

CLUJ-NAPOCA THE REGIONAL CENTRE OF TRANSYLVANIA

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There are 6 regional centres in Romania — apart from the capital, Bucharest — which stand like well defined cities: Jassy, Galați, Craiova, Brașov, Timișoara and Cluj-Napoca. Their influence covers large areas: in the eastern sector, Jassy dominates the entire central and northern Moldavia to the middle section of the Eastern Carpathians; to the south-east stands the city of Galați; the western section of the Romanian Plain up to the middle section of the Southern Carpathians and the Danube Straits has Craiova, the south-west Timișoara, central Romania, Brașov and for the north-west and west — roughly the hilly Transylvanian Basin — there is Cluj-Napoca.

The city of Cluj-Napoca emerges among the others above-mentioned (equal in rank) by its position — at the merging point of three different morphological units: the Apuseni Mountains, the Somesan Plateau and the Transylvanian Plain. This central position provides ideal connections both east-west and north-south, with the whole Transylvanian Basin as well as the west and north-west of the country. Secondly, there are no competitive cities in the vicinity to diminish its prestige as provincial metropolis. The metropolitan character derives — as in other situations — from the size and intensity of its influence within the adjacent territories by its external functions, among which the university, medical and cultural ones, constant tradition for the city.

The external functionality includes the internal one and represents a superior approach for the researcher, since it aims toward specific, interconnected territorial formations — the setion. Thus, there are 845 commercial units in the city, two of them in the supermarket category. The en gross commerce is representative especially by the automobile shop which also attends two adjacent departments — Sălaj and Alba.

The administration is represented by the city hall, banks, financial offices and the offices for agricultural coordination of the department and of inter-departmental activities.

The city's cultural endowment include two theatres (Romanian and Hungarian) two great culture houses and 9 cinemas.

The educational domain is represented by 6 higher education institutions: university, polytechnic, medical, agronomic, musical and fine arts, with a total of 20,000 students.

The sanitation endowments cover the entire range of specialized services, with the university clinic, the oncological recuperatory and professional disease hospitals as the most important.

The number of people working in the tertiary sector per 1,000 inhabitants is close to 250, the larger shares being in commerce, banking and finances and education.

The demographic potential places Cluj-Napoca (with its 317.914 inhabitants in 1989) 5th in the national hierarchy, after Bucharest, Brașov, Timișoara and Jassy.

Administratively, the city preserved its capital character both in the former and the present territorial division system, promoted in 1968.

The traditional connections come from the antiquity, when one of the main roads of the Roman Empire connected Potaissa (Turda) with Porolissum (Moigrad) through Cluj (Napoca). The hydrographic network's features, converging toward the city's precincts, facilitated the establishment of a road system enabling good connections with the Apuseni and the hilly Transylvanian Basin. The valley of Someș provided the best premises for communication lines with Bistrița-Năsăud, Maramureș and Satu Mare areas.

On the grounds of the previously mentioned criteria, the city of Cluj-Napoca stands in the second category of convergence cities (after the country's capital, Bucharest) along with Jassy, Braşov, Galaţi, Timişoara and Craiova. Its influence areas were delimited according to the daily recruitment areas of the working hand, supplying with rough materials located in the vicinity, recruitment areas for students, the medical attraction and the historical factor. Three converging influence zones are important, reinforcing the capital character:

- immediate influence zone (intradepartmental);
- close influence zone (departmental);
- far influence zone.

The immediate influence zone covers the central area of the department, being limited by the convergence areas of the towns Dej, Gherla, Turda, Cimpia Turzii and Huedin. This zone including the pre-city area, covers approximately 2,000 km² (30% of the department) with a population of almost 400,000 (more than 50% of the department's). It is the area with the most intense displacement for work and a relative specialization and intensification of agriculture.

The close influence zone corresponds to the administrative boundaries of the department, with a surface of 6,650 km² and a population of 740,929 (1st July, 1987). It administratively and economically subordinates to the city of Cluj.

The far influence zone has two variants:

- extradepartmental;
- provincial.

The first is characterized by closer service connections (especially in gross commerce) and production ones. It is limited by the influence zones of the towns Baia Mare, Satu Mare and the cities of Oradea and Tirgu Mureş and, to the south, by the provincial boundary. This zone's surface is 17,000 km² with a population of 1,5 million. It disposes of various resources, some directly involved in the city's economy (wood, building stone, salt, hydroenergy, tourism).

The provincial zone roughly covers entire Transylvania, affecting the prestige of same rank cities like Timişoara and Braşov, by medical and university attraction. Its surface is close to 100,292 km² (42,07% of the country) with a population of almost 8,03 million (34,6% of the nation). This zone holds the most important national gas reserves. It also has various resources and a diverse primary touristic offer, especially within the frame of the Apuseni.

The economical, social and political evolution of Timişoara and Braşov tends to extend their influence zones, reinforcing them as regional poles. Hence, one may speak about a tripolarity in Transylvania, the city of Cluj-Napoca dominating however, by its traditional connections, culture and position. The psychological factor is to be added, passed from one generation to another, keeping in their conscience the idea of a spiritual capital and a vital centre of Transylvania, a heritage from the Middle Ages.

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