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LOGISTICS POLICY AS AN SUPPORT ELEMENT OF COMPETITIVE REGIONS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

Summary: The problem of the article concerns the question of logistics policies, as part of the support competitive regions of the European Union. The structure of their subject matter includes issues related to the identification and classification of theoretical disparities in the region's competitiveness, determinants of competitiveness and regional development, as well as the importance of logistics policies and objectives of determinants and relationships in the European Union. The author puts forward the following research hypothesis – the right logistic policy (with defined properties) supports the development of the regions of the European Union.

Keywords: policy, logistics, competition, region, European Union.

JEL Classification: N74, R11.

Introduction

The experience of many regions of the European Union shows that the proper functioning of business processes and systems to a large extent conditioned by the level of product flows and information, which in turn allows you to build a certain level of competitiveness. The competitiveness of a specific region in the European Union, to a large extent is determined by logistics policy that allows shaping the course of cargo flows and accompanying information. The use of logistics policies, as part of the support processes that increase the level of competitiveness of the European Union, becomes, therefore, an important area of

research. Policy logistics understood as purposeful, direct and indirect impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of processes, the flow of products and accompanying information between supply chain participants [Witkowski, 2004, p. 57], is today an important element in building a competitive edge regions of the European Union. The competitiveness of EU regions is carried out as a result of quantitative and qualitative changes that result in changes in logistics policy. Policy logistics and its development is a result of increased efficiency and the efficiency of cargo flows and information, thus determining an increase in the level of competitiveness of the European Union.

The subject of studies focused on theoretical considerations logistics policies, as part of the enabling competitive advantage regions of the European Union, stating: disparities theoretical factors, importance, objectives and determinants and relationships.

The aim of the study is to analyze the theoretical aspects of shaping elements of the logistic policy of regions of the European Union.

1. Disparities theoretical and competitiveness of the region

Explanation disparities theoretical and mechanisms of regional competitiveness is one of the biggest challenges undertaken by economists, economic geographers and representatives of other social sciences. Of particular interest in this issue began in the 1950s, when the first theories, attempting in a systematic way to explain spatial inequalities in the economic development of regions (countries, continents) [Gorzela, 2004, pp. 38-70]. Until now arisen, at least dozens of theories and concepts with different coverage, which, starting from different methodological orientations in different ways explain the diverse spatial dynamics of competitive processes in the region. In the present study it was limited only to identify the theories and concepts that the author's opinion in a significant way refer to as themes, or in spite of many years of their formation are still being used, entering the canon of science and address key factors of regional development.

As it turns economic theory does not give a clear answer to the question of the competitiveness of the region. Closer analysis of the literature indicates that disparities theoretical shaping a variety of theories relate to the mechanisms and regularity of formation of inter-regional differences [Grosse, 2002, pp. 25-46]. However, the structure and nature of disparities theoretical point to the different causes of processes that build regional development. Presented in many designs descriptions and analyzes related to the issue of regional development generally

draw dichotomous image sharing theories into two groups. The first, referred to as theories of the path of sustainable development, in which the differences between regions are treated as natural, and the disruption of development over a longer period of time tend to reach equilibrium. The second, identified as theories of development paths unsustainable, where differences shaping the development of the region are inevitable, as the result of its natural features and socio-economic development, and the same imbalance is a key driving force shaping development. It is in this context the issues undertaken to deepen the question of logistics policies, as part of support for regional competitiveness in the European Union and make the identification and classification of theories and concepts concerned with the issue (Table 1).

