Abstract. Marketing places is, in most cases, a reaction to the new conditions faced by cities that requires them to seek new methods to survive and thrive. Currently, places are engaged in a process of competition, in a global economy that is becoming more integrated, and all areas such as countries, regions or cities, places, compete with each other. At the same time, marketing has the objective of identifying and meeting social needs of people, or meeting the needs in a profitable manner. Cities, regions and countries around the world face the effects that economic and cultural globalization. The purpose of the research is to determine the important aspects that characterize a city, processes and mechanisms which influence the functioning of cities, to determine the variables that characterize cities in terms of residents, and to determine their importance for assessing the capital of a place.

Key words: City, Marketing, Residents, Needs
JEL classification: R23

1 Introduction

Marketing places is, in most cases, a reaction to the new conditions faced by cities that requires them to seek new methods to survive and thrive (Kavaratzis & Ashworth, 2008, p. 163). Currently, places are engaged in a process of competition, in a global economy that is becoming more integrated, and all areas such as countries, regions or cities, places, compete with each other (Hospers, 2004, p. 271).

Today, thanks to marketing, diversification of products, services and features and to stimulate demand and sales, price-demand curb no longer provides an appropriate response to increasingly more complicated situations and choices. Thus, to be competitive, products, services, organizations and even places through their representatives, must resort to marketing and its techniques, if they are to remain current and preferred by people. Marketing is a topic of interest to everyone, whether the subjects of marketing are products, services, property, people, information, events, organizations, ideas or places. Marketing helps create better products and services, more competitive, increases visibility, the number of customers, and ultimately, the success of the subject on which marketing is applied (Kotler & Keller, 2012). At the same time, marketing has the objective of identifying and meeting social needs of people, or meeting the needs in a profitable manner (Kotler & Keller, 2012).

Michael J. Baker claimed that "the enigma of marketing is that it is one of the oldest human activities and is still regarded as one of the latest business disciplines" (Baker, 2003, p. 3).

Along with specialization, the need to broaden the concept of marketing appeared, thus new concepts were introduced, such as personal marketing, social marketing, political marketing, religious marketing, place marketing etc. We can state that marketing is part of classical marketing philosophy in which the product advertised is the place.

Marketing places is a multidisciplinary concept that can be viewed from several perspectives; it divides and borrows concepts from disciplines such as sociology, architecture, urban planning, geography, psychology, public policy, management and others (Warnaby & Medway, 2013, p. 346). Therefore, marketing places can be regarded as a phenomenon that encompasses many aspects, with a much higher complexity than the marketing of goods or services (Warnaby, 2009, p. 406).

Two of the trends that influence marketing places are globalization and regionalization (Muller,
Gone are the days when cities were based on traditional industries, industries that were the heart and soul of the city. Old industrial centres were abandoned and traditional seaside resorts have deteriorated. Today, in an era of globalization, the industry migrates from a national to a global scale (Tucker, 2008, p. 21).

2 Literature review

Currently, the competition between places expands and it affects many organizational structures, not just places: subnational or supranational regions, states and provinces, nations, towns and even villages, all competing for the same people, tourists, population, same products or capital investors, for respect, recognition and attention given by the media (Anholt, 2010, p. 2). Cities, regions and countries around the world face the effects that economic and cultural globalization, but also other major trends, poses to the environment in which these places operate and generate changes in their economic, cultural and social environment.

Marketing places, in regards to towns, is currently seen as a tool to help municipalities attract groups of people it needs to support its future, whether they are investors, buyers of properties, houses, housing or tourists. Marketing places is seen as an activity designed to bring prosperity to places (Eisenschitz, 2010, p. 79).

Resident population of a city is, strategically, the most valued segment of those targeted by place marketing practitioners. Quality of life of residents and their satisfaction regarding their city of residence should be one of the ultimate objectives of place management. Maintaining a stable population, diverse and qualified accordingly, is vital for sustainability of a place. Cities, through their nature, depend on their residents for economic, social, cultural and environmental sustainability. In turn, the satisfaction of a resident towards the city he is living in is formed, in part, by its nature or the perceived quality of these interdependent environments. Outsiders are also interested in the satisfaction of residents. Therefore, in order to be a strong competitor in attracting investments, a place must demonstrate convincingly that their city residents enjoy a higher level of well-being and satisfaction than the competitive places. Among the most important factors taken into account include the welfare and satisfaction, employment, infrastructure, transport network, education and learning and development opportunities; therefore, achieving a high level of satisfaction of residents should be an objective of places (Insch & Florek, 2008).

