

## TOURISM FUTURE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT BASED ON SOCIO-STATISTICAL STUDIES

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### Abstract

*The restructuring the global economy is the main factor of which depends the future of sustainable development, major changes being needed in the human behavior, in the system of values and life style. In order to raise people's sensitivity regarding the importance of constructing ties between natures and cultures, between different world cultures, cultural and natural heritage must be used as efficiently as possible.*

*The second part of this paper refers to a study made on tourism in Bucovina region. This case study may be considered a useful instrument for identifying malfunction in the touristic sector in the south of Bucovina region, in order to supply all necessary information for further development strategies and policies in the field. The statistics in tourism is used in the study of the most stable features of touristic activity behaviour. This study will allow the configuration of a general outlook, which is necessary in order to take the best decisions when it comes to elaborating forecasts in the field.*

**Key words:** global economy, natural heritage, sustainable development.

**JEL classification:** C42, L83, Q01.

### 1. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CULTURAL TOURISM IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONS.

During the last decades, it is manifested obviously the tendency of tourism sector development, by the returning to nature and genuine natural values, especially in the most industrialized countries. At the basis of this kind of tourism it is the action of spending a vacation or a holiday in a natural and anthropic original environment, which has some outstanding objectives.

The idea of durable tourism that is more recent had the origin in the ideas of Rio Conference, in 1992. This appeared in order to protect the nature for the future, especially the fragile species and tropical forests. Gradually, the concept of durable development penetrated in all domains of the economic life, including tourism. No matter the tourism form, this must respect the durable

development principles: from eco tourism, rural tourism, cultural tourism to business tourism or automobilist tourism.

The impact of tourism activities on a zone is induced by the natural environment and the variety of tourist potential, by the existence of a general infrastructure, by the presence of some tourist structures of accommodation, alimentation, and pleasure. These elements of tourism determine more types of impacts (political, social, economical cultural etc.) which can take positive or negative ways of manifestation. The notion itself influences the tourism sector too, which uses as resources: outstanding natural spaces, and also values of cultural-architectural patrimony, and it refers especially to the modification of behavior, starting from residence until the tourist places from other countries.

The culture is more and more pointed out, which must be considered as a sector of social-economic life and also is pointed out its importance always increasing in the development strategy. The complexity of problems and the importance of the phenomena determined the appearance of the concept of cultural politics. More and more they underline the role of the state in the determination and the realization of the cultural development objectives, the promotion and organization of the cultural development through the state, the development of the research on cultural politics and international cultural cooperation, the role of UNESCO in the domain of cultural politics.

The common elements that are to be emphasized when joining the two concepts (durable development and globalization) are shown in (Rotariu, I., 2004):

- identifying all the natural and anthropic resources with tourist valences;
- durable exploitation of the tourist resources;
- limiting the consume and the loss
- preserving the biodiversity and the cultural identity
- integration of the tourist industry into the economical planning process
- supporting local economies
- the involvement of local economies
- consulting the specialists and the population regarding the high risk investments
- training the tourism personnel

- tourist marketing adapted to the environment
- using the research in this area in order to realize some market studies, financial, environmental or tourist audit, monitoring the activity or the tourist circulation.

What we can consider as being a drawback is the fact that we haven't still had any definition for culture, which is being considered by some as being an artistically creation, interpreting and spreading the art works, on the other hand, sport. The final report of the intergovernmental conference on the cultural European politics defines culture as being an assembly of spiritual and material expressions belonging to a society as far as they are the product of man's creative aptitudes or founded on them, trying to define culture in relation to social justice, education, communication, environment, etc.

The large diversity of the field, lots of the problems which it takes, the absence of the deep research in this field involve a difficult charge in the establishing structure of culture.

The tourism is invert commerce (the consumer goes to the ware), and the culture is the main element of the motivation, it's important to have a clear idea concerning the structure of the culture and the phenomenon that affect this field, for understanding the causes of the lasts mutations in tourism. If a cultural product like world wide web can be consumed home, it can determine the decision of a travel for effective consumption (to the place presented in www) or maybe it can become a "virtual trip", a sick tourism, in the case of persons touched by the "Internet syndrome".

As a coincidence at the cultural revolution with the ones from informatics and communication, the tourism passes from service packets to selling life experience, actually art, culture or a part of life time, of existence for the subject (the tourist), blended through the intimate process of culture and the object (raw material in the tourism activity). For example as a reinforcement of this information, we mention the fact that the tourist who goes in a tourist agency isn't asked where he wants to leave, but what kind of destination he desires: a family environment, adventure, sport, for youth, or an exotic or classic one. Unlike rich countries, for a tourist from a transition country, the first question it refers to the allotted budget. Maybe from here results a series of inequalities in culture's development.

Today the communication, the culture distribution implies a much more evolved technique that changes rapidly under the influence of technical progress, which involves extremely big sums, difficult to found in the developing countries.

We have the recent example of the irakian people who, on the edge of war, were informational isolated in order to become an easy pray afterwards to the mass media; or of Romania in 1989 or after 1990.

But the immediate effects are transient; can be annihilated, sometimes with huge costs.

Nowadays, at the world level, there are different possibilities of production, distribution and access to culture between different countries due to economic discrepancies, because the culture of different states is situated on different levels in according to different economic development.

We cannot limit the cultural development of poor countries to the preservation of the folkway and the picturesque folklore as it is broadcast on the Discovery Channel or shows offered to foreign tourists.