Table 1. Identification of some theory, concept development of the region

Type of theory	Group of theory	Theory	Author	
1	2	3	4	
balanced theories	classic's theory	theory of economics development	A. Smith (1776)	
		the theory of trade – model's comparative advantage	D. Ricardo (1817)	
		the theory of abundance of resources	E. Heckscher (1919) B. Ohlin (1930)	
	Keynesian model	Keyne's model of economic base	J.M. Keynes (1936)	
	North's theory	North's theory of institutions	D.C. North (1955)	
	model's phase	Rostov's phase model	W.W. Rostow (1960)	
		Kondratieff' cycles	N.D. Kondratiew (1926)	
		the theory of 'life cycle' of the product	R. Vernon (1966)	
	location theories	the theory of agricultural zones	J.H von Thünen (1826)	
		the location theory of an industrial enterprise	A. Weber (1909)	
		the hierarchical model of city location	W. Sombart (1928)	
		central place theory	W. Christallera (1933)	
		the theory of location	A. Lösch (1939)	
		the theory of substitution	W. Isard (1956)	
		spatial marginalization	D. Smith (1981)	
		the theory of gravitation	J. Stewart and G. Zipf	
		the theory of maturity of process organization	W. Humphreya (1989)	
		unbalanced theories	Theories of development 'from the top'	
	growth poles and theories of polarization		growth poles	F. Perroux (1950) J.R. Boudeville (1966)
cumulative causation			G. Myrdal (1957)	
uneven development			A.O. Hirschman (1958)	
axial model of polarization			P. Pottiera (1963)	
the theory of network – networking			J. G. Lambooy (1991)	
the theory of the core and the periphery			J. Friedman (1973)	
new economic geography			P. Krugman (1991)	
Theories of development 'from below'				
	the theory of basic needs			
	the theory of development autocentered and selective separation		D. Senghaas (1978)	

Table 1 cont.

1	2	3	4
		the theory of independent regional development	H. Glatz, G.Scheer E. Brugger
		the theory of endogenous potential.	N. Romera (1996)
		the theory of 'learning region'	R. Florida (1995)
		the theory of the big push	P.N. Rosenstein – Rodan (1961)
		the theory of regional innovation systems	P. Cook (1992)
		the theory of clusters	J. R. Lasuen (1972)
		the theory of a flexible production system	M.J. Piore i Ch.F. Sabel (1984)
		the theory of segmentation	P. Rayan (1981)
		theory related diversity	Frenken K., Van Oort F.G., Verburg T (2007)
		the theory of triple helix	H. Etzkowitz i L. Leydesdorf (2000)

Source: Based on: Wieloński [2004]; Borysa [2004]; Zajdel [2011]; Herodowicz [2014].

Identified in Table 1 selected concepts and models in various ways deal with the issue of logistics, as part of shaping the region's competitiveness. Most of them explicitly emphasizes the possibility of logistical support for the competitiveness of the region, others only implicitly refer the matter under consideration. The theories and concepts of sustainable logistics issues do not constitute a factor influencing the competitiveness of the region and are clocked as part of endogenous and treated most often as a factor creating cost (e.g. the cost of the transport, storage, storage charges). With time, we took into account more variables being the subject of flow of cargo and information. The second group analyzed in the light of the theory that differences are inevitable inter-regional competition, represent concepts that refer to the path of development unsustainable. It shows in them, that the existence of differences in the regional economy is the driving force of competitiveness. It refers to a different interpretation of the theory on the formation of pulses competition. Thus, in the development concepts 'from top' it is assumed that the growth is initiated in a few sectors (e.g. logistics) or things, and then spreads to other areas of the analyzed region. These theories are often considered to national or regional authorities for the initiator pulses competition. The competitiveness of the region is most often understood as the subject of development, and the processes occurring in it are the result of exogenous factors. The concepts of development 'from below' draws attention to the endogenous (often specific) factors of development of individual regions, including intangible assets that are the responsibility of the regional community. The emphasis is on the presence and importance of bottom-up initiatives (outgoing from the local community) that contribute to the use of own resources of

the region. In turn, theories of development ‘from below’ emphasize the specificity of the region and the quality of its features forming endogenous potential. The main condition for development is the proper use of a specific combination of resources and features of the region. These concepts highlight the importance of bottom-up initiatives of local communities contribute to the use of endogenous resources of the region, with appropriate support from the more developed centers. In addition, development concepts identified ‘from below’ are different emphases, in many places, however, coincide. As a way of bridging regional disparities, they recommend increasing the competitiveness of regions and changes in the development strategy of ‘top-down’ to ‘bottom up’. They draw attention to the need to increase the participation of logistics, promotion of technical progress, specialization and flexibility of production and use of internal development potentials.

