

The International Exposition of Zaragoza

**A trigger to regional
economic development?**

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Foreword

The importance of regionalism and regional economic development has risen during the last decades, because since the European integration, regions want to obtain its own identity. Regions have to be (economically) developed by obtaining that wanted identity. The history has shown that international events, like the International Exposition of Zaragoza that will be held from 14 June until 14 September 2008, are likely to have a significant effect on the economic development of a region, but not much specific research has been done about how they affect each other.

By visiting Zaragoza, the availability of needed plans, other information, and interviews, I have analyzed a lot of information about the future of the metropolitan area of Zaragoza, which is the region in this case. The analysis consists of testing the information to a self-made conceptual framework, which is based on existing literature about economic effects that appeared from other international events, with the aim to clarify if and especially how the International Exposition of Zaragoza will be a trigger to regional economic development.

I could not have made this report without the help of other people who gave me usable critics and information resources. Therefore I especially would like to thank Dr. Johan Woltjer of the University of Groningen and Dra. Ana Escalona of the University of Zaragoza who were of great help for me to make this report the way it is right now. I would also like to thank the Director Técnico de Ebrópolis, Javier Celma Celma, and the General Manager Expo Zaragoza, Francisco Pellicer Corellano, who were available for an interview.

Auke Vlonk
Groningen, 27-08-2007

Abstract

The International Exposition of Zaragoza, with its theme 'Water and Sustainable Development', will be held from 14 June until 14 September 2008. In this report has been tried to clarify if and how hosting this Exposition can be a trigger to regional economic development for the metropolitan area of Zaragoza. It has also been tried to clarify if and how the Exposition can create a own unique identity for this area in the context of regionalism, which is a theory that implies that regions want to obtain their unique identity, and want to get economically more developed than other regions in the neighborhood. The regional plan 'Plan Estratégico de Zaragoza y su entorno', and the Exposition plans have been analyzed by testing it to a conceptual model which consists of one central element: innovation. The central element consists of three key elements: improvement of respectively accessibility, knowledge, and attractiveness. Hosting this Exposition will probably accelerate the economic development of the region with about 20 years, because the accelerated implementation of many infrastructure projects will lead to especially a grow of business (investments), logistics, and employment possibilities during and after the Exposition. During the exhibition of the Exposition there will be a lot of tourists, but for the period after the Exposition a modest grow is expected. Furthermore will it be difficult to create a own unique identity for the metropolitan area of Zaragoza, because there is nothing really special that will distinct this region from others. However, hosting an Exposition is an excellent opportunity to improve the (international) image and awareness of a city/region.

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Background part

Introduction, theories and conceptual framework, and background information

1 Introduction

1.1 International events

According to Muñoz (2006), the Olympic Games are an event where a lot of opportunities can appear which can be extended to reinforce the capability to transform surrounding urban space in subsequent years. Brown and Massey (2001) argue that economic impact is arguably one of the most important indicators of the success of a major sporting event and often one of the main incentives for intending to host the event initially. An Exposition is an event which is comparable with Olympic Games. Nagoya, which hosted the Olympic Games of 1998, is a well accessible tourist attraction (Economist, 2005) and they have tried to exploit it by building a new international airport to attract a lot more visitors; businessmen in particular. Investments, like the investment to build a new airport, are also a main element of international events. These (infrastructural) investments may well lead to a growth of the (regional) economy. Most cities made a profit, like Barcelona and Los Angeles (Brown and Massey, 2001), but they also mention that there have been Olympic Cities that made a loss when they hosted the Olympic Games. Montreal, for example, made a loss of £692 million.

According to De Groot (2005), Brussels received the status of a world city after the city had its Exposition in 1958. Hosting an Exposition can make the world become more aware of a city and the city will become more famous and attractive, which generates more tourist and business development. With help of the investments the city/region can create its own identity, which is an element that becomes more and more important (Keating, 1998), because cities and regions have to be special regarding others to e.g. attract more tourists and businessmen.

Olympic Games and Expositions are events which can make a city/region strong, but they can also make a city lose money and for example leave the city behind with an attraction park in Seville that 'now looks more like a ghost town' (De Groot, 2005). The main elements of international events that arise are: investments, image-building (creating an own identity), awareness, and profit. These elements are strongly related: Investments can lead to the creation of an own identity for the city; furthermore the rest of the world will become more aware of the hosting city, so tourism and business rates will probably grow. Eventually these changes have to lead to profit (economical development).

1.2 Research problem

The Exposition of Zaragoza will be held from 14 June until 14 September 2008. This Exposition has its own theme, which is 'Water and Sustainable Development'. Besides this theme, a lot of new infrastructure will be built. The ultimate goal of this Exposition is to make people from all over the world aware of water problems, but the Exposition also seems to be a tool to give the economy of the city and region a significant boost. The history has shown that other cities which have organized an international event did make profit and appeared as a city that was more beautiful, economically stronger than before, and some of them got their own famous identity. Therefore it is interesting to study if the Exposition of Zaragoza will have a stimulating effect on the economic development of the city of Zaragoza and especially the region around it, and to study what exactly causes the possible economic development. It is also not clear yet to what level the results of an Exposition reach. Maybe an Exposition is a tool to become internationally more famous and getting international status by the creation of an own identity, because not many people in the world actually know about Zaragoza. But maybe the main focus is only of improvement in the region or country itself. Furthermore it is interesting to clarify if a plan of an international event (the Exposition plan) is embedded in the regional plan, since hosting an Exposition causes much changes for the region. These assumptions have led to the research objectives and research questions that will follow.

1.3 Research objectives

First and main objective is to clarify if and how the Exposition 2008 will form a trigger to regional economic development in the region of Zaragoza by testing policy plans to a conceptual framework (page 14) which consists of the key elements that have to ensure regional economic development.

Second objective is to clarify if the region of Zaragoza will become a region with a much higher international status by creating a unique identity. It may also be possible that the region will only improve on national scale. An Exposition like the one that will be held in Zaragoza seems an excellent

opportunity to create a more famous city than it is now. But, maybe the policy-makers only have made plans to develop Zaragoza and its region only in Spain.

Third objective is to clarify if the Exposition plans are embedded in the spatial planning policy of the regional plan. This regional plan is the 'Plan estratégico de Zaragoza y su entorno' (Strategic plan of Zaragoza and its surroundings) that has been written by the Ebrópolis association. The Exposition plans have been written in: 'Candidatura EXPO Zaragoza 2008, Agua y desarrollo sostenible: todas las preguntas, todas las repuestas (candidature EXPO Zaragoza 2008, Water and sustainable development: all the questions, all the answers). Both plans will be analyzed in the same way, which makes it easier to compare afterwards.

1.4 Research questions

During this study answers have to be found to the following research questions, which have been divided in background, main and concluding questions:

Since the main objective is to clarify if the Exposition will form a trigger to regional economic development, it is necessary to provide theory and background information about the key elements of this report: regions/regionalism/regional economic development, Expositions, and the geography of Zaragoza. These are the key elements, because first of all, the Exposition is the event which is main subject of this report. Second, it is necessary to provide theory about regions, regionalism, and regional economic development to verify the answers to the concluding questions. Finally, the geography is an important element too, because strategic situated cities/regions will especially attract more businessmen, and perhaps more tourism.

The main questions help to analyze the regional and Exposition plans. Both plans have been analyzed in the same way, and therefore the same questions per plan are mentioned below:

- Is there a strong coherence between the regional plan and recent theoretical notions on regional economic development?
- Has the regional plan been prepared to strengthen the region internationally?
- To what extent does the regional plan relate to current literature about regional economic development?
- Is the regional plan presented as a trigger to regional economic development?
- Is there a strong coherence between the Exposition plans and recent theoretical notions on regional economic development?
- Have the Exposition plans been prepared to strengthen the region internationally?
- To what extent do the Exposition plans relate to current literature about regional economic development?
- Are the Exposition plans of Zaragoza presented as a trigger to regional economic development?

The concluding questions, regarding the research objectives, are:

- Will the Exposition of Zaragoza be a trigger to regional economic development?
- Will the region of Zaragoza become a region with a high international status by creating an own unique identity, or will they only improve on national scale?
- Are the Exposition plans embedded in the regional spatial planning policy?
- Is it really a matter of importance to obtain an Exposition in order to ensure regional economic development?
- Will the region of Zaragoza be an example for other regions?

1.5 Research methodology

Scientific articles have been used to provide answers to the first background questions, especially for the theoretical part of the project which has been described in chapter two. The articles of Keating and De Bruijn & Lagendijk provide useful information about regions and regional economic development. By using articles about Olympic Games and other international events, a conceptual framework has been constructed which has been used as a guiding principle for the remaining part of this report. The background questions about Expositions, the Exposition of Zaragoza, and the geography of Zaragoza have been answered by using websites, like the website of the Exposition itself (www.expozaragoza2008.es).

The main questions have been answered as follows: This study is based on field research conducted in Zaragoza, which included several elements. First, policy plans have been used (literature about the region of Zaragoza and about the Exposition) to find out what the intentions of the policy-makers are to get the region of Zaragoza economically more developed. Finding an answer to this objective has been done by creating a conceptual framework which consists of the main elements that have to lead to regional economic development. This conceptual framework has been used to test it to the policy plans. Second, attention has been given to the intentions of the policy-makers by analyzing if the plans have been written to strengthen the region internationally, and if they have used international literature and/or theories about regional economic development.

Understanding Spanish was also important, because most policy plans have been written in Spanish. I was able enough to understand Spanish to analyze the text in the policy plans and other literature about the Exposition. The website of the Exposition 2008 provides information about a lot that deals with the Exposition, so it was of great help for me too. The field research, policy plans/literature and the website delivered enough information to test it to my conceptual framework.

