

Connecting Geospatial Data With "Smart Business"

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SUMMARY

The globalization of markets and free enterprise have had, in the last twenty years, an incentive role for the commercial development in almost all industrialized countries and in the developing ones. In fact, during the reporting period, the commercial distribution system has been able to expand and evolve in ways often not controllable. The general economic crisis that currently affects Europe and much of the Western world is reflected in all the economic and productive sectors and in particular in that of commercial distribution. The coexistence of markets in specific geographical areas, which are not always of particular vocation, and the wild overlapping in similar commodity sectors form a kind of competition factor that not always respond to a profitable investment for companies and especially does not represent the assumption of quality and convenience for consumers. In addition the economic flows resulting from certain initiatives, in the absence of viable and sustainable market space, involve consequences on both local and regional social situation (migratory movements, possible increases or loss of function of the existing social structures, new behavioral patterns, variations of social use of places, etc.) or on induced socio-economic and political reflections (changes of flows of communications and transport, transport costs, changes in the values of commercial areas, infrastructure costs and costs of their modifications, etc.). The research aims to outline the conditions of investment choices searchable via the GIS and of the resulting guidance and of support interventions to be implemented on the basis of government action concretely responding to the expectations and the convenience of investors and consumers: the so called "Smart Business". In this context it should be noted that those who govern the territory should take a guiding role for the prevention of negative consequences and mitigation of market distortions. The "Smart Business", consisted of a platform of strategic choices in terms of commercial investment, is based on forecasts of concrete and reliable information of market potential obtained through the use of GIS. The information to be managed for the establishment of the GIS of reference relate to spatial and geographic data, demography, the average level of education, housing densification, statistics of income, the propensity of spending and orientation on consumption, income enterprise, the quality and spread of infrastructure, etc. Outlining an extremely precise framework would be difficult and perhaps of little use considering the fast process of transformation that some basic information are subject to. For example, the replacement rate (birth / death of the company) that is very high and hardly adjustable especially for the periods of small distribution that can be activated in any form. Moreover the transformations of the existing - related to extensions, transfers, typological changes etc. - become processes less and less statistically controllable because, as in general situations, there are no appropriate functions of verification and control of unprofessional or "voluntary" data. In practice, in the detection step, it is possible to reconstruct a system constituted by both information already available and information sought specifically. The result provides a fairly accurate picture given the non-changeability of the information in the short term of information more influential. The GIS has the function to indicate the basic data that determine vocations and weaknesses of the territory to verify the advantages and

disadvantages of each productive investment at regional level ("Smart Business") in relation to the co-existence of different levels of market (small and medium business site in the center and on the outskirts of towns and large retailers normally settled in new areas of expansion). In the context, the GIS is also the basis for planning and implementation of policies of balance between small and large retailers, taking into account the interests of consumers as a necessary component of economic well-being in the area and primary factor in the profitability of investments.