of Infrastructure, competing for EBRD funds to co-finance this very important project for the future development of Prishtina. The main benefit of this project will be reducing unnecessary car access to the city, easier access to the highway as well as reducing pollution and noise in the city.

International donations over a long period of time have been selective, non-substantial and non-transparent, developed mainly in "soft" projects on administrative and professional capacity building of employees and certain social groups marginalized because of investments. insufficient from the central and local level.

Considering that the Municipality of Prishtina for the first time has implemented the strategic plan for the city, this Strategy, despite the goals described in achieving the objectives, has had delays in meeting the goals and objectives. Compared to regional city strategies, this strategy is mainly infrastructure-oriented, lagging investments in regional sister cities that are investment-focused on correlation with national strategies oriented towards innovative policy approaches, improving know-how, and promoting urban marketing.

Prishtina Development Strategy has not been harmonized with the National Strategy because Kosovo does not yet have a National Development Strategy, approved by assembly. This has come because of meeting the great needs for investments in road infrastructure, construction of school facilities by doing capacity building education, the construction of health ambulances in different parts of the city, sports facilities, which for decades have been left without the necessary basic investments as part of the strategy of the then authorities. The demand for faster development compared to other capitals in the region has driven the need for infrastructure reconstruction more than necessary, thus bypassing many projects, which have been needed in both human capacity building and long-term investment.

While other cities, such as Skopje, in its development strategy in one of the main goals has set the preservation of the identity of the city, Prishtina has had to focus on the most urgent objectives for the start of a new life. This shortage has also come because of the small budgets that municipalities have had in this time, as well as the allocation of meager government grants. The lack

of adequate legislation, the non-definition of Kosovo's political status at that time, caused delays in the implications of the public-private partnership, as well as foreign direct investment in all sectors.

While other cities in the region are focused on creating a more favorable environment for business and competition, the Municipality of Prishtina in its development strategy (2016-2019) is more focused on meeting the infrastructure needs, roads, schools, kindergartens for children, restoration of cult and sports facilities, shelter for war-torn categories, etc.

If we make a comparison between the Development Strategy of Prishtina and that of Zagreb, the distinction is essential. Zagreb Development Strategy focuses more on "soft projects", which will be for:

- i. a competitive economy.
- ii. human resource development.
- iii. environmental protection and sustainability.
- iv. natural resources and energy management.
- v. improving the functioning of urban quality in the city.
- vi. improving the quality of life; and
- vii. improving the development management system.

Based on the results of location impact, the motivating factors of employers and employees for doing business in the capital are mainly attracted by the economic advantages that offers the city of Prishtina, such as: job opportunities, favorable labor market conditions. For managers, the motive is a wider market (enterprises, customers), which is a significant advantage. Another important advantage for the creative class is the opportunities that the city of Prishtina offers regarding education and training from the Public and private University.

Other important advantages that Prishtina offers as a capital are job offer, opportunities for career building, cultural life, and the opportunity to use leisure time, then, the opportunity for sports and entertainment, growing services and extensive sales network, as well as the number of premises that provide quality food and services.

Despite the advantages offered above, there are also weaknesses that accompany the regional capitals. Large influx of people who use the services and are employed in Prishtina while living outside it, pollution, insufficient cleanliness, unintegrated and outdated transport, and noise are factors that affect the competitiveness of the city compared to other cities of the country as well as regional ones.

Table 2: Ease of doing business ranking of capital cities in Southeast Europe

City /State	Ranking	DB Score
Skopje/ North Macedonia	17	80.70
Ljubljana/ Slovenia	37	76.50
Podgorica /Montenegro	50	73.80
Zagreb/ Croatia	51	73.60
Budapest/ Hungary	52	73.40
Prishtina / Kosovo	57	73.20
Sofia /Bulgaria	61	72.00
Tirana /Albania	82	67.70
Sarajevo/Bosnia and Herzegovina	90	65.40

Source: Edited by the author (2020).

