

# The Systematization of the Geographic and Tourism Space Within the Municipality of Craiova

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**Abstract**—The systematisation of tourism areas as an economic phenomenon in correlation with the natural components (relief, beautiful landscapes, climate, hydrography, soil factor, etc.) of the territory as the main elements of Craiova; tourist objectives must be prioritised in the territory and forms of tourism must be promoted according to them.

In order to maximize the functionality of the geographic and tourism areas, it is essential to acknowledge and characterize the components of the geographic space and their interdependence, because any metamorphosis within the territory of a city can change the balance of the systematisation of the natural environment of the territory.

A multitude of endogenous (earthquakes, landslides) and exogenous (temperature variation, wind variation, rainfall, flora and fauna) factors contribute to the organization of the geographical space within the urban area of Craiova; at the same time, there is an interest in the construction and organization of spaces for recreation and relaxation, conservation and reconstruction of tourism heritage buildings, promotion of tourist attractions in order to increase the tourist attractiveness index.

As a result, the economic self-valorisation of a geographic space with a tourism destination must be conceived as a structural development of tourism planning, whose essential goals require the balanced targeting of the advantages of tourism with other social and economic forms of exploitation of the geographic space, with tourism shaping its own activities according to the development and production of ecological, social and political factors.

**Keywords**—Geographic Space, Organization, Tourism Space, Systematization, Craiova Municipality

## I. Introduction

The systematization of the geographic space of Craiova reflects the moment of correlation of the spatial and geographical elements with the appropriate and planned administrative and territorial development. It was introduced in the Romanesque specialized literature by Vintilă Mihăilescu (1968), who considered that "the organization of geographic space implies the socially variable use of the virtual possibilities included in this space".

The name Craiova is mentioned in a document dated on the 1st of July 1475, related to the nobleman *Neagoe ot Craiova*, and the name "city of Craiova" is mentioned in a document dated on the 25th of July 1582 [15].

The fortress of the noblemen of Craiova and Buzesti (Cetatea banilor) - "capital of Wallachia Minor" -, an ancient settlement with rich cultural traditions, Craiova is located at 44°2' North latitude, 23°5' East longitude and at an altitude of

between 75 and 116 m [9].

It is located at a distance of 227 km from Bucharest, the country's capital, and 68 km from the Danube River.

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## II. Literature Review

In the international and Romanian geography literature, the notion of geographic space is relatively recent, since the 1960s, and it belongs to a new stage in the development of modern geography [5].

As a general definition, the modern understanding of the city is the highly concentrated and organised population centre that develops itself under certain conditions of space and time. When we refer to concentration and organisation, we are supposed to recognise from the outset that the city, however young or old it may appear to us today, has a life of its own in which there are periods of progress or regression, depending on certain conditions [7].

Francophone geographers consider the geographic space as the land area used and developed by society, valued as the raw material that society processes [13].

According to Professor F. Prikiril, tourism spatial planning is a planned development effort applied to different sectors of the national economy in order to achieve an optimal solution for the harmonious development of an area as a whole [4].

The urban ecology defines the city as an extremely heterotrophic element of the geographic space, which requires important inputs of biological, mineral and other types of raw materials, clean water, clean air, energy, semi-finished and finished products [3].

Green spaces play an important role in the development of peri-urban and urban areas. They represent a functional category within or related to localities, whose specificity is determined, firstly, by the vegetation and secondly by the built environment, including facilities and equipment for the cultural, educational, sports or recreational activities of the population [10-2].

Green spaces play an important role in the development of recreation in large cities (Nicolae Romanescu Park and the Botanical Garden of Craiova etc., [8].

From a philosophical point of view, space represents the objective and universal form of the existence of matter, expressing the order of coexistence of the objectives of the real world [12].

### III. METHODOLOGY AND DATA

For the present study "The Systematization of the Geographic and Tourism Space within the Municipality of Craiova", we used:

- ❖ statistical data at the level of the urban administrative and territorial unit, taken from the National Institute of Statistics.  
 The data refer to the surface of green spaces, the intraurban surface and the population by residence in the Municipality of Craiova. The data analysis covered a period of 14 years, with 1993 and 2019 as reference years.
- ❖ graphical method, making column charts and a radial population chart in excel;
- ❖ the digital cartographic method, to produce maps of the Municipality of Craiova;
- ❖ the method of analysis and observation of geographical phenomena;
- ❖ analysis and documentation of specialized literature.

The geographic space - as a global system - is an object of study for geography, as a field of activity but also as a conceptual working tool and it can be divided, in the process of knowledge, by applying the analytical method, into: natural geographic space and anthropized, humanized geographic space [6].