Since I have done a Spanish language course it was possible to do interviews in Spanish to obtain more information which has been useful for this report. Not many people in Spain do speak English well enough to speak with them in English, but it was possible to obtain information by using the Spanish language.

After all, the concluding questions have been answered based on the findings in the background and main part.

1.6 Outline of this report

In chapter 2, theory about regions, regionalism and regional economic development will be described. With help from information of hosts of former main events, a conceptual framework will be created and will act as a guiding principle for this report. Then, chapter 3 will describe important background information about Expositions, the Exposition of Zaragoza, and the geography of Zaragoza. Chapter 4 and 5 will be the most important chapters of this report. In those chapters, respectively the regional and the Exposition plan will be analyzed by testing it to the conceptual framework. The answers of the concluding questions, a reflection on own used theories, and some recommendations for further research regarding the relation between international events and regional economic development will be mentioned in chapter 6.

2 Regional Economic Development

2.1 Introduction

Since this report is about regional economic development, it is necessary to provide theory about this term. First will be made clear: 'What is a region?', and: 'What is Regionalism?'. The theories about these terms will be used in the remaining part of this report, because it has to be made clear if the analyzed policy plans actually refer to regionalism and regional economic development. Furthermore a conceptual framework has been constructed in §2.3. It will be used to do the analyze in chapter 4 and 5.

2.2 Regions, regionalism, and economic development

According to Keating (1998), region refers to space, but the notion of space can have different meanings, which are: territorial, functional, political, and economic. Territorial space is legally administered space, that has come under the authority of a government. This differs (sometimes even within a country) from metropolitan regions to provincial-scale regions (Keating, 1998). Functional space refers to the functions that are proper to specific regions. Regions have other functions than the national state and local governments. This a result of the fact that the national state remains responsible for the welfare state, and the local governments have their responsibility for the local well-being. Regions are in the middle of it and do not have those social solidarity responsibilities (Keating, 1998). A region is a political space too. Decisions have to be taken about what to do with the space and to take decisions an arena for political debate is needed. Finally, a region can be seen as an economic space. This assumption is the most important for this report. Social and economic relationships form a region, which itself can be seen as a system of action (Keating, 1998).

According to Keating (1998, derived from Badie, 1995), there has been a new wave of regionalism from the late 1980s, forced by economic restructuring, globalization, the transformation of the nation state, and above all by European integration. Old regionalism (1950-1980) can be seen as a period characterized by shallow integration, both globally and regionally (Keating, 1998; Burfisher et al., 2003). An important element of new regionalism is the investment decision of multinational corporations and international capital flows. The impact of those investments is mediated by local factors. Global effects are also felt as local ones (Keating, 1998). A statement of Keating is: 'Firms escape territorial influences, while territories become more dependent on firms'. Investments of firms in a region can develop a rise of the regional economy. Therefore creating space for firms to invest in the region of Zaragoza is mentioned in the conceptual framework that will follow. The result should be that firms actually invest within the region, which should have the consequence of regional economical development.

The European integration has had important effects on regions and regionalism. Regions want to obtain their own identity and as a consequence, regions are competing ('competitive regionalism') with each other now (Keating, 1998; Hilaire and Yang, 2003). Burfisher (2003, derived from Lamy, 2001 & 2002) states that the EU has pursued regionalism aggressively as a means of encouraging investment and competition, and to reinforce a multi-polarity in the international system. Regionalism has made regions that tended to cleave to the central state want to obtain their own identity and want to be more economical developed than other regions in (neighboring) countries (Keating, 1998).

Clearly, it is necessary to answer the question: 'What is regional economic development?'

According to Blazevic and Jelusic (2006), an economy of a given region consists of several variables, which are: investments, tourism activities, employment, domestic product of the region. Development of a regional economy means development of these variables, although it is crucial to take in account the level and direction of the impact of unpredictable external factors (Blazevic and Jelusic, 2006). For example the Olympic Games are events where a lot of (infrastructure) investments take place, which leads to more employment (implement projects, and after in the building itself), and especially during the event a lot of tourists will visit the region. This will have the consequence that the domestic product of the region will rise. So it is clear that all variables have a certain effect on each other. In the next paragraph a conceptual framework has been constructed with elements that should lead to development of the regional economy.

2.3 Conceptual framework

Regional economic development is the main element of the conceptual framework (page 14)399. According to the Lisbon Strategy (De Bruijn and Lagendijk, 2005), the key factor for regional economic development is innovation. Acs et al. (2002) also mention that 'there is a growing consensus that innovation is the key driving force behind regional economic growth'. Howells (2005) states that innovation is important to regional development, because science can create and sustain wealth (social, cultural, and economic benefits). Therefore innovation is the central element of the conceptual model.

Brown (2005) mentions a new transport type: trains were propelled by a linear electric motor on the second Maglev-line ever. It was being used to transport visitors to the Exposition of Aichi. Two elements arise: accessibility and technology. In the Economist (2005) is being stated that the difference between success can be a consequence of being easy accessible, especially for people who are coming from overseas. In March 2005, a new airport was opened near Aichi to receive people from overseas and the inland public transportation was arranged well, so people in Japan could make a one day trip to go to the Exposition (Bernstein, 2005). Ingersoll (2004) says that Athens has made lots of benefits regarding their economy when they had the opportunity to build lots of infrastructure, financed by several organizations such as the IOC (International Olympic Committee) and the EU (European Union). Ingersoll states that the projects related to the Olympic Games have 'significantly boosted the Greek economy' and 'the games can be declared to have spurred increased national prosperity'. Among those projects are highway extensions, a new airport, the doubling of the metro system, pedestrian streets, historic restorations, and the renewal of districts. Also here it is obvious that main events are not only the event itself, but there are a lot of projects that boost the city. Accessibility is one of the key elements for the boost of the city of Athens and also for Greece as a country. De Groote (2005) states that the provision of new infrastructure will lead to regional economic development. For these reasons accessibility (by creating new or improved infrastructure) is a key element in the conceptual framework.

Another example of boosting the attractiveness and status of a city is Barcelona. According to Fagerström (2003), the cultural festival Forum 2004 of Barcelona would attract major conferences, requiring convention centers, exhibition halls, hotels, and office buildings. Pennington (2005) mentions Lake Placid, which is a good example of a place where the local economy has benefited as tourism has doubled, which is a nice consequence regarding the amount of hotels that was being built for the Olympic Games of 1980. Tourism can be seen as an effect of improvement of a city, but tourism can also be a trigger itself to improvement (from an economical view) of a city, because tourism means money, and money can be used in the local/regional or even national economy. García (2004) also states that 'major events are catalysts for city regeneration processes, because they are able to merge tourism strategies with urban planning'. Therefore tourism plays an important part in the conceptual framework, but it will be primarily used as an effect of other improvements.

García also mentions that architecture is a relevant contributor to the success of major events. De Groote (2005) agrees with him, because he mentions that 'Expositions left the world architectural mementoes', like the Eiffel Tower which was built around 1889 and still is part of Paris its identity, just like the Atomium (1958) is for Brussels. Nice architecture attracts also more tourists, which has the consequence that the economy will be more and more developed. According to Bernstein (2005), much attention was being given to the national pavilions at the Exposition of Aichi. Lots of participating countries have made an effort to make something special of their own pavilion (regarding the main theme of the Exposition), with the aim to attract lots of visitors and getting much attention. It seems that improvement of the attractiveness of a city (and the Exposition itself) is also really important as a contributor to regional economic development. That is why attractiveness has been mentioned as a key element in the conceptual framework.

The third key element of innovation is knowledge. According to De Bruijn and Lagendijk (2005, derived from CEC, 2000), Europe should be made the 'world's most competitive and dynamic economy through a knowledge-oriented strategy'. Acs et al. (2002) also mention that knowledge has become a key driver for growth of regions. Knowledge is a broad understanding. In this case, it has to do with research, technology, science, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), (public-private) partnerships and commercial knowledge (De Bruijn and Lagendijk, 2005). The element of knowledge can also be connected to the subject of the Exposition which is 'Water and Sustainability'. This subject, which can be viewed as the problem of how to behave sustainable with water is an excellent

opportunity to develop knowledge and technological improvements considering water. Perhaps the knowledge of behaving with water can lead to high-skilled laborers in the region of Zaragoza and eventually to economical development.

Concluding: The innovation element has been divided into three elements, which are: accessibility to, knowledge in, and attractiveness of a city/region. In the framework is mentioned how these three elements can be improved and which effects can possibly arise. Except the improvements and effects which are mentioned before, some other improvements and effects have been added to the model, which are also important in my opinion. The eventual effects should lead to regional economic development. Another box has been added, with 'Expo Zaragoza 2008' mentioned in it, since the Exposition has to be the trigger to the eventual regional economic development in the context of this report.

This model will act as a guiding principle for the remaining part of this report and will be used to obtain answers on the questions mentioned earlier.

REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

INNOVATION

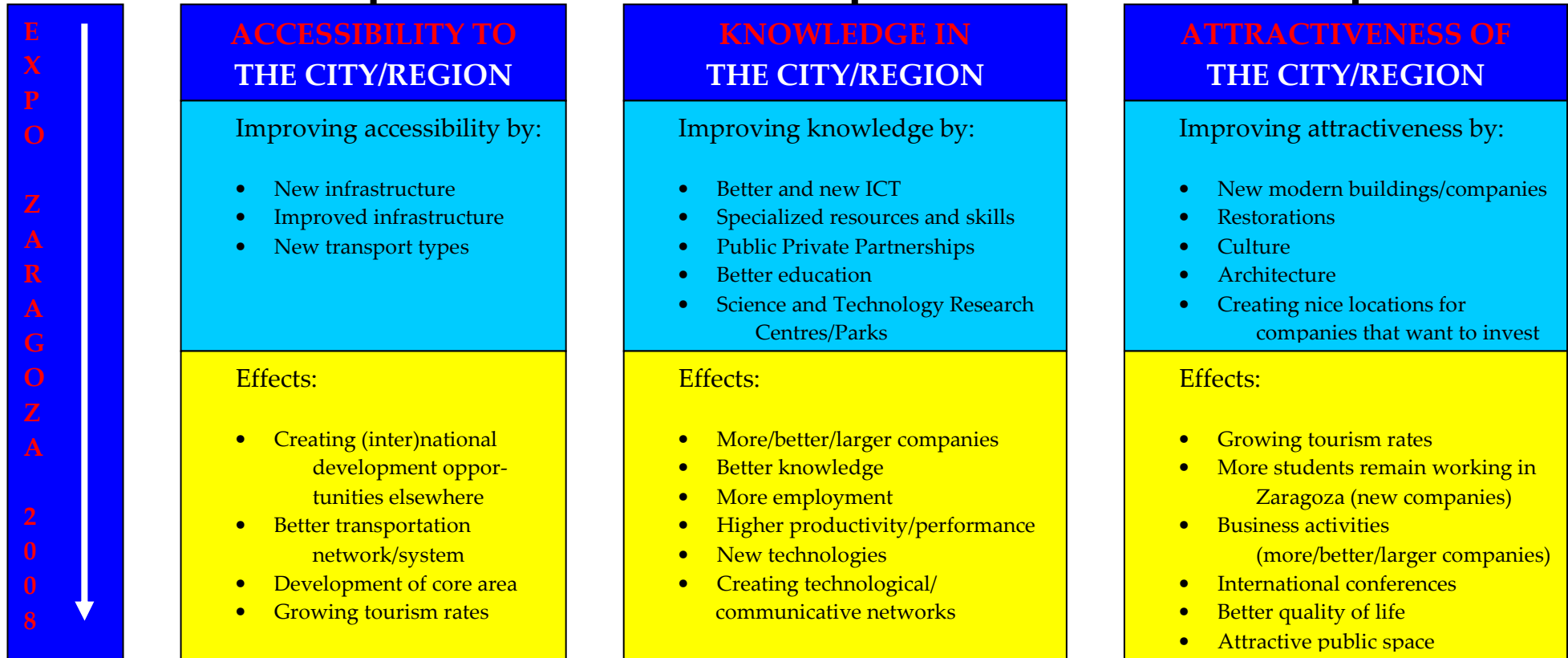


Figure 2.1:
Conceptual Framework

3 Background

3.1 Introduction

Before analyzing the policy documents, it is necessary to provide some general background information about Expositions, the Exposition of Zaragoza, and the geography of Zaragoza.

In §3.2 some general information about Expositions will be mentioned, because it is necessary to know what an Exposition exactly is, since it is the possible trigger to the regional economic development. In §3.3 some main facts of the Exposition of Zaragoza and the possible improvements that can develop the regional economy will be mentioned. It will be followed by the geography of Zaragoza in its country, region, and province (§3.4), since it is important to know, because the geography of a city/region is highly important for the possible economic development. It is also important to define the region in the context of this report, since it is the area where the regional economy has to be developed by hosting the Exposition.

3.2 Expositions

De Groote (2005, quoted from J. Goldblatt and K.S. Nelson (2001)), defines a World Fair or Exposition as an

'infrequently occurring celebration that typically showcases the latest or future advances in arts, culture and technology'

Expositions are a showcase of technological process, represented in pavilions of the participating countries and organizations.

There are two types of Expositions: Universal and International Expositions. The differences between them are:

- Universal Expositions are held every 5 years on a site with no area limitations. They last 6 months and address a general theme. An example of this type of Exposition is the Seville "Expo 92".
- International Expositions, such as the one planned for Zaragoza in 2008, are held over 3 months on a site of no more than 25 hectares and address a specific theme (expozaragoza2008.es).

There are four types of participants:

- Exhibitors: The representing country/city that hosts the Exposition;
- Visitors: Exposition can be visited by everyone who wants to. This has the consequence that there is a wide variety of individuals from lots of different countries: intellectuals, local people, people who are simply curious, tourism professionals, etc;
- Participating Countries: Many nations can join an Exposition and have their own or shared pavilion. Countries get the opportunity to show themselves, which provides the visitors a possibility to discover the participating countries;
- International Organizations: Humanitarian and international organizations are more and more involved concerning Expositions. Examples of those organizations are: The Red Cross, UNO, Unesco, Benelux and CECA (De Groote, 2005).

Most Expo-sites got a new function afterwards when they were developed to e.g. a leisure or science park, like in Seville in 1992, or a multifunctional urbanized area like Lisbon in 1998 (De Groote, 2005).

It seems that an Exposition can be a trigger to regional economic development, because a lot of people from a lot of countries in the world will visit the Exposition. Those people will spend money on visiting the Exposition, sleeping in a hotel, and their daily food which they have to buy. Furthermore, new technologies will be interesting for nations and especially (international) corporations with the aim of the hosting city to attract more business (investments) in the region.

3.3 The Exposition of Zaragoza

The Exposition of Zaragoza is being held from 14 June to 14 September of 2008. Its theme is Water and Sustainable Development (Gobierno de Zaragoza, 2004). Since water issues become increasingly more important, since the global warming problems are at stake, this Exposition will try to make people even more aware of those problems at all levels: global, regional, local and individual (see Appendix I).

The area of the Exposition will be very attractive according to the pictures on the Expo website, and the small scale models in the information centers. An example of the attractive area is being shown in figure 3.1.

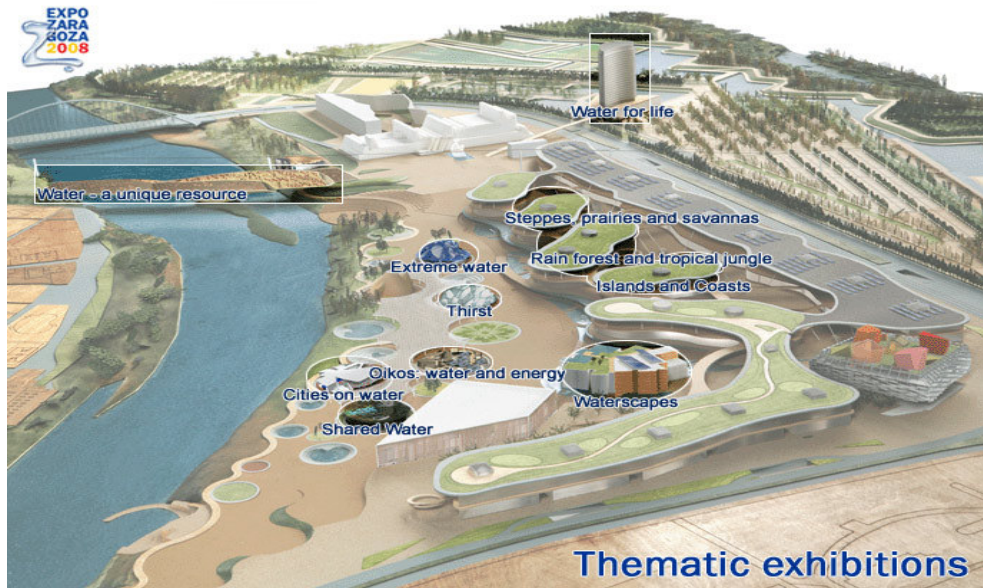


Figure 3.1: The attractive Exposition area (expozaragoza2008.es, 2007)

As already mentioned, there is more than the Exposition itself. Much infrastructure is being built to make Zaragoza the city which the policy makers want it to be. These infrastructure projects will be analyzed in chapter 5.

Regarding the main theme of this Exposition, the Exposition probably can develop an own identity for Zaragoza, which will be 'Zaragoza, the city of sustainable water(technologies)'. Furthermore the expected tourism numbers (around 7 million visitors) (Gobierno de Zaragoza, 2004) and the attraction of at least 95 nations (expozaragoza2008.es, July 2007) and corporations will have to lead to (regional) economic development.

3.4 Zaragoza and its geography

3.4.1 Introduction

In this paragraph the geography of Zaragoza will be made clear. The geography is important, because it can make the difference between development of a regional economy, or not. It is also necessary, because the region in the context of this report has to be defined.

3.4.2 Zaragoza in its country

Zaragoza is situated in the north-eastern part of Spain (see figure 4.2). It is connected to the two largest cities in Spain (Madrid and Barcelona). There is also a connection from France to Zaragoza, which makes Zaragoza reliable as a city, with a high national and international strategic value to be exploited by businesses for the distribution, handling, grouping and storage of their products (plazalogistica.com, 2006). The Ebro river streams through the city to the Balearic Sea, which makes it another access possibility to reach Zaragoza.



Figure 3.2: Zaragoza in South-Western Europe (Van den Berg et. al. (2005), derived from Ebrópolis (1998))

3.4.3 Zaragoza in its region and province

Spain has been divided into 17 different regions (see figure 3.3). Zaragoza is situated in the region of Aragón.

The region of Aragón is divided into three provinces: Huesca, Zaragoza and Teruel. Zaragoza is situated in the province of Zaragoza (see figure 3.4). The situation of the city Zaragoza is being pointed out by the black arrow and circle.