Currently, it is noticeable to build more complex and comprehensive theories, concepts and models affecting the competitiveness of the region in which the element of logistics and logistics policy begins to play a significant role. Today, moving away from building simple and linear relationship built building competitive advantage of the region’s multidimensional and network-oriented approach with the approval so far used the classical theory and the concept of competition. Dynamically changing the functions of the region, especially those related to economic activity, increased mobility of goods and information due to the impact of globalization processes change. The change are hierarchical centers of economic power and their impact through increased opportunities to flow. This is because since it increases the possibility of obtaining by operators and create demand for certain products, with growing counts regions than before. In addition to growing new interest there was a return in theories of polarization, in particular on the processes of globalization and the increasing imbalance in the level of development of individual regions derived from P. Krugman and his model of general equilibrium spatial allocation (e.g. associated with the role of broad-based trade, including transport and logistics in the process of regional development).

It is also worth noting that regardless of the period to formulate and methodological orientation, presented in Table 1 theories and concepts combines special attention to those regions which are characterized by a certain level of development. Usually this is just a comparison of the characteristics of the less-developed areas that allows you to find the differences in the level of competitiveness, which then form a contribution to the formulation of correctness, and further concepts and theories of regional development. It seems that the present-

ed theories and concepts should be treated as different, but overlapping each other, look at the problem of regional development. For this reason, e.g., metropolitan areas can be considered both a pole of growth, competitiveness, and you can treat them as an effective regional innovation systems or learning regions. Their economic success can be explained by the scope of the appeal to a particular theory and the importance of cumulative causation or institutional factors related to the specific concept.

2. Factors determining the competitiveness and development of the regions in the European

Economic and political transformations that have occurred in recent years in the European Union have led to the intensification of inter-regional disparities [Korenik, 2011, pp. 29-56]. Various factors, including the ability to adapt to highly competitive conditions in the economy led to education in the European Union regions stronger and less developed countries. Measures aimed at increasing the competitiveness of the regions as part of EU regional policy are of particular importance especially when the modern world compete with each other not only operators, but also countries or regions. The rivalry between the regions takes place at various levels associated with the movement of capital, the provision of specific services (including logistics), obtaining qualified personnel, raising funds for the development of the state budget and other domestic and foreign sources (mainly from EU aid funds).

The notion of competitiveness, the ability to achieve success in economic competition. Whereas the competitiveness of the region is often defined as the ability to attract capital and aid as well as the ability to stop in the region owned the factors of production. This is obviously not the only definition of regional competitiveness. Next to it there are a number of others, the content of which is dependent directory of a variety of factors that determine competitiveness. Regional competitiveness can be considered in two planes, as direct and indirect. Competing in the intermediate region it should be understood as the existence or creation of a regional environment for companies within it, enabling to obtain a competitive advantage in the elements outside the control of their actions. Indirect competition of the region is expressed and measured abilities competing companies located there. Competing directly regions it can be understood as competing subjective territorial units that compete for various types of benefit (e.g., access to funds). So we can say that a competitive region is the region that

is able to adapt to changing conditions faster than other regions, thereby achieving an improvement on its position in the competition between regions.

As competitive factors determined by all the circumstances, an increase is allowed in the competitiveness of regions. From the point of view of this research it can be assumed that regional competitiveness depends on many factors, among which are:

- diversified structure of logistics areas,
- the provision of infrastructure logistics,
- the availability of logistics,
- quality of the logistics services,
- investment activities in the field of logistics,
- the ability of the region to absorb innovation in the field of logistics,
- the presence of institutions and research facilities, creating support for innovation processes in logistics.

Said catalog of the factors determining the competitiveness of regions is of course not a closed set. It depends because of different circumstances. The issue of the competitiveness of regions characterized by considerable volatility over time. The competitiveness of the region depends to a large extent, and perhaps above all, the efficiency of the innovation system in the development of logistics. Knowing the factors affecting the competitiveness of the region may act on them in such a way as to lead to the lifting level. It is a task that should be carried out, among others, by entities logistics policy. The main task of logistics policy pursued by entities logistics policy in the European Union is to create favorable conditions for development to individual regions, while the objective of the policy implemented in the same regions should be striving for logistics development in that region.