The organisation of the tourism area takes into account the following delimitation and organisation stages (Fig. 1).



Fig. 1 Stages of delimitation and organization of the tourism space in Craiova  
 Source: authors' own processing

The systematization can be considered as a fundamental system of strategies, principles and activities aimed at a reasonable and balanced practice of the city of Craiova, the

unlimited exploitation of the potential of tourism resources (natural and anthropic), the achievement of civilized conditions of material development for the entire population.

The issuing of an action plan and policies for the tourism development of a territory is based on several parameters: natural and man-made tourism attractions; their degree of exploitation within the analysed territory; financial, human and material resources related to the development of the tourism sector.

### IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Municipality of Craiova, one of the largest cities in the country (seventh by number of inhabitants), with a population of over 185,000 inhabitants (excluding suburban communes) in 1973 [1]; with a population by residence of 307,077 inhabitants on the 1st of January 1992, of 314,918 inhabitants in 2002, of 311,909 inhabitants in 2011, of 296,359 inhabitants in 2021 (insse.ro data).

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of July 2020, the population by residence of the Municipality of Craiova (Fig. 2), was 298,488 inhabitants of which 140,080 men (47%) and 158,408 women (53%).

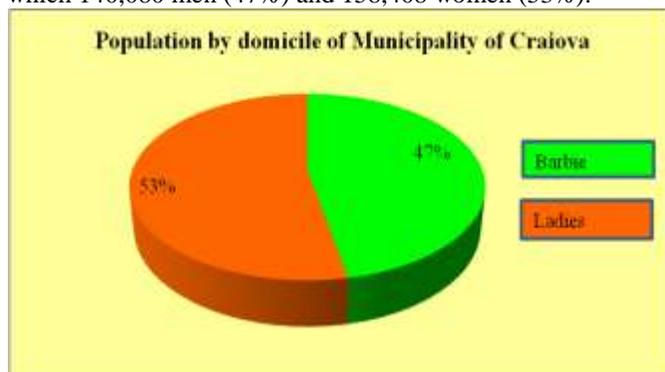


Fig. 2 Population by residence on the 1st of July 2020 in the Municipality of Craiova

Source: data processed by authors from insse.ro

From our point of view, the City of Craiova is one of the most important industrial, administrative, territorial, cultural and artistic centres in the South-West Oltenia Region.

It is located at the contact of the piedmont hills with the plain, on the terraces on the left side of the Jiu River, the city's hearth descends like an amphitheatre, up to the meadow [1]; the location (Fig. 3) of Craiova is at the contact between the Getic Piedmont and the Romanian Plain, in the wide corridor of the Jiu River.

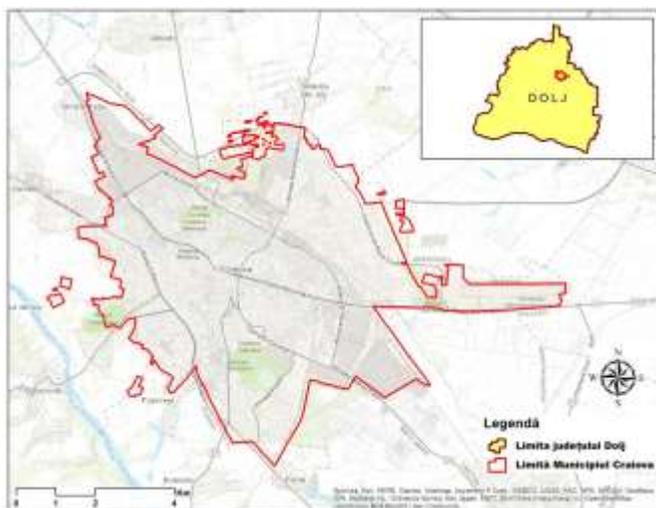


Fig. 3 Location of Craiova within Dolj County

Source: data processed by authors from

Urban Atlas 2018 — Copernicus Land Monitoring Service; [geo-spatial.org](http://geo-spatial.org)

Craiova City consists of the following peri-urban localities (Fig. 4): Șimnicu de Jos, Mofleni, Făcăi, Popoveni, Rovine, Izvorul Rece, Cernelle and Cernelle de Jos and the bordering administrative-territorial units that delimit the city are: Ișalnița and Șimnicu de Sus, Mischii in the North, Ghercești in the North-East, Pielești in the East, Cârcea in the South-East, Malu Mare and Podari in the South, Bucovăț in the South-West and Breasta in the West.