Figure 3.3: The regions of Spain (Aragón is number 8) (map-of-spain.co.uk)

Figure 3.4: The provinces of Aragón (map-of-spain.co.uk)

3.4.4 The region of Zaragoza in the context of this report

It is highly important to define the region in the context of this report. It is possible to take in account a few regions at the same time, like Zaragoza-Barcelona; Zaragoza-Madrid; Zaragoza and Southern Spain; and Zaragoza-Pau (Western Europe). It is also possible to see Aragón as the region of Zaragoza, since it is the region of Zaragoza. But, the 'territorial space' (region) is on a metropolitan scale in the context of this report because of two reasons. First, the metropolitan area of Zaragoza consists of approximately 720.000 inhabitants (Gobierno de Aragón and Ayuntamiento de Zaragoza, 2006) and the region Aragón consists of approximately 1.2 million inhabitants (wikipedia.org, 2007) which indicates that the city/metropolitan area contains more than 50% of the inhabitants of the total region. Second, the regional policy document of Ebrópolis (2006), (which is the Association for the

Strategic Development of Zaragoza and its Metropolitan Area, headed by the City Council of Zaragoza) (Van den Berg et. al. (2005), is a document with strategic objectives for 'Zaragoza and its surroundings', which is equal to a metropolitan area.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter has been made clear what an International Exposition is, and what will occur during and after an Exposition. It seems that a nice attractive precinct with a lot of after-event possibilities is being developed in the region, which is in this case a metropolitan area. An advantage may well be the strategic position of Zaragoza regarding other important Spanish and foreign cities. Together with the attraction of many visitors and businessmen, hosting an Exposition may have a positive and stimulating effect on the economy of the region. Especially the choice of a region is important for the remaining part of this report, because it is about how the Exposition will be a trigger to regional economic development. By analyzing and testing the policy plans to the conceptual framework in chapter 4 and 5 will be clarified what the consequences of hosting an International Exposition will be for the metropolitan area of Zaragoza; especially regarding regional economic development, obtaining a unique identity and the creation of awareness for a region (regionalism).

Main part

Analysis of the regional and Exposition plans

4 The Regional Plan

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter the regional plan 'Plan estratégico de Zaragoza y su entorno' (Strategic plan of Zaragoza and its surroundings) will be shortly analyzed. It is a plan that has been revised and updated, since it was clear that the Exposition 2008 will be held in Zaragoza. The new version was released in June 2006. Almost the whole province of Zaragoza was considered in this plan: about 90% of the population of the province (Ebrópolis, 2006).

The first step in this analyze consists of testing the plan to the conceptual framework by splitting the three key elements (accessibility, knowledge, and attractiveness) in separate paragraphs (§4.2, 4.3, and 4.4). Then, in §4.5 will be clarified if the plan is a reasonable attempt to strengthen the region internationally. In §4.6 will be clarified to what extent the plan refers to current international literature about regional economic development. After that will be clarified in §4.7 if the plan is presented as a trigger to regional economic development. In the end some conclusions will be mentioned.

4.2 Accessibility

In the plan much is mentioned about strategic goals, objectives and projects for new and improvement of existing infrastructure that should make the city and region of Zaragoza better accessible. It is stated that 'Zaragoza and its surroundings require good, tailor-made infrastructures of all kinds, which will provide first-class accessibility by integrating everything into a single system for mobility and transportation,...'. Eventually a comprehensive plan has to be formulated to improve the road network within the metropolitan area of Zaragoza (Ebrópolis, 2006). Some objectives and projects will be mentioned shortly:

- Execute the items contained in the 'mobility pact' in order to improve communication networks between Zaragoza and its surrounding area;
- Increase the provision of bus and taxi lanes;
- Organize a network of bicycle lanes (at this moment there are few bicycle lanes) in the city and its surroundings;
- Organize an adequate suburban rail-network covering the metropolitan area, and coordinating and improving regional services as far as Cariñena, Huesca, Calatayud, Tudela and Caspe;
- Construct more and better pedestrian routes;
- Obtain a larger number of regular air links with both European and Transatlantic cities: extending the existing airport;
- Construct and improve many connections and access points by road, including the airport, main station (Delicias), Logistics Platform, and other important sites (more information about it in the plan).
- Connect Spain with France (Europe) via a high-speed rail link (Ebrópolis, 2006).

Also a new transport type is mentioned:

- The construction of the North-South underground or light rail system and the East-West line linking the Expo 2008 precinct with Delicias Station and the Road to Castellón (a city to the east of Zaragoza) (Ebrópolis, 2006).

4.3 Knowledge

In the plan is stated that 'the desire for modernization should also include a decisive interest in new Technologies and insertion in our Knowledge-based Society, enhancing people's skills and preparation, promoting a greater relationship between the education and manufacturing systems and fomenting a culture favorable to innovation and scientific and technological progress, in which new technologies are employed on a daily basis by everyone living in Zaragoza' (Ebrópolis, 2006). This sentence almost fully contains the message of the knowledge part of the conceptual framework. All points in the knowledge box of the conceptual framework will be analyzed shortly. The main findings per point will be mentioned on the next page.

Better and new ICT (Information and Communication Technologies)

- Investigate the current system of a science-technology-company-society further to consolidate a culture that tends towards innovation and technological development;
- Generalize the use of ICT in society, companies and administration;
- Implement the Digital Mile Project which is a big project close to the Exposition precinct and the city centre. Its main objective is to create more innovation and knowledge regarding ICT and create more business relations (for more information see: www.milladigital.es) (Ebrópolis, 2006).

Specialized resources and skills

- Zaragoza as a reference for renewable energies (Ebrópolis, 2006; Celma Celma, 2007);
- Zaragoza as a capital of innovation, quality and safety in the food and agricultural industry (Ebrópolis, 2006).

(Public-Private) Partnerships

- Investments of corporations (from Spain and abroad) are necessary to develop the regional economy (Celma Celma, 2007);
- Strengthen ties with other cities and territories in the Ebro Valley;
- Deepen relations with Latin America:
 - Extend knowledge and experience of the city on water, the environment, sustainable development and renewable energies;
 - Strengthen business relations;
- Promote relations with European cities and metropolitan areas;
- Establish relations with cities and metropolitan areas in Asia:
 - Analyze the implications at all levels of Asian development, potential commercial, industrial, logistic and tourist partnerships and alliances, and the exchange of knowledge about town planning models (Ebrópolis, 2006).

Better education:

- Set up meetings between educational and occupational career advisors to improve on strategies for action aimed at guiding young people in making the right decisions concerning their training and profession;
- Improve people's knowledge of foreign languages (Celma Celma, 2007; Ebrópolis, 2006).

Science and Technology Research Centres/Parks

- Spread the culture of innovation throughout the business world by promoting research centres;
- Improve relationships and coordination between research centres and scientific institutions (Ebrópolis, 2006).

4.4 Attractiveness

In this paragraph the main findings for every aspect in the box 'attractiveness' of the conceptual framework are mentioned.

New modern buildings/companies

- Construct buildings that can be used in several different ways;
- Build a Congress Hall and complementary installations and facilities (Ebrópolis, 2006).

Restorations

- Develop plans for the recovering of houses in consolidated parts of the city and built-up areas, particularly those that are over 40 years old;
- Encourage the recovery of distinguishing areas like the Old Town, 'El Tubo', and rivers like the Ebro, Gállego, Huerva and Jalón (Ebrópolis, 2006).

Culture

- Develop specific activities based on the city's different historical cultures;
- Use the heritage of the local environment to promote or install for example convention centers or celebrations;
- Promote and organize guided visits to extraordinary natural sites (Ebrópolis, 2006).

Architecture

Nothing is mentioned about architecture which should be constructed as a trigger for tourism or other purposes.

Creating nice locations for companies that want to invest

- Convert the Expo 2008 precinct into an area to be used for production, generating new opportunities and, in particular, commercial and leisure activities (Ebrópolis, 2006);
- Logistics Platform, which is the largest logistics/industrial area of Europe with its 12.826.898m². It should attract 300 companies and about 11.000 jobs (for more information see: www.plazalogistica.com).

4.5 Strengthening the region internationally?

In this paragraph is clarified if the regional plan is a reasonable attempt to strengthen the region internationally. Literally, it is mentioned that there is a need to '...achieve one of the most important distinguishing features in the updated Strategic Plan: gaining visibility for Zaragoza and its surroundings in such a way that they can occupy a strong position internationally' (Ebrópolis, 2006). Zaragoza and its surroundings want to achieve a suitable position among the cities of the world by becoming an open and attractive city, and a communications and external relations hub, on both national and international level. The metropolitan area has to become a meeting point, leader in organizing trade fairs, congresses and business tourism (Ebrópolis, 2006). They want to achieve it by increasing contacts with foreign cities, with whom they share common strategic objectives to generate mutually complementary activities. As already mentioned earlier, those contacts will be with European, Asian, and especially Latin American metropolitan areas (Ebrópolis, 2006).

Large projects like for example the Exposition 2008, the Logistics Platform and the Digital Mile are projects that can help significantly to achieve the objective of becoming a city with a strong international position from a business point of view (Pellicer Corellano, 2007). An external factor which is also mentioned in the plan is the improvement of speaking foreign languages by people living in the region. This will be of vital importance regarding the objective to obtain more contacts from Asia and other parts of Europe, because not everybody speaks Spanish. People who work e.g. as a taxi-driver, or in restaurants/hotels have to speak foreign languages to encourage people (particularly businessmen) to come from overseas.

Thus, it is clear that the region explores its chances overseas, with the objective to be a city with a strong international position. At least, the plan is a reasonable effort to strengthen the region internationally. However, logically, a lot depends on the implementation of it.

4.6 Cohesion with international literature about regional economic development

The entire plan is primarily focused on sustainable development. According to Celma Celma (2007) nothing is referred to specific international literature about regionalism and regional economic development. Main reasons are that a lot of actors (more than 200 people, from corporations, from banks, professionals, civil servants, NGO's) are involved in the policy-making process for the metropolitan area and they should have enough knowledge together to produce plans to develop the region. There is also a lot of transference of information between cities in Spain about how to plan the future for a city/region, but of course every city wants and needs to keep its own identity (Celma Celma, 2007).

Some key elements of regionalism and regional economic development will be analyzed beneath in the way they have been presented in the regional plan: Identity, investments, (public-private) partnerships, employment, and tourism.

