

## APPROACHES TO THE ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF URBAN TOURISM SYSTEM WITHIN URBAN DESTINATIONS

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### Abstract

*The city is an area that has a complex functionality which is based on the utility of its zones that imprint a quality of life and a specificity to the place, but it is also based on the architectural aesthetics which determines a local lifestyle and a potential which can be exploited through tourist activities.*

*The study aims to identify the characteristics of the urban tourism and the elements of an urban tourism system, which will be approached by identifying the city-breaker profile, by creating a tourism product, by presenting the relation between touristicity and urbanity to determine the quality of places. These elements will be applied as a case study in Craiova, a first rank city in Romania, with a mixed industrial and economical profile services, and with a low tourism function.*

*This type of city has an urban tourism system which starts to take shape and, according to the theory of "overlapping cities", although there are many forms of tourism in a city (cultural, business, shopping, sports tourism, visiting relatives and friends and recreational tourism), Craiova focuses on the typology of the city for festivals, business, leisure and sport, as a strategy for the tourism sector development and for entering the tourism market of Romania.*

**Key words:** Touristicity; Urban tourism; Urban tourism system; Urban destination; Urbanity.

**JEL Classification:** L83

### INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become along the time a phenomenon of the contemporary world, standing out by a broad dynamics, very diverse motivations, and a multitude of forms.

Tourism is a complex activity with a multitude of issues, with a significant economic load, positioned at the intersection of several branches and economical sectors. The tourism and travel industry is often considered to function as a mechanism for fantasy and personal development, the so called "industry of dreams."

Addressing the two concepts, tourism and the city, in a synergistic way is apparently difficult, but it is certain that urban space is a favourable support for economic activities, thereby, for tourist activities.

The hard competition between cities on the national and global market to attract investments, capital, tourists and a recognized status determines the tourism sector to play an increasingly important role.

Urban tourism is primarily a movement activity through which tourists make exchanges and transformations of goods, individual values and cultural models, shaping in this way a tourism system. This modeling has proven to be a difficult phenomenon because it is in constant contact with the geographical space, having an impact on it often irreversible. The influence of the tourism phenomenon

on the urban space creates certain urban morphological transformations.

Amid a communist legacy, the cities in Romania, implicitly the studied one, have a lower tourism potential compared to other European cities due to a problematic past, a peripheral location within Europe, a tourist infrastructure often neglected, a high level of crime and social problems of segregation. This produces long-term consequences on the city, because it affects the tourism industry and the local economy, the investments, the trade and the attractiveness among both residents and non-residents (who are often tourists) of the city.

### DEFINING URBAN TOURISM AND URBAN TOURISM SYSTEM

#### Urban tourism

Tourism is considered primarily a form of recreation and of spending the spare time (Holloway, 1994) and involves a temporary movement of people to destinations outside the area of residence and activities in the destination during the time spent there (Witt, Brooke et al., 1991), generating expenses with impact on local economies.

There is a very clear bidirectional relationship between tourism and the city: tourism can be a way to approach the city, especially since the development of new technologies of communication and

transportation has created "an operative, viable and developed system in all the places, consisting of material and immaterial networks" (Chaoy, 1994, pp.26-39, which speaks of a dying city and the supremacy of the urban areas).

There are extremely well capitalized certain routes / streets of the city, the historic center (with its cultural activities, festivals, street performances etc.) through tourism activities, which become tourist places; the tourism influences the existence of a city and renders its centrality (the tourists are often attracted by this part of the city and less by the peripheral and peri-urban areas).

The city becomes the object of study for urban tourism, and it is sought by tourists who want to escape from their daily routine and who seek the fantastic places (Urry, 1990, p.11). It is worth mentioning that the visitors of a city are also of urban provenance, and their choice is justified by the fact that the city is the spatial concentration (density) of a maximum of social objects characterized by diversity (Lévy, 1999, p.285); the city influences the tourism and the tourism influences the city, creating a vicious circle.

