

## TOURISM IN THE NEW ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CONTEXT

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**Abstract:** *Romanian tourism potential locates our country among the countries with the most diversified tourism products due to the rich natural resources holding flora and fauna biodiversities unique in Europe, with a high rural area which offers special natural landscapes, which can ensure the development of rural tourism. On the other hand in Romania is found one third of the natural springs from Europe and 117 localities with natural therapeutic elements. The tourism offer with mountains elements can offer recreation and leisure tourism in the summer and recreation and sportive tourism in the winter by the specific winter sports, the seasonal tourism offer offered by the Black Sea littoral which covers a surface of 245 Km from the Danube Delta, another great tourism objective until the border with Bulgaria.*

**Key words:** *tourism, tourist destinations, concept, development, sustainable tourist arrangements, recreation*

### INTRODUCTION

The modern tourism arose once with the development of the industrial civilization which stimulated the emancipation of individuals in the society by the training and civilizing processes followed by individuals. For a long time, it was reserved for elites, but, after 1930 – 1940's and especially after the second world war, due to the promotion of some social laws, regarding, the grant of rest leaves, paid vacations, etc, but also as a result of the population income increase, increase of the number of employees who want to carry out their rest leaves in other places, the tourism became increasingly a mass phenomenon.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

The concept of *development* has a defined meaning and content depending on the living level and conditions in different countries as well as depending on the level of development:

- industrial countries, before the crisis of the 70's, the first idea that the social progress is ensured by the economical increase, which is based on the industrial development. Tourism, was not recognized as a veritable industrial sector, was accepted as an instrument of economical development. The crisis of the 70's, modifies the notion of economical development by assigning other dimensions. The tourism as field of activity is recognized not only as profit generator, but also as means of social transformation and balanced development of some regions. The *concept* becomes much larger, and extends on more plans: economic, social, cultural and even spacial.

- the developing countries don't accept this because the development of the economical, social, cultural important sectors are underdeveloped, with inequalities between them. In these countries the tourism development has the objective of speeding up the exit from the state of certain regions. In the last five decades of the last century the tourism recorded a significant increase both on economical plan by the weight to the world GDP as well as on social plan by jobs.

The development of international tourism depended on the customs, currency restrictions and on the development of the means of transportation, three factors which influence the mobility of the persons on international plan. After the period of the 50's of the twentieth century, in the developed countries some customs restrictions begin to be removed and the land (railway and road), sea and air communication routes, as well as the

industry of the means of transportation develops very much. In these circumstances the transportation times until the tourism destination are reduced very much, increasing the number of travelers and tourists.

The rapid tourism development is confirmed by its evolution in social and economic plan between 1950-2000. The number of arrivals in this period increased 27,6 times from 25,3 millions arrivals in 1950 to 698,8 arrivals in 2000, and the currency receipts expressed in US dollars increased in this period 226,6 times from lei 2,1 billions to dollars 475,8 billions.

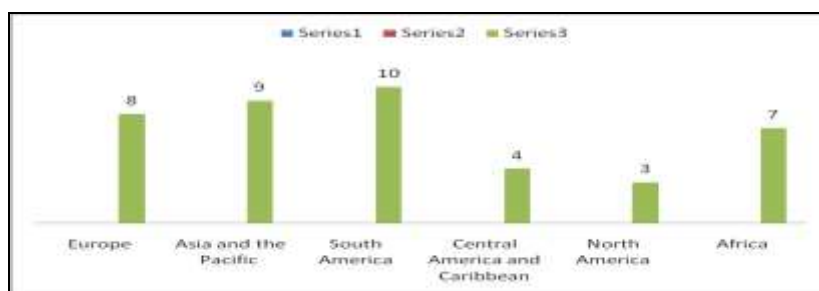
After this period the forecasts on the tourism development on world plan were favorable, which shows that these increases are real and not conjectural explains the fact that 2011, a year of crisis records increases in the field of tourism (Figure 1)

**Table 1.**

**International tourism in 2011 (thousands arrivals)**

Europe	8
Asia and the Pacific	9
South America	10
Central America and Caribbean	4
North America	3
Africa	7

Source: [http://www.business24.ro/articole/rezultate:2012 international tourism](http://www.business24.ro/articole/rezultate:2012%20international%20tourism)



**Figure. 1 The level of tourism in 2011 at the beginning of economic crisis (thousands arrivals)**

**RESEARCH RESULTS**

From economical and social point of view the tourism records significant increases both within the national economy as well as in the world economy. The tourism is approached at tourist industry level. The tourist industry is part of the tourism offer and includes all the technical undertakings and facilities designed for the production of tourism services in a certain country. [Any business tourism occurs in the market through tourism product (services) own, so as to form tourist offerings] [1]

According to the most recent report issued by Eurostat, the tourism industry includes the following components:

- Accommodation means and services;
- Public food service units and structures;
- Facilities and services for conventions, conferences;
- Facilities and structures for recreation;
- Air transportation;
- Railway transportation;
- Coach transportation;
- River and sea transportation;
- Tourism information offices;
- Travel agencies, tour operators and other intermediaries ;
- Companies specialized in the health tourism;

- Renting means of transportation, sportive equipment;

The tourism is an economic activity specific for the sector of services but in the last period recorded a very complex and rapid development of *tourism industry* type, the tourist industry is a component part of economy, and comprises of more activities or several branches of whose common objective is meeting the needs of tourists.