The identity for the region is a key element in the regional plan, because the policy-makers committed one specific chapter to it. It is mentioned that it is 'essential to define and transmit the Zaragoza brand that identifies the city', although the policy-makers recognize that this will be a huge challenge (Ebrópolis, 2006). Some possible solutions to obtain an own identity that will be known by a large part of the world are for example hosting the Exposition 2008 and 'take advantage of the *global showcase effect* created by the Expo to generate a complementary tourist attraction that perpetuates this brand image'. It will be made clear in the next chapter if the Exposition really is an event which should 'give' the metropolitan area its own identity. Another solution to obtain an identity should be the improvement of technologies in the agricultural, food, and renewable energies sectors (Ebrópolis,

02006). But the different sectors mentioned above will probably not lead to the creation of a world-famous identity (or there have to be created one or more astonishing technologies), because Zaragoza is not the only city who wants to improve in these sectors. The creation of the largest logistics centre in Europe (Logistics Platform), the creation of the Digital Mile, and the after Expo area probably can lead to the development of an identity which refers to 'Zaragoza as a logistics and business meeting point', because those three areas have and will be created to attract lots of industrial and business companies. But if this really will create a world-famous identity will be made clear in the upcoming years. It is also strange that nothing is specifically mentioned about 'Zaragoza, the city of (sustainable) water(-technologies)', because they want to solve the regional water problems in a sustainable way. Without analyzing the Exposition plans, the subject water really seems an opportunity to develop an own identity for the metropolitan area. Of course other countries like The Netherlands have developed a lot of techniques to live with water, and protect the land, but this Exposition seems to find solutions to water problems that still have to be paid attention to, and therefore it would be possible to create Zaragoza the city 'where they began to solve the global water problems'. Thus, it actually is a huge challenge to create an own identity which differs from other regions considering the possibilities for Zaragoza.

However, the creation of the Logistics Platform, Digital Mile, and the after Expo-precinct will have to attract lots of industrial and business companies, which means that there will be much investments of those companies and there will be rise of employment rates for the metropolitan area. There are no real references to public private partnerships in the regional plan, but there are plans to strengthen ties with other areas than cities/companies in Spain itself, like South-America, Asia, and other parts of Europe. This strengthening will probably lead to the development of the regional economy by the interaction of knowledge and the expanding of business relations with other parts of the world, which can improve the image of Zaragoza outside Spain.

Tourism rates will increase in a modest way (ECAS, 2004), since people from all over the world will probably become more aware of Zaragoza because the Exposition will be held in this city. The intentions of the policy-makers to improve the city by restorations and taking advantage of the history and heritage of Zaragoza may also lead to some more tourism than before. So, it is not expected that tourism rates will increase in large numbers, which is kind of logical, since it is difficult to compete with for example beach-cities (Barcelona, Valencia) and Madrid.

4.7 Trigger to regional economic development?

Regarding the conceptual framework of this report, much is mentioned about improving innovation, accessibility, knowledge, technology, ICT, international business, and attractiveness. All elements have been mentioned earlier in this chapter. Considering the paragraphs in this chapter before, the regional plan actually is aimed at regional economic development, for example by implementing the Exposition 2008, Logistics Platform and Digital Mile projects. Especially the rise of investments of industrial corporations and other business activities will probably be a trigger to regional economic development and the employment rate will increase. However, in the plan is only mentioned that the policy-makers want to develop the metropolitan area by those projects, but it is not mentioned how much effect it will have in the future considering economic development and employment. At least the intentions of the policy-makers are to strengthen the relations with other parts of the world by sharing knowledge about the same subjects like renewable energies and the agricultural and food industry. But it will heavily depend on its implementation if these plans really will work out. The plan is to strategic to really point out how those new relations with other parts of the world should have an effect on the metropolitan area. The policy-makers want to achieve economic development in a sustainable way, which means that everybody has to be efficient using special resources which can harm social and environmental issues (Celma Celma, 2007). Again, it is clear that sustainability is the way to go in the metropolitan area of Zaragoza.

4.8 Conclusion

The regional plan 'Plan estratégico de Zaragoza y su entorno' is a nice strategic attempt to obtain regional economic development. The plan deals a lot with the key elements of the conceptual framework (accessibility, knowledge, and attractiveness), which should indeed ensure regional economic development. By implementing projects like the Exposition 2008, Logistics Platform and the Digital Mile, the region (and city) of Zaragoza will obtain more international contacts which will probably ensure a stronger international position, especially regarding business relations. Tourism rates will increase in a modest way after the exhibition of the Exposition. Regarding the main elements

of regionalism and regional economic development, it has not been made clear how the policy-makers really want to create an own identity for the metropolitan area which should make it more famous and interesting for foreign people, countries, and especially companies that would like to invest in the area. In the plan some examples are mentioned that could be seen as an identical element for Zaragoza like knowledge and new technologies considering renewable energies, and the food and agricultural sector, but those examples will not be good enough to provide a world famous identity for the metropolitan area. The theme of the Exposition (Water and sustainable development) seems a subject which may well provide an identity for Zaragoza, but this theme has not been used at all in the plan. Thus, this plan may well lead to regional economic development, but it is to strategic to conclude how much effect the interesting strategic objectives will have, because the implementation of them will be of vital importance.

5 The Exposition Plans

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter the Exposition Plans will be analyzed. Before Zaragoza obtained the Exposition, a plan was drawn up to actually obtain the Exposition. The plan is called 'Candidatura EXPO Zaragoza 2008, Agua y desarrollo sostenible: todas las preguntas, todas las repuestas (candidature EXPO Zaragoza 2008, Water and sustainable development: all the questions, all the answers). Together with the information on the Expo website this book will be analyzed by testing the plan to the conceptual framework by splitting the three key elements (accessibility, knowledge, and attractiveness) in separate paragraphs (§5.2, 5.3, and 5.4). Then, in §5.5 will be clarified if the plan is a reasonable attempt to strengthen the region internationally. In §5.6 will be clarified to what extent the plan refers to current international literature about regional economic development. After that will be clarified in §5.7 if the plan is presented as a trigger to regional economic development. In the end some conclusions will be mentioned.

5.2 Accessibility

In this paragraph the Exposition plan and other Expo 2008 resources are tested to the key element accessibility. The information about transport and accessibility mentioned on the Expo website is information that has been derived from the 'Plan Intermodal de Transportes: Plan de Movilidad Sostenible de Zaragoza' (Intermodal Transportation plan: Sustainable Mobility Plan of Zaragoza) which is recommendable to take a look at, although it has been written in Spanish. The total costs of all the infrastructure projects will be 997.795.000 euros over a period of ten years (2006-2015) (Gobierno de Aragón and Ayuntamiento de Zaragoza, 2006).

First, figure 5.1 provides the most important high-, motor-, water- and railways in and around Zaragoza to make it easier to understand where the construction of new and improved infrastructure takes place. The numbers in the figure are hospitals, so they can be ignored.

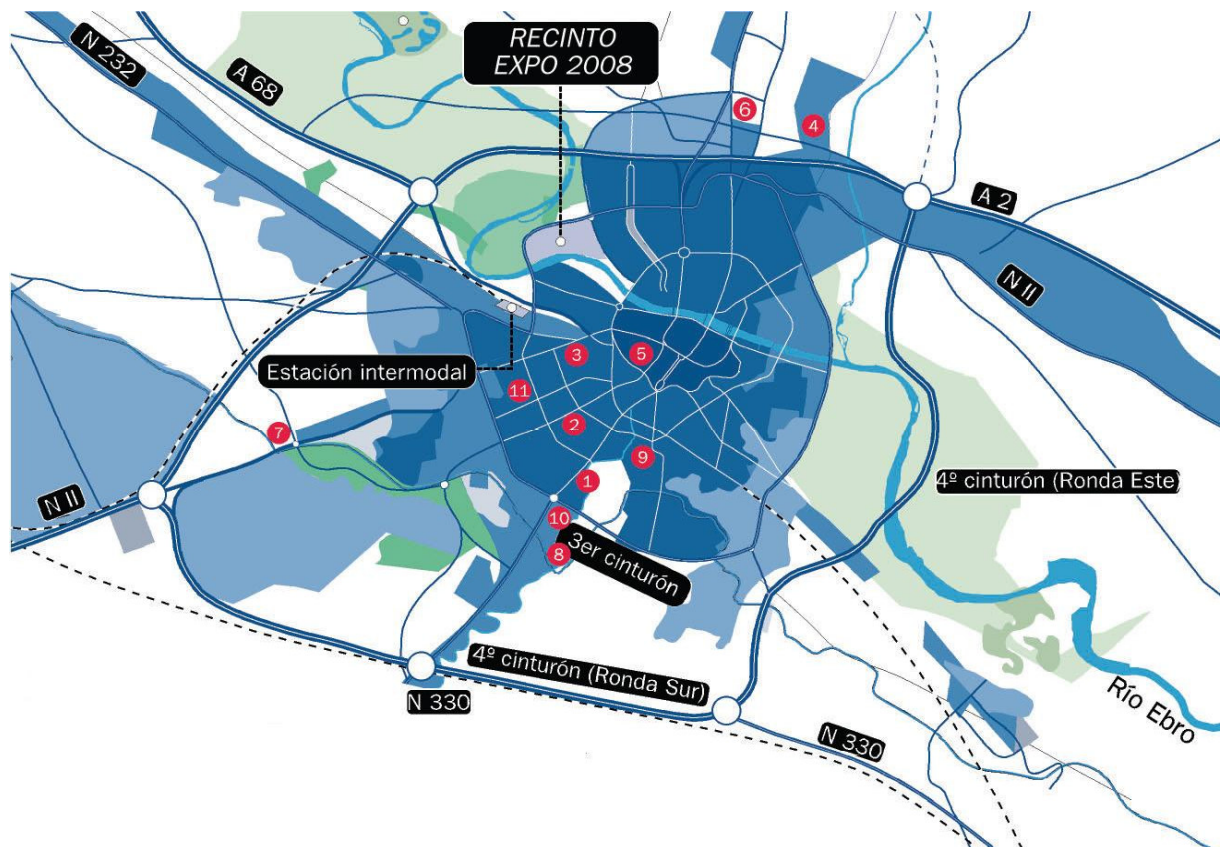


Figure 5.1: The most important roads in and around Zaragoza (Gobierno de Zaragoza, 2004)

New infrastructure/improved infrastructure

It is mentioned that 'more infrastructure and better communication among the diverse types of transportation will provide the territory with better accessibility and connectivity in the region, by constructing and improving ring-roads, high- and motorways, public transport and railway facilities' (Gobierno de Zaragoza, 2004).