Urban tourism has developed during the 90's, which corresponds to the movement of globalization and increasing competition between cities, prompting the public actors to consider the city a product to be better positioned in a competitive market in order to highlight the uniqueness of the city, specifically the urban identity, linking the human community and the urbanized territory.

Given the dynamism of the city and its functions and metamorphoses over time, it was difficult to see and quantify the urban tourism within the other functions of the city. Due to the behavioural changes and trends, the city has turned into a cultural center, a place to relax, a place to shop etc. Thus it can be said that urban tourism is an integrated feature of urban life (Howie, 2003, p.93).

Law (1993) mentions four main factors that have boosted the urban tourism: the industry decline, the need of new economic activities, the economical growth generated by tourism and the capitalization of tourism potential represent the main reasons for regeneration and revitalization of urban centers. These factors have led to two types of tourism urbanization: conversion of industrial spaces into tourist areas and the development of new tourist resorts.

Urban tourism has been also analyzed by the European Commission, DG Enterprise - Tourism Unit in 2000 in the study "Towards quality urban tourism. Integrated quality management (IQM) of urban tourist destinations" conducted in 15 European urban destinations which observed the quality of this form of tourism (European Commission, DG Enterprise - Tourism Unit, 2000, pp.21-26). The general European context shows that tourism is seen as the basis of

urban development policy that combines a competitive supply to meet visitors' expectations with a positive contribution to the development of cities and of the welfare of their residents. A touristic city is described by two interrelated elements: internal geographical reality, which is coherent (urban actors interact and cooperate, and adopt decisions and policies) and external reality, based on the image and perception of the non-residents, i.e. the meaning, the identity of that place for a tourist.

The assessment of the consequences of urban tourism should explore its symbolic aspects, taking into account the economic aspects of this phenomenon because tourism is a significant component of the city's economy, sometimes being the key element. Those working in the tourism industry, plus the public actors, are the first creators and promoters of the tourist "attractions". In developing and marketing the local places, they must deliver extraordinary elements to serve the economic purpose to attract people to the cities, ensuring the visitors that they come in safe places where they will feel comfortable.

The result is the creation of tourist space, where the visitors experiment the new, the familiarity, the excitement and the safety feelings. This influences the human resources that work directly in the tourism industry and tourism services. In addition, the transformation of urban space that is intended for tourism influences in a positive manner the other industries as well, the persons having more access to the city and to the opportunities it offers.

Thus tourism becomes a marketable product containing material dimensions, i.e. direct products (providing jobs and income) and indirect products (social structure, opportunity costs, and access to the city) and non-material, symbolic dimensions which include the creating and promoting of some urban "authentic" attractions and their significance that they hold in the visitor consciousness.

### **Types of touristic cities**

The diverse forms of tourism that interfere with urban tourism show the complexity of tourism phenomenon in the cities, where there are also some other forms of tourism such as cultural tourism, business tourism, shopping tourism, sports tourism, visiting relatives and friends and leisure tourism, meant both for tourists and residents (Gheorghilaş, 2004, p.12).

The factors influencing the complexity of urban tourism are related to the size of the city, its history and heritage, the urban morphology, the quality of environment, the geographical location and the destination image.

The deindustrialization and economic restructuring have helped urban tourism in the developed or developing countries. Ashworth &

Tunbridge (1990) indicate that in order to strengthen its competitive position, many urban areas have capitalized their culture and heritage.