Development of the region leads to increase its competitiveness, even by improving the image and increase the attractiveness in the eyes of potential investors. They are then willing to invest capital in this and no other place. The most important for them is often a positive image of the region associated with the specific possibilities of development of logistics. The development of the region and its level of competitiveness greatly affects the provision of infrastructure logistics. The experience of many developed countries show that the logistics infrastructure functioning in regional is also the central point of modern chains of distribution of goods, which later develop in a single global logistics system. Very often they take over from companies located in the region of realization of the basic functions of logistics, such as transport or storage, as a result, which makes the process of ‘slimming’ of companies (outsourcing). Positive

aspects of logistics infrastructure also result from the fact that its operation and development in the region contributes to attracting new investment, especially concerning the activities of production and trade, demanding logistic service. At the same time they induce progress in the system infrastructure of the region. Creating infrastructure logistics flows, so with properly functioning logistics policy advantageously creating the economic development of the region and increase its competitiveness.

3. The importance of logistics policy in the European Union

The importance of logistics policy identifies the conscious action of public authorities involving the use of knowledge of the relationships governing the evolution and use of the region for their rational management of logistics. Within the framework of distinguished methods for transforming the infrastructure in the interests of socio-economic, the aim should be to increase the efficiency of the flow of goods and information. The scope of logistics policy shall, therefore, decision-making mechanism mainly infrastructure, together with the instruments for their implementation and the preparation of various types of development plans. The role of logistics policies as a regulator in the economic system of the region is reflected in the interaction between public and market. Regional authorities interact with party logistics providers that their activity was subordinated to the needs of society and the region as a whole. In this model system planning functions optimization answering a question about ways of achieving the desired objectives. The correctness of the proposed solutions mainly depends on a comprehensive diagnosis of reality and monitoring of logistic processes taking place in the region. Directions of activities supporting the development of logistics policy can be summarized in the following groups:

- creating or maintaining an adequate logistical infrastructure of the region,
- ensuring conditions for the effective operation of logistics operators through the development of logistics infrastructure,
- allocation of logistics investments with the needs of stakeholders,
- controlling the use of space for the intensity of its development and management, as well as in terms of compliance with the basic principles of sustainable use of natural resources and the need to maintain high values of the natural environment,
- supervision over the maintenance of the existing logistical infrastructure in the region.

These tasks create optimal conditions for organizing and enforcing specific order planning, in which the flow of goods and information should occupy a key place. At the same time they eliminate or minimize conflicts arising between the functions of the socio-economic and individual economic units under the mutual neighborhood, e.g. logistic infrastructure and the environment.

4. Objectives, determinants and relationships logistics policy in shaping the competitiveness of the regions in the European Union

Objectives, determinants and relationships logistics policy in shaping the competitiveness of the regions in the European Union manifest themselves at any level of aggregation of economic or – in other words – are taking place both, in the case of companies, the whole industry, sector and the case of economies of individual countries and their transnational organizations. Objectives, determinants and relationships logistics policy in shaping the competitiveness of the regions in the European Union in terms of economic focus, therefore, on the willingness to increase success in the economic competition outside the European Union [Skowrońska, 2013, pp. 20-30]. So determined perspective in the approach to the subject matter refers to the number of levels, which are usually considered from the point of view of the power of transnational countries organized in the framework of the European Union (Brussels), economic power of the Member State (central national) and the level of regional government located in the area of a particular region (subcentrum regional). From the regional subcentrum it is important, therefore, to appoint certain logistical purposes to allow raising the level of competitiveness:

- determination of the strategy's ability to compete effectively, rivalry or competition in the region,
- terms of demand for logistics services in the region, enabling competitive advantage which is the result of above average service offer addressed to current and potential users in the region – both internal and external investors,
- determining the efficiency and effectiveness of flows of goods and information,
- obtaining the proper proportion in the combination of a competitive internal and external factors aimed at shaping their attractiveness for foreign capital and (or) to stimulate the creativity of local entrepreneurs to increase their expansion into national and international markets,
- anticipate and adapt to global trends in the development of logistics, support of economic entities operating in the region.