New and improved road infrastructure

- The transformation of the A68 (north-western part) into an urban road at the access point to the city going close to the central station (estación intermodal). A hub will be built near the station that will allow traffic to travel to the Expo as well as the other parts of the city;
- The complementation of the fourth belt of the Zaragoza ring road (4 cinturón, Ronda Este) by constructing a road of 6,5 kilometers;
- A new motorway that will join the Ronda Este where it links with the A2 with the Huesca highway to clear the congestion at the entrance to the Pyrenees;
- Finish the third belt (3er cinturón) around the Expo area with lanes of 10 meters, pavements and bicycle lanes (expozaragoza2008.es).

A lot of public transportation facilities have been planned to improve the accessibility in the metropolitan area of Zaragoza, which are: two stations, a new terminal for the airport, improved urban and inter-urban bus facilities and the new light-rail track in the city. Furthermore, a lot of bicycle lanes and nice pavements will be created. All of the proposals will be analyzed beneath.

New inter-modal station Delicias

The inter-modal station Delicias was opened in May 2003, when the railways service started operating at the station. Since June 2007 the bus station is also at the Delicias station, so it connects both railway and bus services. The station was built to be a connection point between the cities of Madrid and Barcelona, which made it easier and especially a faster journey from Zaragoza to both cities. The construction of the bus station will be useful, because when people arrive at the train station, they immediately have the possibility to travel further with the bus to their final destination in Zaragoza.

As can be seen in figure 6.1, the Expo precinct is really close to the Delicias station and therefore it will be easy to transport people from one to another, because people can walk and make use of the chairlift during the Exposition (Gobierno de Zaragoza, 2004).

Airport

A new terminal will be built to absorb the growth of passengers at the airport. It will have a capacity of up to one million passengers a year and will be built close to the west of the current building. Also airport facilities like a car park, control tower and platform will be extended and other modernization works will take place (Gobierno de Zaragoza, 2004).

Extending the airport is essential to develop the region economically, because it will be much easier to access Zaragoza by a plane from lots of important cities from all over the world. This may lead to more international contacts with foreign cities since people from those (e.g. Asian) cities can probably fly to Zaragoza at once.

Second station near the airport

This new station will have to ensure that the airport, logistics centre and exhibition centre will be better accessible. It is situated in the southern part of the city, connected with the fourth ring road and all trains on the Madrid-Barcelona route will pass through one of both stations in Zaragoza (expozaragoza2008.es).

This station will be of vital importance to regional economic development, because especially when businessmen arrive at the airport, they want to travel quickly to their final destination which will probably be the Logistics Platform, Digital Mile or Expo precinct. Good accessibility will attract more business people, because the journey will be easy and fast to whatever destination you would like to go.

Urban and inter-urban bus lines

The bus network in and around the city already has been improved. A lot of buses drive through all the city to transport people easily and quickly from one place to another. At every bus stop a bus

arrives (for every line at that specific bus stop) within 10-20 minutes so the flow of bus passengers is fine. More than 110 million passengers a year use the bus, so it will be necessary to keep up the good work regarding the bus transportation (Gobierno de Zaragoza, 2004; expozaragoza2008.es).

Bicycle lanes and pavements

The construction of a bicycle lane network has already started in the city of Zaragoza, just like the creation of broad nice pavements. The most important effect that especially the pavements will have on the regional economy is that it will not anymore be allowed for cars to drive in the old centre. Instead, the nice pavements will have to ensure a quiet and nice atmosphere which will be suitable for tourists to enjoy the city (expozaragoza2008.es).

Light-rail

Light-rail will be the only new transportation type in Zaragoza, like already mentioned in chapter 5. According to technical studies this will be the most efficient method of transport for Zaragoza, because most journeys undertaken by passengers are very short and it will be cheaper than underground railway. The construction of both tracks has to be finished in 2015 (expozaragoza2008.es).

Conclusion

A lot is going on in and planned for the metropolitan area concerning accessibility. These improvements will lead to short and long term economic benefits (ECAS, 2004) by the creation of development opportunities (e.g. business), development of the core area, a better transportation network and growing tourism rates. Surely, the improvement of especially airport and railway facilities will ensure those effects, and the extending of the bus network and two light-rail tracks will ensure that transportation within the city will also be easy and fast (and the light-rail is more sustainable). From now on it will be matter to make the people of Zaragoza aware to actually use the improving and improved public transportation facilities, and do not make as much use of their car as they do now.

It is also necessary to mention that the infrastructure improvements are not only part of the Expo plans itself (since they were drawn up in the Sustainable Mobility plan of Zaragoza), but the Expo accelerates the construction of it (since they got the money because of the Expo). In that way, the Expo is the trigger to the early construction of the many improvements regarding accessibility.

5.3 Knowledge

In the plans not much is mentioned about knowledge itself, but when analyzing the text regarding the conceptual framework, almost every element in the knowledge box of the conceptual framework has been used in one or another way. All elements of the knowledge box will be analyzed like has been done in chapter 4.

Better and new ICT

In the Expo plans is mentioned that it is necessary to create Technological Parks to improve the information and communication technology and to promote the interaction between knowledge and the transfer of technology (Gobierno de Zaragoza, 2004).

It is not mentioned how the policy-makers want to promote the interaction between knowledge and the transfer of technology, but at least they have thought about it, just like they think it is necessary to create technological parks to improve ICT. The improvement of both ICT and technology will be essential regarding technological and communicative networks with other corporations, organizations or countries.

Technical innovations

The development of new technologies orientated at the possible compatible procedures regarding sustainability and water issues and the opportunity for corporations to show their ultimate innovations at the EXPO (3 pavilions of large corporations (national/international) will have to ensure that there is a possibility to view many technical innovations (Gobierno de Zaragoza, 2004; Ortega et al., 2006). Those innovations create a new and better technology, while it is interesting for other professionals, corporations, countries and tourists who like to see something new.

Specialized resources and skills

Not much is mentioned about this aspect, but it is clear that the Expo will be an excellent opportunity to make Zaragoza the city of knowledge about water. Zaragoza also wants to be an important city

concerning the use of renewable energies (Celma Celma, 2007) and in the food and agricultural sector, like already mentioned in chapter 4.

(Public Private) Partnerships

Public Private Partnerships will be important for the development of the regional economy. The policy-makers want to achieve it by:

- Attracting international organizations, non-governmental organizations and corporations;
- Facilitating collaborations between the public and private sector;
- Promoting the coordination between the different international and inter-governmental organizations (Gobierno de Zaragoza, 2004).

Since public, private and other organizations will join the Expo, it will be an excellent opportunity to create many (public-private) partnerships, and the setting up of new industry (ECAS, 2004). This creation may lead to investments of national and foreign organizations/corporations which will lead to more/better/larger companies, and communicative and technological abilities and networks might as well be improved.

Better education

Nothing really is mentioned about education, but again it is worth mentioning the 'language problem'. According to Celma Celma (2007) there is not really a problem regarding the differences in languages, because a lot of people from foreign countries speak Spanish. Although 'there is not really a problem', there will be languages courses for lots of people in Zaragoza (see §4.3), and English will become the second language instead of French. Furthermore the difference in language between Spain and most foreign visitors will not be a problem during the Exposition, because everything will be mentioned in three languages: Spanish, French, and English (Pellicer Corellano, 2007).

But the Spanish (policy-makers/people) may be underestimating the 'language problem', although they are trying to improve the knowledge of English in the region. It is of vital importance to speak English to develop the city economically, especially because the policy-makers want to set up relations with corporations/cities in Asia and other parts of Europe. Corporations from other countries that want to set up relations with Zaragoza will do it more rapidly when they know they can speak with people who are able to speak English.

Science and Technology parks

It is an objective to create technology parks to improve the information and communication technology (see the aspect of better and new ICT) and create a scientific park (Gobierno de Zaragoza, 2004).

Conclusion

The policy-makers of the Expo are trying their best to improve 'knowledge' in the metropolitan area of Zaragoza. These improvements consist of better and new ICT, technical innovations, specialized resources and skills, (public-private)partnerships, and science and technology parks. These improvements will eventually have to lead to more/better/larger companies (investments), better knowledge, better communication, higher productivity and the creation of technological and communicative networks. The factor which could slow down these developments may be the 'language problem', although the policy-makers are aware of it, because language courses will be more and more available. But overall, the improvements concerning knowledge may lead to regional economic development for the metropolitan area of Zaragoza.

5.4 Attractiveness

New modern buildings/companies

Especially at the Expo precinct itself a lot of new modern buildings and other infrastructure projects are being built to attract many people who can enjoy the architectural highlights. These buildings and projects will be highlighted beneath and also can be seen in figure 3.1 (page 16) on a small scale. Since the construction of most buildings and other projects has not been finished yet (July, 2007), almost only pictures from the Expo website have been used to emphasize the attractiveness of them, instead of only using own photos.