The tourism industry besides the tourism services offers also a wide range of tourist products, of goods: souvenirs, goods of high consumption, agroturism products until industrial ones of last generation. The managements of tourism communities as well as of the tourism locations are bound to develop together sustainable strategies of development in the respective area in which to develop also economic sectors producing benefits for the area and its inhabitants.

Under the current conditions of tourism development at industrial scale, the tourism becomes a distinct field of activity with its own particularities, thing which imposes a broader approach on the effects of tourism development over environment. The environmental protection, as well as of the heritage is an imperative of the new strategies of tourism. The operation of the tourism areas and the arrangement of the tourist destinations must be carried out in a sustainable tourism development which can be a component of the arrangement of territory and which can ensure the environmental biodiversity.

The sustainable tourism arrangement is the new objective in the field of tourism and is much more complex, it aims the long term strategies and consists of, all the resources which represent the main tourist attractions and the reasons of traveling for tourism purpose, from the assembly of the natural, historical and cultural components systems of a tourism area. The tourism arrangement under the new form of tourism is not limited only to the geographical approach; it also consists of an economical approach. The concept about the arrangement of a tourist destination has the form of a function with more variables on which is based also the territory arrangement for tourism purposes.

The variables which are at the basis of the tourism arrangement are: Natural condition of the area; Distance from the emission area and receptions area; Economical and social conditions of the area which is going to be arranged; Market potential; Current size and the designed one of implantations; etc.

#### **Arrangement of Tourist Destinations**

The tourist arrangement regarded as complex action of scientific organization of the territory within a sustainable development program must meet the following functions:

- ensures a rational exploitation of resources;
- stimulates the development of the other branches and activities in a given perimeter;
- contributes to the environmental protection, to the increase of its quality.

The tourism arrangement of the territory will produce profound effects in the life of people and of localities contributing significantly in the economical and social development plan or the arranged region. The arrangement of territory must ensure a controlled increase in all the fields, and to avoid the rupture between man and nature. Also, it must ensure the tourism development respectively the recreational function of the resorts with complex capitalization of their resources. The population from the tourism area must know very well the tourism potential of the area and to contribute to its capitalization alongside the tourism companies in order to obtain benefits. In agrotourism the agricultural products specific for the area have a large search and their capitalization leads to meeting the needs of tourists and to the achievement of income of the bidders.

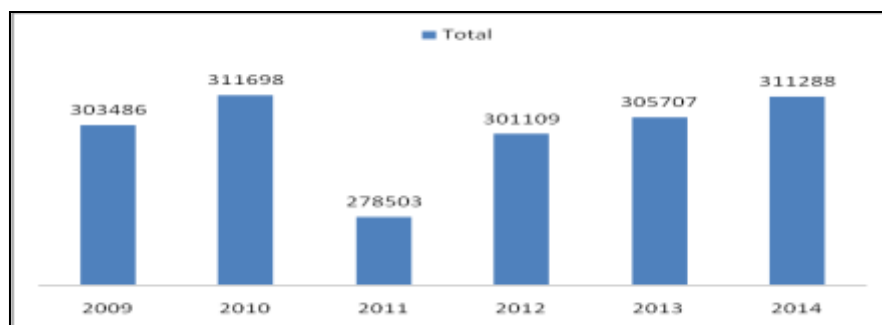
The priority for tourist facilities is accommodation. During the period 2009-2011, the number of accommodation facilities increased, except for year 2011, when the economic crisis began. (table 2, fig 2)

**Table 2.**

**Romania's tourist accommodation capacity between 2009 -2014  
(number of accommodation places)**

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2009/2014
Total	303486	311698	278503	301109	305707	311288	2.51

Source: Head. 20.2 tourist accommodation capacity



**Figure.2 The evolution of accommodation places during 2009 – 2014  
(number of accommodation places)**

The strategies of tourism arrangement must consider a series of characteristics, mainly the decisions of locating the equipments and their sizing, and namely:

- *uniqueness of performance*; each tourist location represents a particular, unique case, even within the large geotourism and relatively homogenous areas (Mediterranean Sea, Alps Mountains etc),

- *the tourism location is made "at source"* (for example the pyramids tourist objective of the category of univocal territories) with rigid offer, the resorts are arranged at the place of "raw material", of resources (beach, mineral or thermal spring, mountains, artistic monuments etc).