To attract and retain valued residents, policy makers and urban planners must consider the reasons, expectations and needs of current and future residents. The desires of a place vary when it comes to different groups they want to attract (Kotler, et al., 1993, p. 300). Some of these may be interested in retired people, professionals, people with high incomes, and in some cases even by unskilled workers (Kotler, et al., 1993, p. 300). Cities offer their residents, in addition to the economic benefits of urban concentration, many social and emotional benefits, including opportunities to share information and engage in activities that match their interests. Moreover, "cities survive, as they did thousands of years, only if the benefits - reasons why cities exist - outweigh the disadvantages" (O'Flaherty, 2005, p. 12). Opportunities created by cities for individuals - those of employment, education, social mobility, transport and business - low cost, financial services, specialized labour, proximity to resources and markets, have all benefited from a continuing urbanization in the 20th century (Cohen, 2006). Given the concern that this trend cannot be sustained in the future, it reveals an increased competition for city resources, human capital, financial and intellectual, to ensure health and longevity (Dinnie, 2011, p. 9).

Quality of life is an indicator that refers to key determinant social factors, environmental and economic indicators of health (Williams, et al., 2008, p. 5). In the 1970s, researchers realized that the index of quality of life should be a more complex indicator than that of the financial situation, or the GDP of a country or place. The
trends in the GDP index and health of society, other times similar, may be divergent, suggesting that economic indicators alone are not an indicator of quality of life. Although in the past the claim that economic growth was accompanied by an increase in the health of society, these associations are no longer actual today (Miringoff, et al., 1996, p. 17). Factors such as rent, access to basic services, parks and green spaces, but also people's perceptions, affects the quality of life index. There may be situations where GDP grows and a state of persistent poverty exists, unemployment, declining wages, lack of health insurance, and increased social problems, have a negative effect (Miringoff, et al., 1996, p. 17).

European Commission within audit trials, examines the following issues (European Commission;, 2005): employment opportunities and pessimism / optimism that characterize the labour market, expenditure on housing, the possibility of finding properties at reasonable prices. Of course, there is an inversely proportional relationship between the two. For example, in cities where jobs are found, real estate prices and costs are high. Urban safety is another important issue for cities, as is the cleanliness of cities, people preferring clean, low-pollution or satisfaction offered by the public transport system. Also, other important issues are air quality, the integration of immigrants or the level of satisfaction of residents.


3 Research

The purpose of the research is to determine the important aspects that characterize a city, processes and mechanisms which influence the functioning of cities, to determine the variables that characterize cities in terms of residents, and to determine their importance for assessing the capital of a place.

In regard to the conduct of the research, the methodology requires a qualitative research and quantitative research. Qualitative research involves testing the variables determined from studied literature, which were adapted and completed after finalizing the in-depth interviews with experts such as developers, architects, planners, specialists in transport systems, specialists in marketing cities, landscape specialists, engineers...
responsible for infrastructure, people from the non-governmental organizations concerned with cities, psychologists, specialists in public safety, investors / CEOs of companies. Following the in-depth interviews, each set of variables was tweaked; certain variables were eliminated, while other variables were added. Within the second stage, using a quantitative research through a questionnaire, the importance of each variable for residents was determined. The author defines a resident as a person who ordinarily resides in a place, a city. A potential resident is a person who is interested to move to another city.

4 Research results

Following qualitative research in how various specialist consider, in their opinion, that a city should look and operate as an ideal city, so to be considered attractive to residents, amongst important aspects include: cleaning and sanitation, civilized city to provide public services that respects citizens but also the quality of the local government. Regarding the authorities and tax level, it is important that "the level of bureaucracy be reduced", "level of fees to be moderate" and to be able to pay taxes online. Also, the city should provide clean, quiet or low noise level "pollutant emissions to be reduced," safety, with a "very low crime rate", clean air with many green spaces, parks and gardens and playgrounds for children. Mentioned issues were also "social justice", "educated people", "to respect the laws and rules", to be social equity and diversity, "an environment without discrimination," and a very good image compared to other similar cities. In addition to the above, were mentioned as important city attractions areas and historical monuments, buildings and city aesthetics, architectural heritage, traditional elements, customs, traditions, nightlife and places for outings. From a cultural standpoint, important are also cultural events, "ways of leisure and socializing" events and fairs, "social amenities", parks, cinemas, theatres, concert halls, restaurants, bars and clubs.