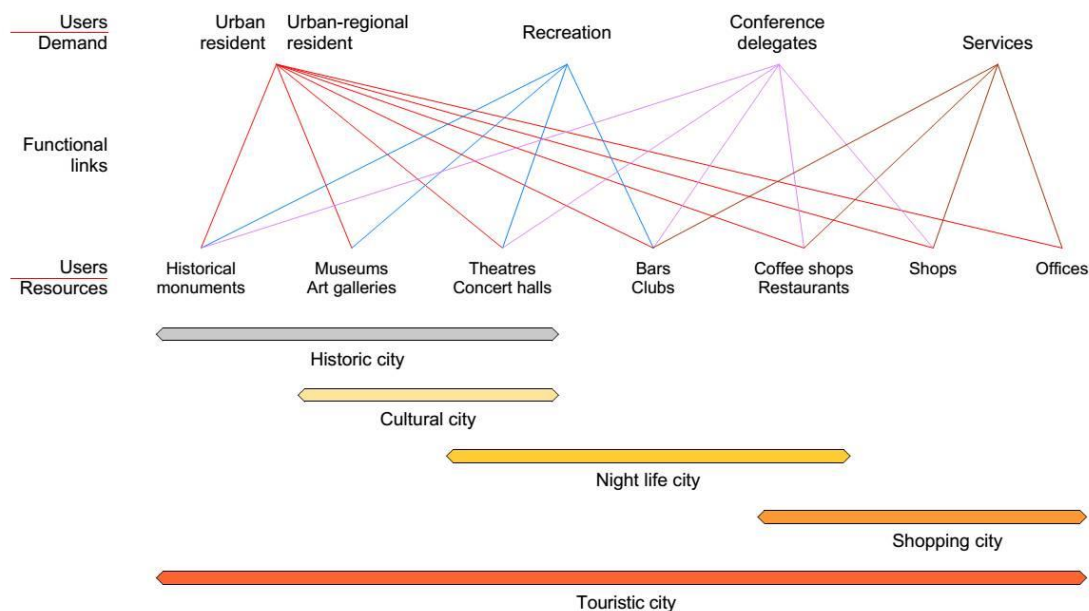
The standardized mass tourism between 1950 and 1970 has evolved into a new form of tourism characterized by high flexibility, enhanced segmentation and horizontal integration.

The impact of globalization on tourism urbanization has resulted in the emergence of homogeneous tourism products (Boniface, 1995; Pearce, 2001; Urry, 1990), because most urban areas imitate projects which were carried out in other cities. Van den Berg et al. (1995) contradict this aspect considering that imitation entails the decline of any tourist destination, "the originality is a major strength since curiosity is what attracts tourists" (Van den Berg, Van der Borg, et al., 1995, p.14). Art can be considered heritage or at least becomes a heritage resource according to Ashworth and Tunbridge (1990).

The tourist space needs an infrastructure specific to tourism activities and a flow of tourists to use it; otherwise it is just a tourist site. Both residents and tourists perceive differently the geographical reality, the tourist space being a result of this perceptual process, most tourists often adding meaning and consistency to the tourist space. The tourist spaces in cities are represented by the historical centers, by peri-urban areas with leisure activities and by the urban fringe.

Depending on the cultural and heritage elements present in each urban area, they are locally capitalized determining a predominance of a form of tourism that is practiced in urban area or of a group of tourism forms. Thus one can identify the following tourist cities: historic cities, the historical and cultural heritage cities that capitalize the anthropic resources of the movable and immovable heritage, historical sites; cities for business, sports and recreation and cities that capitalize the theater, art, festivals, i.e. the artistic and cultural side of the city (Ashworth, Tunbridge, 1990).

The cities that have a multifunctional character determine a complex typology of visitors, because they have a high demand and use various resources in the city (Figure 1). According to the theory of "overlapping cities" the tourist city is of several types which have different urban resources, such as: the historic city (with historical monuments, museums, art galleries, theaters and concert halls), the cultural city (with museums, theaters), the nightlife city (bars, clubs, cafes, restaurants), the shopping city (shops, cafes, restaurants) and the polyvalent city that includes all the above mentioned elements (Burtenshaw et al., 1991). For each of these urban resources there is a tourism demand and functional links are created between the different forms of tourism in the city (recreation, leisure, business, shopping) and the tourists.