Water Tower

The vertical icon of the Expo 2008 is the 73 meters high Water Tower (figure 5.2). It will be used for the 'Water for Life' exposition, but it also provides an excellent opportunity to view the Expo area,

Water Park (more information about the Water Park will follow) and the eastern side of the city of Zaragoza (expozaragoza2008.es).

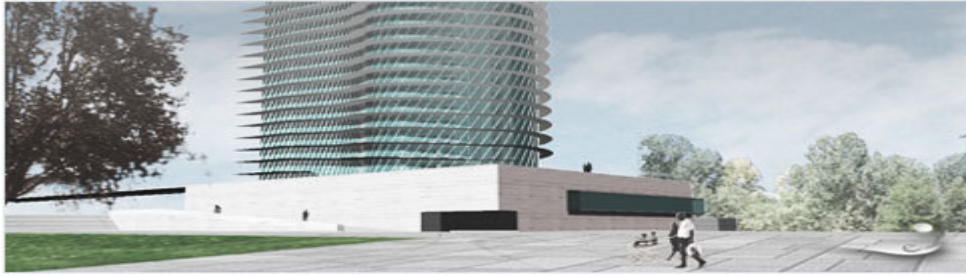


Figure 5.2: The Water Tower (expozaragoza2008.es)

Aquarium

The aquarium building (figure 5.3) will house the 'Water Landscapes' exposition and it is also a very modern building.



Figure 5.3: The Aquarium (expozaragoza2008.es)

Conference Centre

In the Conference Centre (see figure 5.4) the exposition of 'Waterscapes' will be held. The Centre contains nine floors and a main auditorium which has a capacity of 1500 seats. After the Expo this building will of course be used for conferences, ensuring that the building has a function afterwards (expozaragoza2008.es).



Figure 5.4: The Conference Centre (expozaragoza2008.es)

Thematic Pavilions

There will be five thematic pavilions at the Expo precinct. One of them is about thirst, and the building where that exposition will be held is particularly modern (see figure 5.5). This building will be recyclable and moveable (expozaragoza2008.es).



Figure 5.5: The 'thirst-building' (expozaragoza2008.es)

The Water Park

The park (Parque del Agua) is situated at the left of the Exposition area. Main objective of this park is to change the Ebro (at this place) from a noisy and turbulent water system into a liveable and autonomous one. There will be an irrigation channel which will make it possible to create bathing areas. The park will be promoted for leisure activities, facilities and services (expozaragoza2008.es).

The Pavilion Bridge

The most modern bridge that already is being built is the Pavilion Bridge (see figure 5.6). This bridge will connect the area close to the main station with the Expo precinct.



Figure 5.6: The Pavilion Bridge (expozaragoza2008.es)

The Aragón Pavilion

The region of Aragón will have its own pavilion. The large building (see figure 5.7) symbolises the local tradition of basket weaving in Aragón, so there is a cultural aspect too. The Aragón Regional Parliament will house this building after the Expo will finish.



Figure 5.7: The Aragón Pavilion (expozaragoza2008.es)

The area after the Expo

The pavilions of the Expo site will be converted into a 160.000 square metre modern Business Park (see figure 5.8). Some pavilions and buildings will be remodelled in order to be used by the tertiary sector: offices, leisure companies and catering premises (expozaragoza2008.es). Some buildings will also be used by the provincial and local government. Main thing is that the Expo area will not be left behind as an empty area with nice buildings that will not be used, but instead the policy-makers have thought quite well about what to do with the area after the Expo.



Figure 5.8: The area after the Expo (expozaragoza2008.es)

It seems clear that the Expo area will become a highly attractive one. Lots of nice modern buildings and also an astonishing bridge which will be an architectural highlight. This attractive area will attract many tourists during the Expo. Some hotels are already under construction in the metropolitan area of Zaragoza, so the possible rise of tourists will probably and hopefully not lead to many problems. After the Expo, when the area is transformed into a business park, this area will attract lots of business activities and (international) conferences which will eventually lead to regional economic development.

Restorations

Restoration of the Ebro banks

Thanks to the Expo, there is an acceleration of restorations in the metropolitan area of Zaragoza. Especially the riverbanks of the Ebro will profit a lot from the restorations by the creation of wider and restored pavements, improved roads, and the planting of lots of trees which will make the riverbanks highly attractive for especially tourists (see figure 5.9). Nowadays, the Ebro is not much more than just a river, but according to the policy-makers the Ebro it has to be the central element of Zaragoza (Gobierno de Zaragoza, 2004), starting with making the area more attractive. The restorations will lead to other opportunities like using the river for sporting and recreational purposes (e.g. sailing) (expozaragoza2008.es).



Figure 5.9: The restored Ebro banks (Auke Vlonk)

Restoration of the historical Casco area

In this area, located in the centre of Zaragoza, private buildings that have been damaged will be (and are) restored to make this area more attractive, especially for tourists' purposes (Gobierno de Zaragoza, 2004).

Restorations of road infrastructure

In the southern part of the city roads have been restored by creating good roads with pavements and bicycle lanes (the green stroke next to the pavement) besides it, plus a lot of trees that make it a pleasant and comfortable area (see figure 5.10).



Figure 5.10: Restored road infrastructure (Auke Vlonk)

Culture

According to the policy-makers the culture of the city is also an important value for economic, industrial and tourist development (Gobierno de Zaragoza, 2004). The city already has a lot of cultural buildings, like the famous church El Pilar. At the Expo precinct a cultural park will be created where people can get to know about the culture in this area (Gobierno de Zaragoza, 2004). Furthermore, a museum which exhibits the legacy of sculptor Pablo Serrano and his wife, the painter Juana Francés has been built to express a part of the culture of Zaragoza. A new theatre will be built too, 'to complete the cultural offer of the city' (expozaragoza2008.es).

Architecture

The new buildings at the Expo precinct can be seen as improvement of architecture, and especially the Pavilion Bridge will be of high attractive quality. According to Celma Celma (2007) it is really necessary to improve on architecture to create an own identity for the city and region. He also says that most of the buildings are pretty ordinary and he is right, because the city does not contain many architectural highlights. Though, there are some nice pieces of arts/architecture (like El Pilar) in the centre of the city which make it attractive for tourists to visit the centre of the city.

Creating nice locations for companies that want to invest

The Expo area will be a nice location during and especially after the Expo for companies that want to invest (see figure 5.8). Together with the Digital Mile project (Gobierno de Zaragoza, 2004) and the Logistics Platform this large area will be highly attractive to invest (Pellicer Corellano, 2007). The location of the Expo and Digital Mile area is also perfect, because they are really close to the main station Delicias and are therefore easy accessible.

Conclusion

The many new modern buildings (architectural highlights), restorations, more use of culture, and creating nice locations to invest will improve the metropolitan area of Zaragoza into an attractive space. Tourism rates will of course increase during the Expo, and for the period after the Expo it is expected that there will be a modest increase of the tourism rates (ECAS, 2004), although the city will

be far more attractive, especially due to the Expo precinct, and the Ebro and historical centre restorations (Pellicer Corellano, 2007). This growing tourism rate will probably lead to 35.000 jobs in the tourism sector (hotels, restaurants, camping places, and hostels) (Ortega et al., 2006). Business activities will rise, because the Expo area will be prepared to become as business park and also international conferences will be held at the precinct. All these improvements will probably have the consequence that more students remain working in Zaragoza after they have graduated. This consequence means that more knowledge remains in the city/region to develop it even more.

Since it is expected that the tourism rates will not grow in large proportions, although the city will be more attractive, the focus will have to be on business activities. Regarding the intentions of the policy-makers for the situation after the Expo, it is obvious that the objectives are indeed to strengthen business activities in particular by converting the Expo area into a business park.

5.5 Strengthening the region internationally?

According to Celma Celma (2007) the Expo(-plans) will really strengthen this region internationally, because nowadays not many people from all over the world know much about Zaragoza (perhaps not even its geography). The Expo-plans guarantee the visits of many businessmen, tourists, and public or private organizations who have a specific interest in this Expo. The Expo is an excellent opportunity to improve the international image of the metropolitan area of Zaragoza and obtain international fame and fiscal benefits before, during, and after the event (Ortega et al., 2006), just like the Olympic Games of 1992 did with Barcelona (Celma Celma, 2007). The metropolitan area of Zaragoza has to be identified with the Expo (Ortega et al., 2006). One consequence has to be that a lot of people from all over the world actually get to know about Zaragoza in a positive way, which will strengthen the city/region automatically by for example the (modest) rise of tourism (Ortega et al., 2006; ECAS, 2004), but eventually the proposed setting up of international relations with for example Asian and Latin-American corporations/areas will really have to strengthen this region internationally.

5.6 Cohesion with international literature about regional economic development

Nothing is referred to specific international literature about regional economic development, but there has been done much investigation to find out what is best to create the Exposition precinct as it is now, with the aim to develop the region economically (Pellicer Corellano, 2007). It has been done by generating information from previous Expositions (other countries), the university, and contacts with foreign architects and engineers. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) also has helped to develop a part of the Expo precinct.

Some key elements of regionalism and regional economic development will be analyzed beneath in the way they have been presented in the Exposition plans: Identity, investments, (public-private) partnerships, employment, and tourism.