The city should benefit from "public spaces that allow walking and cycling" with a "road, rail and air infrastructure well developed", "to be linked by motorway, national roads, railway stations, airports with gateways to other cities in the country and abroad "and provide "quality transportation services". Furthermore, the network of public transportation should be well developed and cover the whole city, important being also the aspects related to traffic and traffic jams and without "excessive congestion". It is important to have "access to public facilities" - health care, education, kindergartens, schools, colleges, universities and social assistance, and the opportunity to take courses after graduation from university. Regarding the health system, hospitals should be equipped with modern equipment and competent staff "patients to be treated with respect."

From the economic point of view, ideal would be that "industry to be developed" with existing company headquarters - small, medium, multinational - working in various fields. Also, jobs and climate were mentioned as important. Thus, finally, the variables considered for residents segment are (Sarău, 2014): stability and safety stability and safety (minor offenses, violent crime, personal safety, the threat of terrorist attacks, military conflict or potential civil unrest, corruption level, level of law enforcement, professionalism and stability of local administration, the risk of natural disasters), health care services health care services (availability of private medical services, quality of private medical services, availability of public health, quality of public health services, medical infrastructure available, doctors recognized as competent, care opportunities for the elderly), culture and living environment culture and living environment (social or religious restrictions, the local censorship, places of worship, libraries, local hospitality, cultural diversity, cultural life, renowned for local food and drinks, the number of tourists visiting the city, supply of consumer goods, public and social services, playgrounds for children), geographic environment geographic environment (comfortable climate, natural attractions, congestion, geographical location (plains, hills, mountains), city size), education education.
(class size, availability of private education, quality of education, diversified education, conferences and/or international congresses that take place in the city, size and universities recognition (prestige), level of education and teacher training, university city, the education level of the population), infrastructure (quality of the road network, quality of public transport, size (expansion) of public transportation network, inter-urban connections easily accessible, easily accessible international connections, availability and quality of power supply, water and sanitation, availability and quality of telecommunication services and Internet, quality construction and housing, traffic jams, availability of an airport nearby), ecological city (use of environmentally friendly transport means, adapted city for cycling ("friendly city for cyclists") city adapted for walking ("a city for walking"), policies and strategies to reduce congestion, number of parks and green spaces, air quality, gas emissions in the area, noise level, the degree of recycling of municipal waste, green beltway), attractions and recreation (variety of restaurants, bars and clubs, food quality, the existence of large shopping centres, sports, leisure activities, architectural and aesthetic qualities, theatres and musicals, nightlife, sports arenas), human capital (ease of communication in foreign languages, ease of finding a job, level of employment, intellectual activities, availability of services associated with a high standard of living, social and ethnic pluralism, the number of immigrants, tolerance and friendly locals, activism and citizen involvement, the number of associations and NGOs operating in the city (clubs for activities, hobbies)), economy (economic image, how rich is the city, unemployment, income levels for locals, cost of living, personal taxes, business environment, industry development, industry diversity, availability of business headquarters, level of development of entrepreneurship, availability of business infrastructure, the level of investment attraction, property prices and housing, hypermarkets department stores present, local businesses seem to thrive), city image (reputation, futuristic city).

5 Conclusions, limits and future work

Place marketing benefited from rapid growth in popularity, from local to national levels, international or continental and is, in most cases, a reaction to the new conditions faced by cities that requires them to look for new ways to survive and thrive. Currently, places are engaged in a process of competition, in a global economy that is becoming more integrated and all areas such as countries, regions, cities, places are trying to compete with each other. The most important categories of variables, for residents are, in a descending order of importance: stability and safety, health, culture and living environment, geographical environment, education, infrastructure, ecological city, attractions and recreation, human capital, the economy, the city's image. The most important variables, aspects for residents are, in descending order of importance: personal safety, availability and quality of telecommunications and Internet services, the availability and quality of power supply, water and sanitation, violent crime, the potential for military conflict or civil unrest, the ease of finding a job, the quality of education, quality of constructions and housing, the danger of terrorist attacks, the quality of public health services, the number of parks and green spaces, available medical infrastructure, natural disaster risk, cost of living, availability of public health care, air quality, personal tax level, employment labour, intellectual activities, property and housing prices, leisure activities. A major contribution of this paper is that it proposes a clear hierarchy of the attributes that influence the target groups of a city. The paper also provides an opportunity to understand the role of different variables in determining attitudes of residents.

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