**Figure 1 – The functional links between the demand and supply in a touristic city**

Source: adapted after Burtenshaw et al., 1991

The effects of a mono-functional touristic city were highly discussed especially in times of economic

crisis when there is a decline in tourism demand. The „false tourists” who avoid high prices and do not stay

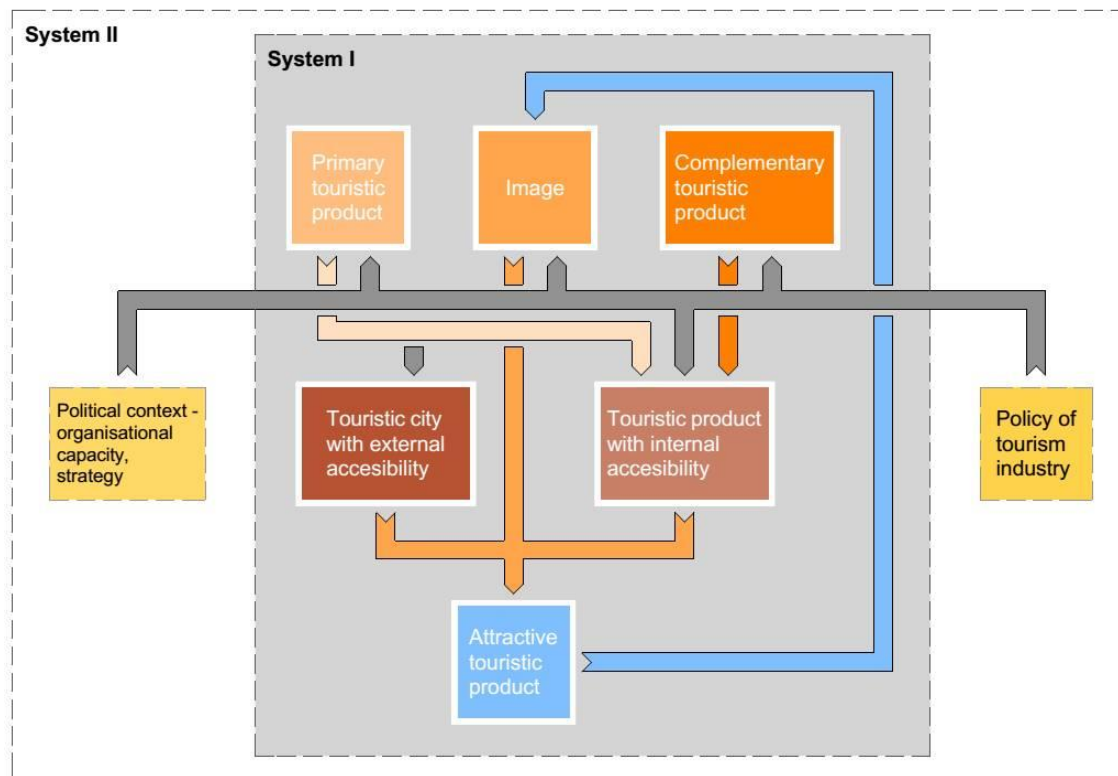
in the destination, choosing to go to nearby communities may become a threat to urban tourism sector.

### Urban tourism system

The tourism system consists of the geosystem (the ecosystem that depends on natural factors), the territory (consisting of accessibility, natural resources,

tourism heritage, and tourist infrastructure) and the landscape (the visible part of the territory). The spatial analysis is a tool for tourism development and a mean of analyzing the tourism supply and demand.

The tourism system can be highlighted in relation to the characteristics of urban tourist areas and urban tourist product (Figure 2).



**Figure 2 – The main relations within an urban tourism system**

Source: adapted after Van den Berg et al., 1995

According to Van den Berg et al. (1995), the urban tourism product consists of five components: the primary tourism product, the complementary tourism product, the touristic image, the external accessibility (how to reach the destination) and the domestic accessibility (easy movement within the destination). Thus the tourism system is segmented into the system I consisting of key factors, namely the primary and complementary tourism product, which form a complete tourism product, the touristic image (exercised through the market perception) and the internal and external accessibility of the destination. This first system cannot work without the influences of the public and private sector that form the system II, which have a major impact on the tourism product and on the urban tourism attractivity.

Within the Ist system, the destination image is often a key factor when choosing a tourist destination

the practice demonstrating that the positive images are generally taken easier into consideration (Bramwell, Rawding, 1996; Chon, 1991; Dann, 1996; Echtner, Ritchie, 1993; Gartner, 1993; Goodrich, 1978; Mayo, 1973).