In the World Bank Report "Doing business" Kosovo in 2011 was in 176th place, while in 2015 it managed to rise to 64th place. Based on these reports, Kosovo has had a very positive move in terms of improving the conditions for doing business. While the World Bank report in 2017 ranked Kosovo among the 10 economies around the world that have marked the largest improvement in doing business reforms. This year, Kosovo ranks 40th out of 190 countries in terms of ease of doing business, compared to 60th place a year ago.

Due to the political conjuncture, Kosovo in 2020 is in the 57th position, enabling countries in the region such as Montenegro, Croatia, and Hungary to surpass Kosovo, countries which have applied deeper reforms in the economy. There are several criteria that are considered in the ranking of world economies such as Operating in a secure business environment, opening a business, obtaining a location, Accessing, nonce, dealing with daily operations, starting a business, connecting electricity, dealing with building permits, registering property, obtaining credit, protecting minority investors, hiring workers, enforcing contracts and resolving insolvency.

Table 3: The Global Competitiveness Index 4.0 2020 Rankings of capital cities in Southeast Europe

City /State	Ranking	DB Score
Slovenia	35	70.20
Hungary	47	65.10
Bulgaria	49	64.90
Croatia	63	61.90
Montenegro	73	60.80
Albania	81	57.60
North Macedonia	82	57.30
Bosnia and Herzegovina	92	54.70
Kosovo	n/n	n/n

Source: Edited by the author (2020).

Covering 141 economies, the Global Competitiveness Index 4.0 mat national competitiveness - defined as the set of institutions, policies and factors that determine the level of productivity. The indicators considered according to the IKG can be classified into four groups based on topics that address (i) human resources and quality of life; (ii) trade opportunities and production potential; (iii) mobility; and (iv) innovation and brands. In the global ranking of competitiveness from 141 world economies, Kosovo is unfortunately not included, where according to these parameters Slovenia, Hungary and Bulgaria are in a very favourable position.

Conclusion

The impact on the competitiveness of cities developing creative industries (arts, media, entertainment, creative business services, architects, publishers, designers) and knowledge-intensive industries (ICT, R&D, finance, law). It provides significant new knowledge to the theoretical and practical understanding of the conditions necessary to stimulate "creative knowledge" cities.

The competitiveness of the city can be seen as creating good conditions for citizens and the business community. If we do not provide favourable conditions for entrepreneurs, it will be difficult to find resources to finance projects in the process of implementing the Development Strategy. Thus, the city strategy should improve competitiveness at the regional level, based on factors such as: cultural heritage, demographic movements, and social shifts. All regional development strategies are oriented towards technological innovations, seeking productivity increase and free exchange of technological capacities as well as innovations.

The possibility of entering new markets is an important factor for regional development analysis. The main factors are the development of transport and information technology, while environmental issues are the last factor in all the goals described. Therefore, some development strategies of regional cities, aim to have a high-quality environment, based on natural resources and heritage. Renewable energy is also supported by this strategy. Spatial planning, cultural heritage and demographic shifts are part of the concept of competitiveness. Of course, competitiveness is oriented towards economic development, technological progress and increasing the quality of life.

A "smart city" must provide sustainable economic development, ensure a high quality of life for all citizens, and provide responsible management of natural and social resources, through participatory governance. Therefore, future development strategies should push forward the transformation of Prishtina into a "smart city". The Global Competitiveness Index measures national competitiveness - defined as the totality of institutions, policies and factors that determine the level of productivity. The indicators considered according to the Global Competitiveness Index can be classified into four groups based on the topics they address: human resources and quality of life; trade opportunities and productive potential; the mobility; and innovation and brands. Therefore, the strategy of competitiveness of cities has to do with the fact that all its assets are accessible and useful for all its inhabitants regardless of skills, physical condition, age, gender, etc. Promoting alternative and sustainable mobility, urban regeneration, high-efficiency public transport, increasing parking capacity and increasing green and creative spaces are specific objectives that will be met to facilitate and ensure mobility in the city and improve the quality of life of citizens.

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