Through the prism of regional logistics policy level of competitiveness we are determined usually as a predisposition to achieve a relatively high level of income and employment, as well as delivery services meet the needs of the market, which creates a solid foundation for the region's competitiveness. The structure and scope of competition makes the availability of traditional factors arrangement of individual elements to increase the advantage on a regional scale is becoming more and more similar. However, operators continue to carefully make the selection not only of its activities, but also the characteristics of the economic space, which allows a way to diversify the structure of competitiveness. The attractiveness of the region constituting a team of advantages of location as a result of matching the supply of resources to the needs of business organizations, institutions and economical units are analyzed only in the context of attracting investors. In this wording clarifies this issue, and at the same time complements the definition of competitiveness. From the point of view of logistics policy businesses particularly important here are the following determinants:

- the location of the region,
- absorptive capacity of the regional market,
- the ability to export sub-regional logistics services,
- quality of staff employed in the logistics sector,
- labor costs in the logistics sector,
- the cost of doing business,
- favorable financial conditions (e.g. tax relief),
- stable legislation,
- the provision of infrastructure logistics,
- establishment of business associated with the logistics,
- network links between the entities or the presence of the leaders in the logistics industry,
- the availability of logistics services,
- favor regional authorities (especially logistics).

As you can see, these goals and determinants affecting the scale of potential interest in the region will usually be linked and strongly correlated with them. Further evidenced by the potential, quality implemented in the region logistics policy. It should also be noted in the context of its deliberations that the policy logistics in regions of the Union refers to the relationship associated with the formation of competitive processes, which can be divided into meso and macro-environment. Conditions mezo-environment logistics policies focus on the functioning of organizational, technical and functional mainly indirect relations in regional and local space logistics in the region, being an intermediate structure

between the macro- and microenvironment (competitive environment), in which there is transmission influence the allocation of investment logistics infrastructure. Conditions macro-environment logistics policies focus on developing economic policies and relations, the development of logistics infrastructure state, the efficiency of the logistics market, the formulation of technical, organizational and functional links in the chains and networks of logistics, profiling the consistency and efficiency of flow of products and information, stimulating the activation of the logistic state [Figura, 2013, pp. 119-128].

Conclusions

In summary, it is clear that there is no single economic theory that would explain the mechanism of overall competitiveness and the emergence of differences in the level and dynamics of regions' development in the European Union. Despite the existence of many theories and concepts undertaking to explain the causes and nature of the phenomenon of competitiveness, none of them includes all the factors associated with the spatial imbalances. Numerous theories of regional development represent, therefore, an example search for the answer to the question about the driving force behind the development processes in the regions with different levels of development, different resources competition and development opportunities. The identified and reviewed concept only allows to conclude that the development processes in the regions affected by numerous and varied factors which affect accumulation in the process of shaping the competitive situation of the region. The diversity and complexity of the conditions of regions' development is reflected in the rich scientific achievements of regional development theory, which change with the development of economies and societies activity. It can be assumed that other concepts will bring new elements based on other assemblies and more diverse factors. This results in a discovery the next stages of the development of other traits that are regarded as essential for the formation of competitive differentiation in the region.

Conclusions from the study:

- proper logistics policy based on efficient and effective premises of cargo and information flow is an important element of development of regions of the European Union,
- logistics policy becomes an instrument for shaping the competitiveness of regions of the European Union,
- the regions of the European Union should, to a lesser extent, coordinate logistics policy.

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POLITYKA LOGISTYCZNA JAKO ELEMENT WSPARCIA KONKURENCYJNOŚCI REGIONÓW UNII EUROPEJSKIEJ

Streszczenie: Problematyka artykułu dotyczy zagadnienia polityki logistycznej jako elementu wsparcia konkurencyjności regionów Unii Europejskiej. Struktura podejmowanej problematyki obejmuje zagadnienia związane z identyfikacją i klasyfikacją dysproporcji teoretycznych w konkurencyjności regionu, czynników warunkujących konkurencyjność i rozwój regionów, a także znaczenie polityki logistycznej oraz celów determinant i relacji w Unii Europejskiej.

Słowa kluczowe: polityka, logistyka, konkurencja, region, Unia Europejska.