The destination image was variously defined as follows: the sum of beliefs, ideas and impressions that a person has of a destination (Crompton, 1979); the result of the interaction between convictions, ideas, feelings, expectations and impressions of a person about a destination (Chon, 1991); the attributes' perceptions of an individual destination and the holistic impression created by the destination (Echtner and Ritchie, 1991); an individual's mental representation of knowledge, feelings and general impressions about a destination (Baloglu, McCleary, 1999).

Once arrived at the destination, tourists'

satisfaction depends on the comparison between the expectations based on previous images and the current reality that they find in the tourist destination (Chon, 1991). Thus the identification, the assessment, the marketing and the management of images should be among the top priorities of urban tourist destinations, as tourist images do not always reflect the reality (Hunt, 1975, p.2) and they can drive away potential tourists.

## APPROACHES TO URBAN TOURISM SYSTEM

### Methodology

Based on the theoretical concepts of urban tourism and urban tourism system and based on previous studies about the general context of tourism, accessibility, tourist market and tourism image of Craiova city (Bădiță, 2012a, 2012b), the urban tourism system of Craiova will be approached from the following perspectives:

- According to the theory of Van den Berg et al., 1995, the 2<sup>nd</sup> system will be briefly identified;
- The social and touristic general context of the city;
- The 1<sup>st</sup> system will be outlined, namely the product - image - accessibility of Craiova urban destination, focusing on developing a tourism product and on the tourist quality of urban space.

To create an eloquent tourism product there will be taken into consideration the previous studies of touristic image to present the endogenous and exogenous perception, and the studies of Craiova tourism market to highlight the characteristics of urban tourism (i.e. urban tourism supply and its distribution within the urban territory, the relation between the touristic supply and demand and its concentrations in the urban space), it will be outlined the profile of urban tourist (city-breaker) according to Juguet model, 2009; Craiova tourism product will be developed integrating some tourism forms specific to this city: city breaks, business, cultural tourism and leisure, emphasizing also the quality of places (a new quality of urban spaces being the development of tourism which determines a certain urban quality of spaces), as a prerequisite for the tourism development, through the relation between touristicity and urbanity, using the model developed by Sombret, 2007.

### Craiova city as a case study

In order to highlight the theoretical issues presented above we will approach the urban tourism system from a different perspective with a practical application on Craiova city.

In terms of basic features, the city is located in the South-West Oltenia region, being the capital city

of this region and Dolj county seat. It is considered as a first rank city with a mixed industrial-service functional profile, with a less developed tourist industry, although the authorities want to market the city, trying to develop a tourism product focused on culture, festivals, concerts and scientific congresses.

The functions of the region were likely agricultural and industrial, during the communist period a forced industrialization was developed in the cities. The industrialization process was not correlated with the real resources of the region and with the work force, leading to a chaotic urban development, unrelated to the investments on housing, infrastructure and social objectives. The problem occurs after 1989 when, once with the collapse of the communist system, the economical elements of the region have recorded disfunctionalities because they could not adapt to the new requirements of the economical market.

In terms of tourism, in the city the persons number that work in the hotels and restaurants sectors is extremely low, about 2.5% of all the employees in the service sector, 1770 employees in 2008, 1418 employees in 2009 and 1389 in 2010, from an annual total of about 65,000 employees in the service sector in Craiova (Bădiță, 2013). The positioning of the tourism sector reveals a low tourism intake in the economy of the city and an involvement of a small percentage of the population in the hospitality activities, highlighting a significant low economic level that tourism has on the market of Craiova city.

A perception study conducted in the city reveals that tourists come to the city for professional and business purposes (52%), personal interest (42%) and cultural purposes (33%), most tourists choosing to visit the center due to the historical landmarks (27%) and low prices (39%). Tourists come to visit Craiova only on weekends (98%), thus the weekend tourism being among the main forms of tourism in Craiova; the city was seen as a commercial-university center rather than a touristic one (Bădiță, 2012b).

The urban tourism system will be approached by highlighting the characteristics of urban tourism and the city tourism product (the relation supply-demand, the city-breaker profile and the quality of places), the accessibility and the tourism market being already presented in other studies previously conducted in the city (Bădiță, 2012a, 2012b).