As already mentioned before, the Exposition may well be an excellent opportunity to provide an own unique identity for the metropolitan area of Zaragoza, although the 'Candidatura-plan' does not contain any reference with the aim to really create an own identity for the metropolitan area of Zaragoza. However, this Exposition is an opportunity to a meeting between a lot of countries and organizations to discuss about the water problems (Gobierno de Zaragoza, 2004), but the plan does not assume a specific identity for the metropolitan area of Zaragoza, which is related to water. Pellicer Corellano (2007) acknowledges that it is difficult to create one for this area. He says that creating an identity is not possible by one specific unique element, but it is necessary to have more. Some possibilities to create an own identity are the Exposition with its theme (water and sustainable development), Zaragoza as a city with a lot of conferences, and Zaragoza as a logistics point (Pellicer Corellano, 2007). But these possibilities will probably not be sufficient to create that identity which is necessary to make the complete world aware of Zaragoza, although Brussels received its status of a world city by hosting an Exposition due to the possibilities of exhibit lots of conferences and e.g. the creation of the famous Atomium creation (De Groote, 2005). The Exposition area will be a very attractive one with nice buildings. It is enough to attract about 7 million visitors during the Exposition (Gobierno de Zaragoza, 2004), but like already mentioned before, the increase of tourism after the Exposition will be modest (ECAS, 2004). Perhaps the Water Tower will become a famous building, but comparing it to e.g. the Eiffel Tower in Paris, it will not create that unique identity. However, the Expo will attract a lot of tourists during its exhibition, which will deliver lots of profits for the metropolitan area. Thus, for the metropolitan area it is important to develop the business and logistics related projects (Exposition, Logistics Platform, Digital Mile), to be at least a area with lots of industry, logistic, and business

possibilities (investments, and (public-private) partnerships) and becoming one of the finest areas regarding those aims. Furthermore the Expo will generate about 16.000 jobs in total (Ortega et al., 2006), which is of course also very important to develop the region economically. Together with the rise of employment due to the Logistics Platform and Digital Mile the employment rates will increase a lot. This increase will of course make this area stronger regarding the regional economy.

5.7 Trigger to regional economic development?

The candidature book itself has not been written with the aim to obtain regional economic development. One reason is that this plan is a plan that has been written to obtain the Exposition with the aim to host an Exposition; not to make this region economically more developed, because it seems that economic development already is a logical effect of an Exposition and it is not necessary to emphasize it in a propositional plan. A lot will change in the upcoming period (until 2015) in Zaragoza regarding accessibility, knowledge and attractiveness. The Expo accelerates the development process of the region with 20 years (Pellicer Corellano, 2007), due to the growing amount of available money (funding) that can/could be used to build all the infrastructure, which is a consequence of obtaining the Expo. All these accelerated developments of e.g. road infrastructure, buildings, city renovations, and art will lead to more investments, tourism (especially during the Exposition), better accessibility, more and better technologies and knowledge and therefore the Expo really is the trigger and accelerator to regional economic development. According to Celma Celma (2007) foreign people will become more aware of Zaragoza after the Exposition, which will also help to develop the regional economy.

According to De Groote (2005) there are also negative economic impacts that could occur due to the Exposition, which are: price increases due to the event; real estate speculation; higher hotel prices; and the psychological effect of 'the economic exploitation of local population to satisfy ambitions of political elite'. If these negative effects will not occur (or will not cause problems) after the Exposition, and the implementation of the Exposition plans will be close to what the policy-makers actually want to develop, there will be regional economic development in the metropolitan area of Zaragoza.

5.8 Conclusion

Many things will change in the upcoming period in the metropolitan area according to the Expo plans. The area will be much better accessible for visitors from abroad regarding the improvement of roads, railway, and airport facilities. Also within the city the accessibility will improve a lot. New technologies, public-private partnerships and innovations have to improve 'knowledge' in this area. The only element which can be a problem is the use of foreign languages (especially English), because not many Spanish people speak other languages than their own. The city will be much more attractive too, regarding the construction of many modern buildings and lots of restorations especially in the Ebro and centre area. So, according to the conceptual framework the Exposition has to be a trigger to regional economic development. But creating an own unique identity for this region is another story. According to the policy-makers this will be very difficult, although there are some possibilities that can become references for the metropolitan area of Zaragoza, like 'Zaragoza and its Logistics possibilities' and 'Zaragoza and Water'. Together with the possibilities mentioned in chapter 4, these ones will not lead to that unique identity. But, at least the Exposition is an event which attracts many countries and organizations which will make foreign people more aware of the metropolitan area of Zaragoza. Thus, this area will probably obtain a stronger international position than before, due to the rise of (especially short term) tourism, employment, and most important in this case: business activities. The Exposition has to ensure that there will come lots of investments of corporations or organizations in this area, which will ensure that there will be regional economic development. Main fact is that hosting an Exposition will accelerate the development of many infrastructure projects, which will accelerate the economic development of the metropolitan area with a period of 20 years.

Concluding part

Conclusions and recommendations

6 Conclusions and recommendations

The International Exposition of Zaragoza is likely to become a trigger for the economic development of the metropolitan area (region) of Zaragoza, because it will accelerate the development with approximately 20 years. The Exposition accelerates the construction of many infrastructure projects, which consist of e.g. roads, railway facilities, and the extension of the airport. All these projects will significantly improve the accessibility of the metropolitan area. Knowledge will improve too, by e.g. creating better and new ICT, technical innovations, and public-private partnerships. The region will become more attractive, because especially the Exposition area itself will consist of many nice buildings, and there will be a lot of restorations in the city too. Also, a lot of nice locations for companies that want to invest are being and will be created. The improved accessibility, knowledge, and attractiveness will have positive effects which will lead to regional economic development. Those effects consist of e.g. growing tourism rates, although it is expected that those rates will especially have its effects from a short term point of view, because during the Expo there will be a lot of tourists. After the Expo the tourist rates will probably increase in a modest way. From a long term point of view there will be more investments ensuring business activities (Exposition area, Digital Mile, and the Logistics Platform), more employment, and more knowledge to create better and new technologies and communication networks. Most advantages are also a consequence of its strategic location, because Zaragoza is situated between Barcelona and Madrid, which are both easily and quickly accessible. One element that can cause problems is the ability to speak foreign languages, because not many people from Spain speak other languages than their own. Foreign companies will invest more rapidly in the metropolitan area when the communication is easy and fast. The effects of the Exposition also heavily depend on its implementation. If everything will be implemented like the way it has been proposed, there will be regional economic development. But it is important to take unpredictable external factors in account which can cause unexpected problems. At this moment it is hard to mention what those factors could be.

Although foreign people will become more aware of the metropolitan area of Zaragoza, it will be difficult to create a unique identity for this area. Zaragoza wants to be innovative regarding technologies concerning food, agriculture, and renewable energies. Furthermore the Exposition can be an opportunity to create 'Zaragoza, the city of water'. The Logistics Platform, the Digital Mile, and the Exposition precinct will ensure many investments, so many business activities will occur in the near future for Zaragoza. This might create 'Zaragoza, the city of business and logistics'. But all these possibilities will not create that unique identity that will distinct the metropolitan area of Zaragoza from other regions. A unique identity is something else than just an identity. A unique identity is really important to create a region that is better known by a huge amount of the world's population, and to create a positive difference with other regions (competitive regionalism). That difference should make the region stronger than other regions. But, in this case, it will be difficult for Zaragoza to compete with Barcelona and Madrid regarding identity and tourism, because they have not developed their own unique identity. Yet the Exposition will attract many corporations and organizations from many countries, which will improve the image and awareness of Zaragoza. This will improve its international status, and the consequence of more business activities with other countries that will make the region economically better developed.

The Exposition plans have been embedded in the regional plan. Since it became clear that Zaragoza will host the Exposition in 2008, the regional plan has been revised and updated to meet the changed expectations and needs for the near future after hosting the Exposition, because the policy-makers of the regional plan are really aware of the consequences (benefits) of an Exposition. Considering the elements of the conceptual framework of this report (accessibility, knowledge, and attractiveness), both plans are aimed at the same: accelerate the regional economic development in the metropolitan area by especially being a strategic situated city/region with a lot of business and logistics possibilities, and change the image of the area regarding foreign countries/corporations/organizations.

Since an Exposition is likely to develop the region economically, obtaining one is a nice opportunity for cities and regions to accelerate the development and implementation of their proposed plans. Furthermore Expositions may accelerate the creation of an own identity, although this will not be the case for Zaragoza. But foreign people will become more aware of the city/region which will probably lead to a higher international status. Therefore metropolitan areas/regions that really want to develop

themselves quickly can think about getting its region developed by trying to obtain an Exposition (or another international event which will cause the same effects).

The region (metropolitan area) of Zaragoza can be an example for other regions, because the development plans are aimed at what the region really needs: better accessibility, knowledge, and attractiveness to develop the region economically. Everything that has been planned seems to have a purpose, which seems logically, but it is really necessary to do not waste any resources. Furthermore, a lot of people living in the metropolitan area of Zaragoza will benefit, since there will become more employment, and they will live in an area which becomes better accessible and more attractive.

It seems that the policy-makers of both regional and Exposition plans have tried to make the best of it to develop the region economically. It is difficult to predict and clarify what they could have done better, since the Exposition still has to be hosted. Zaragoza will probably never be a famous city regarding tourism, so the metropolitan area really should rely on its logistics and business possibilities. The policy-makers are aware of that fact, considering the plans where they have tried to strengthen them.

The conceptual framework has been complementary to both regionalism and regional economic development theories to try to give appropriate answers to the concluding questions of this report. The conceptual framework itself contains most important elements that will help to develop the economy of region, but maybe there are some other elements that have been forgotten, but also fit in the conceptual framework. It is a framework not specifically formed for Expositions, but it may be useful for any kind of (international) event, like the Olympic Games.

Recommendations for further research can be to clarify what could possibly go wrong during the implementation of the proposed Exposition plans (the unpredictable factors) and how to avoid them. It is also a possibility to clarify in a few years if the Exposition actually has been a trigger to regional economic development, and if there are other key elements which should be mentioned in the conceptual framework that has been used in this report, or if there are some key elements which are eventually not that important to ensure regional economic development. Another possibility for further research is to search for the relation and dependencies between international events and creating an unique identity for a city/region at the same time. It is also possible to just search for an answer to the 'identity-problem', because it seems that there is some distinctness about the sense of this element. Every city has its own identities, but only some of them have their unique one, which makes a city/region more famous in the rest of the world.

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