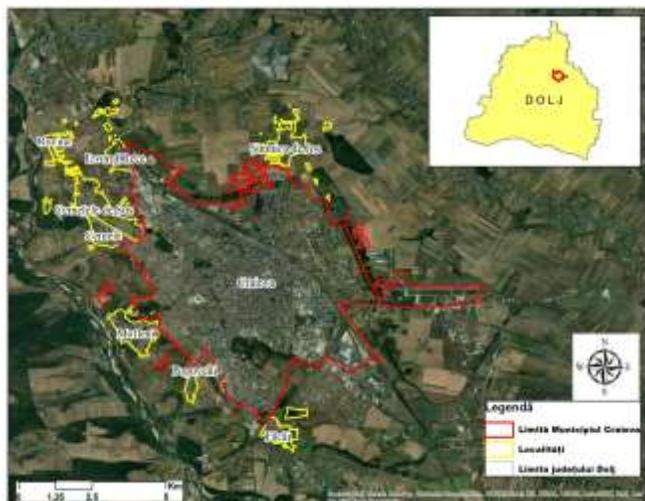


Fig. 4 Geographical location of peri-urban localities in Craiova Municipality

Source: data processed by authors from

Urban Atlas 2018 — Copernicus Land Monitoring Service; [geo-spatial.org](http://geo-spatial.org)

The urbanization process of innovation and modernization of Craiova City is a complex and objective social and economic process, determined by the degree and intensity of certain activities that are carried out in an accentuated and diversified way. This urbanisation is also defined as a multiplier of the city and, above all, an amplification of the relations between Craiova and the other localities in the territory under analysis. The links between the urban and rural localities with well-defined functions create interdependent relationships that give us the concept of urbanisation.

The development of Craiova City is favoured by its geographic position, located in the centre of the South-West Oltenia Development Region; the intensification of trade in goods, the development of industry, in the field of food industry, machine-building and construction, the hotel sector developing many tourism reception facilities (with accommodation and food functions) and areas of leisure, entertainment and ecological (green) spaces.

According to the Law 313/2009, art. 3, "the green spaces are composed of the following types of land within the urban area of municipalities:

- 1) public green spaces with unlimited access: parks, gardens, squares, planted strips;
- 2) public green spaces for specialised use:
  - botanical and zoological gardens, open-air museums, exhibition parks, environmental and recreational areas for animals trained in circus performances;
  - those related to public facilities: nurseries, kindergartens, schools, health or social welfare facilities, institutions, places of worship, cemeteries;
  - sports grounds or parks for the practice of competitive sport;
- 3) green spaces for recreation: recreation bases, recreation poles, sports complexes and bases;
- 4) green spaces for the protection of lakes and watercourses;
- 5) protection lanes from technical infrastructure;
- 6) recreational forests".

The total area of green spaces (Fig. 5), within the Municipality of Craiova exceeds well over 1000 hectares; it has constantly increased since 1993 until now.

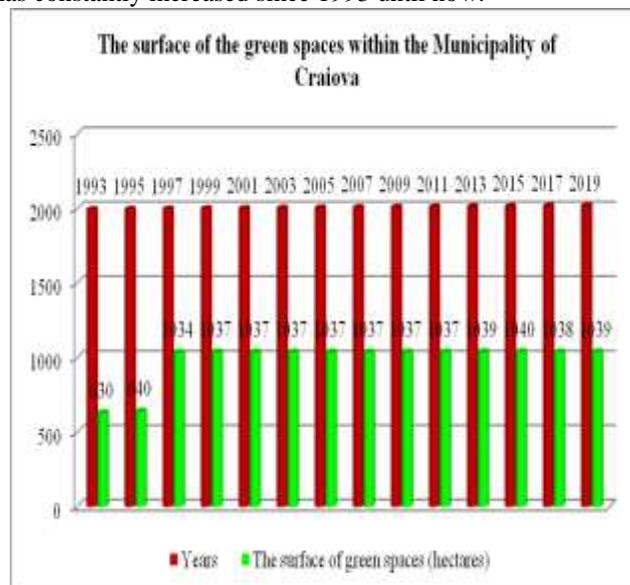


Fig. 5 Surface of green spaces in the Municipality of Craiova

Source: data processed by authors from [insse.ro](http://insse.ro)

Landscape is defined by the Florence Landscape Convention as part of the territory perceived as such by the population, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.

The landscape is made up of the following two components:

A. Natural landscape - natural setting, important green areas in the territory/region, wetlands, habitats, etc;

B. Anthropogenic landscape - built heritage, scenic rural landscapes - and tangible and intangible cultural landscape (traditions, events, customs) that over time have been subject to the economic impact.