In this touristic context, the urban tourism system in Craiova is based on a tourist supply represented by attractive anthropogenic resources, which are various in terms of structure, physiognomy and functionality, and which attract tourist flows which can capitalize effectively, socially and economically this supply. Located in the Jiu meadow and on its terraces, the drained areas of the city have become leisure areas. The historic artifacts from the area emphasize the importance of the historical

heritage of Oltenia Region. The touristic heritage is highlighted in the lists of historical monuments in 2004 (310 monuments) and 2010 (313 monuments) published by the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, with no major differences between the two years of reference (Bădiță, 2012a).

The analysis of the concentration degree of landmarks in the city reveals a discontinuous distribution, with a high concentration especially in the city center and mainly in the historic center and a reduced presence in terms of typology, attractiveness, number in the peripheral neighborhoods of the city. Overall it is obvious the variety and complexity of the existing historical monuments which could prompt the historical and cultural tourism (Figure 3) (Bădiță, 2013).

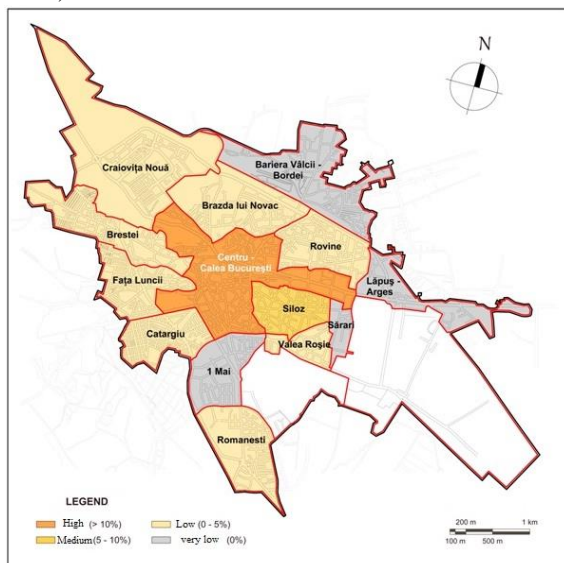


Figure 2 - The concentration degree (%) of landmarks in the neighbourhoods of Craiova city

Source: Bădiță, 2013

The touristic potential refers to different forms of tourism such as: a transit tourism due to the city's location at the crossroads of the communication networks in the South-West of the country, a business tourism due to the presence of the automotive industry, a scientific tourism due to the University of Craiova, cultural and leisure tourism due to the numerous objectives included in the national cultural heritage lists.

The tourism demand is low, recording 55,000 tourists in 2007, 2008 and only 25,000 in 2010 (Bădiță, 2012a).

According to the Micksch theory (1951 cited by Cocean et al., 2005, p.283), which reflects the appropriate relationship between tourism supply and tourism demand in terms of tourist facilities, the studied city has a *concentrated tourism supply and demand* - specific to the unique landmarks in the cities and in their peri-urban areas, to which tourist flows converge from the proximity areas; besides the

landmarks of the municipality, especially located in the central area, there is observed a touristic infrastructure in its peri-urban area; the flows to this city are mainly domestic and very few international (according to the statistical data in 2011).

Referring to the typology of urban tourist areas, there are patterns that reveal certain structural tourist cities where the touristic space has a certain form and where the city center is well individualized. Such a model is developed by Giotart in 1989 which highlights four structural types of urban tourist spaces: the traditional bipolar or polynuclear tourist space; the unipolar and mononuclear polyvalent space; and the specialized unipolar, bipolar or polynuclear urban spaces. The studied area falls within the polyvalent tourist space with unipolar and mononuclear concentration, because the city center concentrates most of the landmarks and attracts the most tourists, and the peri-urban area has a tourist supply focused especially on cultural, recreation, leisure or transit tourism.