- *The tourism location is removed* from the buyer's market; it needs the movement of tourists, for this it is necessary a complex arrangement, to offer to the tourist a wide range of attractive performances to meet all his needs.

Other characteristics of tourism arrangements consist of:

- versatility of arrangements (resorts) which must comprise a high level of diversity and complexity of facilities and services to allow meeting, under quality conditions, the needs of some varied segments of tourists and implicitly to attract more consistent flows, the versatility increases the degree of attractiveness of the tourism arrangement;

- The tourism arrangements are integrated to the tendency of "expansion of the tertiary"- superstructural arrangements; their location will be favored in the areas with a high economical and social development, with a well established, highly urbanized infrastructure;

- *The tourism arrangement depends on* the factors of influence which can influence the tourism development, also the human factors, economical, technical factors and natural and anthropogenic factors:

- *Human factors*– the tourism as economic activity is located in the tertiary sector of services, by definition the quality of the service cannot be separated from the quality of the supplier, the human resource can be considered as determined in the attraction of clients. In tourism the weight of the workforce customizes this activity and influence directly the tourism attractiveness;

- *Economical and technical factors comprise:* – overall economical development level, development level of tertiary (services sector) and technical and material basis of tourism. As a certain production of goods of certain category produces over other categories of goods mutual determinations so a certain service can determine mutually other categories of services;

Technical factors-technical and material equipping of tourist location. The technical and material equipping must confirm the location and to make it attractive. For example the ski slopes from emirates are covered with artificial snow. This location is attractive both for its specific as well as because is in another decor and in any season towards the natural decor known for this sport also in the winter season. For such a tourism arrangement must exist artificial snow plants and snow keeping plants.

- natural and anthropogenic factors refer to the nature and to the human relationship with nature, the natural factors are factors related to climate, natural resources, rare flora and fauna etc.

- anthropogenic factors: historical cultural, religious, architectural heritage resources, etc.

**Case study :**

**S.C. Hercules**

**History:** [Băile Herculane resort is the oldest Romanian resort and among the oldest resorts from the world being documentary attested since 153 A.D.] [9] the resort is geographical located in the South- Western of the country in Caraş –Severin County being delimited by Cernei Mountains and Mehedinţi Mountains.

The natural factors of the resort are: *thermal water* – chlorinated, bicarbonate and calcium; *thermal mineral water* - iodine, sulfur, chlorinated and bromine; *air with* negative ionization and a sedative bioclimate. The specific of the natural factors water and air create an exceptional curative environment and recommends the resort for the treatment of several diseases: diseases of peripheral nervous system, respiratory diseases, early diabetes mellitus, digestive diseases, eye diseases, overweight syndrome, musculoskeletal apparatus diseases, posttraumatic affections of musculoskeletal apparatus and heavy metal poisoning. The curative contraindications of the resort are in the case of the acute diseases, tumors and epilepsy.

SWOT analysis of the resort:

**Strengths:** - long tradition of treatments; historical buildings; special natural framework; quality of mineral water; variety of mineral water; negative ionization of air; varied fauna and flora; easy accessible by land: European road E70 and railway station 1 Railway Bucharest –Timișoara; curative effect

**Weaknesses:** old and damaged material basis; historical buildings don't present attractiveness being seriously damaged; the offered services are underdeveloped; lack of an overall organizational system of the resort; lack of organizing a tourism transportation in the area; lack of some sport, recreational fields; great distance towards an international airport.

**Opportunities:** access to the international tourism market; restoration and reintroduction in tourist circuit of the historical buildings; raising the class of classification by renovation of the accommodation units; attracting in the area the lovers of special flora and fauna; development of the treatment facilities which can operate all the time of the year; organizing hiking in the resort and in the area.

**Threats:** greater exposure to the tourism market in full progress; process of permanent degradation of historical buildings and of the material basis which had a high degree of attractiveness; long period of stagnation and its extension results in the erosion of

the brand; the appearance of new operators and their consolidation in the tourism market; permanent development of the recreation and treatment bases of the new operators.

### CONCLUSIONS

Tourism development is essential for a country from various perspectives:

- From economical point view if it's properly organized it could bring up great benefits at low costs;
- From social perspectives by creating new jobs, unlike the other industries, tourism creates many jobs in the rural environment having a special role in reconverging workforce through holiday and spa resorts;
- Culturally by adding value to the history of the country and the people and also to traditions;
- Scientifically for the whole biodiversity.
- Tourism has reached a great development turning into an industry of tourism due to infrastructure development (terrestrial maritime and air ways of communication, which offers transport facilities to the tourists).

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