C. The intra-urban area (ha) is the area of the territory included in the buildable perimeter of municipalities and cities, including the component localities of the municipality and city, according to the approved development plan for the respective locality. (<https://observator.mdrap.ro/geografie/Documente%20partajate/1.1.2.pdf>).

As far as the intraurban area of the Municipality of Craiova is concerned, it can be observed (Fig. 6) that starting from 1993 where an area of 5766 ha was registered, in 2019 more than 7000 ha of intraurban area was registered.

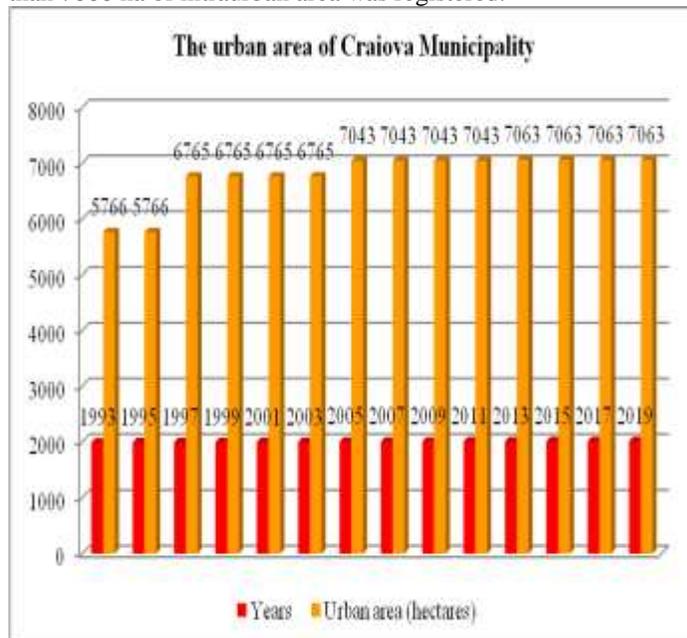


Fig. 6 The intraurban surface of Craiova Municipality

Source: data processed by authors from insse.ro

As far as the development of Craiova is concerned, the difficulty lies in adjusting the administrative and territorial boundaries to the extent of its demographic (birth rate) and social and spatial growth; the city's crossing is determined by a whole series of particular landscapes, running from the commercial streets to the polarising centre where the airier neighbourhoods of Craiova's suburbs are located.

The geographic space of the territory of Craiova is also an exclusive space of great diversity, in which we can affirm that the most valuable and authentic function of the Earth is carried out, namely the biotic function; the systematization of the tourism space must be approached in accordance with the elements of tourist potential and with the structure of the geographical envelope of the analysed territory.

The components of the natural environment (relief, climate, hydrography, vegetation, nature reserves, protected areas, etc.), the physical and geographical conditions of the geographic space of Craiova are those that create favourable

or restrictive conditions for the socio-economic development and expansion of economic activities (tourism, transport, education, health and construction, etc.), in the shaping of a heterogeneous space.

The organization of the tourism space in Craiova is represented by the tourism potential, tourist accommodation areas (3- and 4-star hotels, motels, restaurants, terraces, etc.) and a well-organized infrastructure. In this sense, the Craiova City is a well-defined tourism area, which constitutes a polarising tourism axis, as it is located along an area with high tourism potential, with tourist facilities and amenities that attract foreign tourists flows.

The demographic relations between the city and the surrounding region have a twofold aspect: firstly, the city exerts a definitive or temporary attraction on individuals in a more or less extensive territory; secondly, it represents such an authority that its inhabitants spill outwards in various forms [14].

The main characteristics that define Craiova's tourism space are the following:

- It is a bounded, *delimited* space, marked by the extent of geographical objects (Nicolae Romanescu Park, the Art Museum, the Botanical Garden, Oltenia Museum, Philharmonic, etc.);
- It is a *heterogeneous* space, being individualised by the reciprocity of physical-geographical (relief, climate, hydrography, flora, fauna, etc.) and geographic-human (birth rate, mortality, population density, natural balance) elements;
- It is a *transformable* space, i.e. it has an accentuated dynamic that results from the need for a relationship between the natural and human components, the main trigger being the human being;
- It is a *repairable* space, i.e. it is subject to certain changes, both in content and in extent;
- It is a city *resembling Paris*, resulting from the preservation of traditional elements in the action of modern changes in today's society;
- It is a *geographic* space, configured on levels of organisation, in the sense of the existence of characteristic subspaces: social, economic, political, etc;
- It is an *anisotropic tourism* area, i.e. it presents privileged development directions in terms of the tourism sector and the activities deriving from it;
- It is a *quantified* space, it comes from its delimitative character; it results from the action of the main laws of space (gravity), it marks the transition from urban to rural.