City-breaker profile

In the case of week-end urban tourism, the so-called city-break, that takes place over a short period of time (a maximum of 2 days), it is necessary to understand the profiles of the city-breaker (Table 1) and of the urban tourist who needs easy and handy services because of the limited available time. Urban touristic heritage is an important resource for them, thus needing adequate information in town (tourist information centre, leaflets etc.).

Tabel 1 - City-breaker profile

City-breaker profile	Matching city
- <b>the impulsive:</b> belatedly decides to go on a spontaneous travel, attracted by last-minute offers	The magic city, with rich touristic offers
- <b>the adventurer:</b> the journey is emotional and geographical, with the permanent desire to discover new things and to get out of the daily routine	The extraordinary city that allows one to get out of the daily routine
- <b>the anxious:</b> ensures that any trip to be well organized, with all the preset and well-established items	The practical city, with numerous tourist services available, which are convenient and efficient
- <b>the clever:</b> he discovers the exceptional offers, maximizes the quality/price ratio, and optimizes the stay	The recreational town with lots of entertainment and leisure

Source: Juguet, 2009

The needs of an urban visitor center on easy movement if there is touristic information guide when sightseeing, the fun of discovering (to cultivate and recreate), access to the necessary facilities and touristic services (Wastiaux, 2009, p.42).

Of the four types of tourist city-breaker the anxious and the clever type seek Craiova for a practical city, with a rich touristic supply of leisure and entertainment.

**Craiova tourism product**

After determining the characteristics of Craiova urban tourism system, the forms of tourism and the urban tourist profile, a tourism product can be outlined for Craiova that focuses on the following considerations:

**Table 1 - Craiova tourism product**

Forms of tourism	<input type="checkbox"/> City break <input type="checkbox"/> Business, scientific: congresses, conferences
Tourist Profile	
Age	Average / Above average
Education	Higher
Origin	Romanians and foreigners
Individual/Family / Group	Individual
Financial level	Above average
Actions	<input type="checkbox"/> Improving tourism infrastructure (accommodation structures) to ensure the business travel needs; <input type="checkbox"/> Creating a DMO online portal to provide tourist information services, promotion and online reservations; <input type="checkbox"/> Creating a short route in the city to provide an effectively City Break with specialized guides.

Forms of tourism	<input type="checkbox"/> Cultural-historic <input type="checkbox"/> Religious
Tourist Profile	
Age	Average / Above average
Education	Secondary / Higher
Origin	Mainly Romanians
Individual/Family / Group	Family/Group
Financial level	Average/Above average
Actions	<input type="checkbox"/> Improving the access infrastructure to heritage and architectural objectives; <input type="checkbox"/> Modernization of tourism infrastructure (tourist accommodation structures); <input type="checkbox"/> Active online promotion.

Thus, the tourism product can integrate multiple forms of tourism identified in Craiova, addressing a variety of tourist typologies only if actions occur prior to this process, as described in Table 2. One of these forms integrated by the tourism product can be the city-break.

**The relation between touristicity and urbanity to determine the quality of places and tourism**

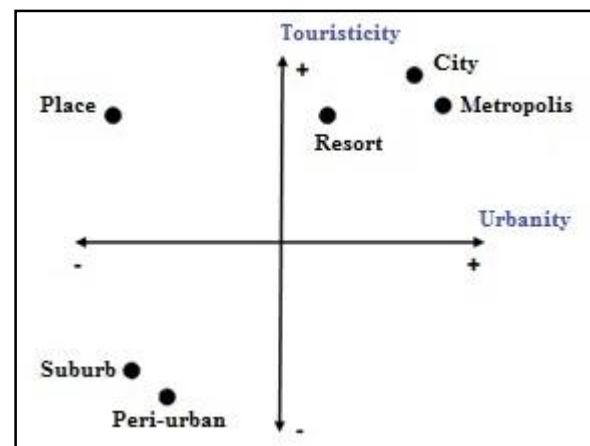
New approaches relating to the quality of places reveal the relationship between the two urban and touristic characteristics: touristicity and urbanity.

*Touristicity* is the analysis of the potential of an

attractive tourist place (often revealed by the no. of accommodation places / no. of housings). Any territory holds a certain touristicity or a theoretically attractive potential according to Lozato -Giotart and Balfet (2004) (cited by Jugănar, 2007, p.315). Without a good infrastructure for access and accommodation, the touristicity of a place remains only theoretical.

*Urbanity* is the quality of the people to live in a city; Schoonbrodt (1997) says that this is "the ethics of coexistence because of which it is possible to experience in city social relations of a positive nature". The term usually refers to the quality of living and shared space which allows neighbourhood relations, civil and courteous meetings" (Soulier, 1998, cited by Huet, 1998, p.211). Lévy (1999) defines urbanity "what makes a city a city", that is the essence of the city; he himself defined the city as a spatial object which best concentrates the relationship between density-diversity, there being in fact a degree of urbanity. The maximum of urbanity is concentrated in the city and the minimum outside of it. Thus, Lévy asserts that urbanity is the city, urbanity is urban. Lussault cited by Lévy considers it "the urban character of a space" (p.966).

Touristicity and urbanity can define the quality that is characteristic for an object, place, and is a relative and objective notion. The concept of recreational turn is based on the idea of the new quality of urban spaces through increasing tourism and recreation. Urban quality depends on the presence of tourists in those places (Stock, 2007). A real city - a place defined by a certain quality of urbanity is defined by the quality of tourism (Figure 4).



**Figure 3 - The relation between touristicity and urbanity in different types of touristic places**

Source: adapted after Sombret, 2007

According to fig. 4, a touristic place has a large degree of touristicity, but a low urbanity. Spaces like cities and resorts have the two features, and are thus places with a higher quality for tourism. The suburbs or peri-urban spaces are considered to have low degrees of touristicity or urbanity, having a lower

touristic quality and attractivity. There are exceptions to this in cities where the suburb holds a more pronounced touristic function than the center.

The model can be also applied to the studied city, because it can be easily integrated into this relation between touristicity and urbanity, in the areas with higher values of the two represented elements.

Thus Craiova has a touristicity and urbanity higher than average, which indicates an average to high quality of places, with prerequisites for the development of tourism activities in the city, following the implementation of a set of actions, resulting in an increase in the quality of the study place.

## CONCLUSIONS

In modern society tourism represents, through its contents and role, a distinct field of activity, an essential component of economic and social life for many states, which see touristic potential as a real generator of revenue.

Thus, urban tourism is the set of resources or touristic activities located in cities and offered to visitors who come from other places (Vighetti, 1994).

Behavioural changes have led cities to become centers of culture and leisure, with tourists spending their time in public spaces located especially in the center.

Many theories consider urban tourism to be rather accidental than on purpose (Ashworth, Tunbridge, 1990). Craiova is noted for a week-end urban tourism, with transit tourism dominating and leisure peri-urban areas being visited.

It was estimated that 80% of visits in cities are purely urban tourism, while 20% are complimentary tourism, visiting cities being associated with other forms of tourism. Business people, delegates to

conferences are "accidental" visitors who spend a short time in the city.

Craiova's urban tourism system has a product based on supply and demand focused in an arrangement which reveals a multi-purpose space with a unipolar and mononuclear tourist concentration because it individualizes the central area of the city which concentrates most of the landmarks and which also attracts the most tourists.

After analyzing the forms of tourism in the city and the tourist profile, an urban tourism product for Craiova could be outlined focusing either on a city-break tourism, linked to the business and scientific tourism or on the cultural and religious tourism, each addressing to a different tourist target, with the possibility of creating an integrated tourism product that includes all the mentioned forms of tourism.

The quality of place is average to high regarding the relation between touristicity and urbanity with the existence of a touristic potential that can be exploited by creating a system of urban destination management organization, a so-called DMO (Destination Management Organization), and the development of city-break, business and cultural and historical tourism.

The urban tourism system can develop given the enabling social context and a touristic product, based on good external and internal accessibility that generates attractive image of a tourist destination can be created.

The studied city has become a centre where one can carry out a multitude of touristic activities, because the authorities are increasingly more involved with organizing large-scale events, recreational areas and with the conservation and protection of landmarks to attract a larger number of tourists.

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