The functional geographic space of Craiova from a structural point of view is as follows (Fig. 7).

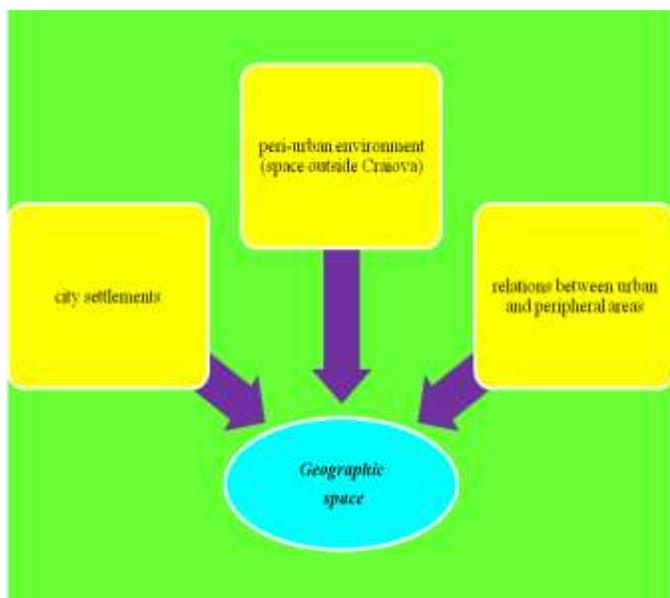


Fig. 7 The structural and geographic space of Craiova

Source: authors' own processing

For I. Ianoş (1987), the functional geographic space is the basic unit in the organization of the geographic space (Fig. 8).

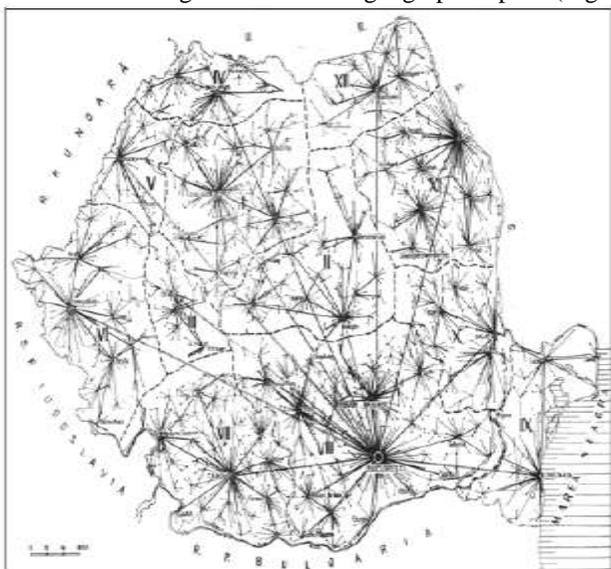


Fig. 8 Romania's functional geographic space. The main coordinating centres and the regions polarised by them

Source: Ianoş, 1987

The interactions that take place within Craiova are polarized by the main central places (Craiova University Centre, Marin Sorescu Theatre, Oltenia Museum, Craiova's old town, etc.) of different ranks. Therefore, the settlement system in Craiova should be seen as a whole, encompassing the relations between each central place and its adjacent territory. In conclusion, the functional geographic space is composed of the integral union of the spaces of influence of all the settlements that compose it.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

Thus, the city of the past, the old commercial centre and the seat of large landowners, has become a polarizing anthropized area, an important cultural-artistic centre, a city with an old industrial tradition, in the process of urban transformation, the most diversified city of the South-West Oltenia region.

The local texture of settlements constitutes the basic element in the systematisation of the geographic space, being combined from a number of components, the settlements, systematically (laid out) in a certain structure, placed on various hierarchical steps, between which certain interferences can be observed; the central area constitutes the best possibility of positioning the main economic activities (tourism agencies, terraces, restaurants, bakeries, etc.).

The historical centre of Craiova represents the oldest area of the city, but also the point of maximum tourist attraction for visitors eager to discover the cultural and attractive treasure concentrated in the old architectural, cultural, historical and religious buildings, narrow streets, traditional elements, museums, institutions (City Hall, University of Craiova, Prefecture) etc., and the possibility of expanding the cultural and historical horizon.

Therefore, cities are important factors of development and polarisation, having the significance of active functional areas; they should be seen as part of functional urban areas, being undeniably engines of sustainable development and regeneration of economic sectors (tourism, industry, transport, etc.).

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