Traditions are slowly disappearing under the pressure of copying the habits from the developed countries; the folklore becomes a sort of museum display, being exhibited on various occasions or for foreign tourists.

The development of national cultures is the only right way to develop the world culture, and the diversity that exists within the national cultures aims to raise the value of the humanity cultures, to raise it on higher grounds.

The world's division in various political-economical systems has given birth to cancerous elements in the culture which modifies the true purpose and role of culture. Forbids its development, nevertheless, the race after the touristic destinations has determined the "leisure" industry to revitalized the traditional cultural elements from many areas of the world, both for their value and their inedited in particular. Once entered into the mass touristic circuit, the natives develop new competitive forms on the market.

## 2. ISSUES REGARDING THE CULTURAL IMPACT. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESS

Tourism represents a strong argument for the establishment of world heritage goods, which makes the relation between tourism industry and world heritage to be a delicate one.

If the world will not stand the social and ecological consequences of the number of visitors brought in areas under the world heritage, a higher importance should be attributed to bringing the world, cultural and natural heritage to the people.

This is an obvious thing because the relation between tourists and the local community is sometimes less fruitful on the local level, the cultural impact prevails.

The positive aspects derive from the following:

- The development and refreshment of cultural and religious traditions,
- The diversification of handicraft forms,
- Favoring the rise of the local population's interest in keeping and preserving the public interest

objectives, natural and cultural which thus can be better valued,

- Initiating of new cultural action regarding the religious aspects, of pilgrimages to monasteries with the aim of satisfying the feeling of Christian sacredness, with the respect towards moral values

The negative aspects are more numerous, their presence being felt after a relative longer period:

- Changing mentalities, moral values under the influence of tourists keeping some habits, traditions only because there are preferred by tourists, the appearance of kitsch.

- Adapting and copying by the part of the residents of some new attitudes and behaviors, attributed to tourists,

- The appearance of possible conflicts and antagonisms when tourism becomes a mass phenomenon supersaturated and leads to the disappearance of the feeling of proudness own culture,

- The increase of the cost of living, the ultra fast development of the consumption model, the graduated destruction of social spontaneity on the local level.

The development of the thematic parks is an alternative suggested by UNESCO (for mass tourism) an example being that of World Disney Corporation. Although information about provenience and the profile of Disney parks are considered almost commercial secrets, it seems that these parks have kept millions of people away from other destinations where probably they would have provoked much more damages. The expansion of these centers from the original Disneyland from Los Angeles, California (1955) in Florida and other parts of USA (1971), to Tokyo (1983) and Paris (1992) ensures the modification of some touristic fluxes.

These parks offers a kind of tourism practiced by millions of people, despite the brought critics underlying their having a totally artificial character. Parks are carefully projected being isolated by the surrounding communities contributing in little extend to the cultural contamination of the local population. The development of the IT sector will make it possible for the virtual tour of the areas belonging to the world heritage aspect which represents a second alternative to the mass tourism suggested by UNESCO, this fact meaning that the remarkable techniques used until now by military pilots and astronauts will become accessible for millions of adventure seekers.

The restructuring of global economy is the main factor of which depends the future of sustainable development, major changes being needed in the human behavior, in the system of values and life style. In order to raise people's sensitivity regarding the importance of constructing ties between natures and cultures, between different world cultures, cultural and natural heritage must be used as efficiently as possible.

Tourism is based on culture, lives through it and is shaped by it, thus changes in culture determine

modification in the touristic activity, these being strengthened by those from the material infrastructure. Nobody travels with the aim of sleeping in the hotel or eating at the restaurant, the impulse coming from the tourist's culture not from him being hungry.

### 3. CASE STUDY – TOURISM ACTIVITY IN SUCEAVA DISTRICT

The second part of this paper refers to a study made on tourism in Bucovina region. Bucovina lies in Northern Moldavia and along with Muntenia and Transylvania is one of Romanian's largest historical provinces. Today's Bucovina only consists of the southern part of the historical province (Suceava district), while the north is located in the Ukraine.

I chose this part of Romania because of its touristic potential. First of all we should mention the five monasteries which churches have exterior frescoes (Voronet, Humor, Arbore, Sucevița, and Moldovița) that have been preserved, which are unique world-wide, despite the mark that centuries have left on them. The original Moldavian architectural style with Gothic and Byzantine influences characterises these monuments dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, already partaking in the patrimony of universal culture.

This case study may be considered a useful instrument for identifying malfunction in the touristic sector in the district of Suceava (the south of Bucovina region). This complex study regarding the tourism in the district of Suceava has also in view a possible strategic orientation of the managers who are involved in touristic activities. Moreover, considering the complexity of the issue, this project also focused on several *didactic goals*, such as the stimulation of scientific research by involving the youth (students) research activity and promoting the students' interest in tourism by offering them opportunities of scientific achievement.

The project has a multidisciplinary character, trying to underline the advantages of selective socio-statistical research and its various fields of application (in this case, tourism) by employing knowledge from statistics, sociology, computer science, psychology, etc.

The study may be envisaged as an invitation to perform a scientifically supported diagnosis of the tourism in the district of Suceava, as well as in any area, region, or district in the country, the information it supplies being useful for those in charge of evaluating touristic development projects or the future requirements of this system.

Consequently, this work also constitutes a starting point of any thorough and complex analysis of tourism not only in the district of Suceava, but in any part of the country, thus managing to supply all necessary information for further development strategies and policies in the field.

*To begin with*, we have to mention the fact that within this geographical area (southern Bucovina) there is a large variety of nationally and internationally acknowledged touristic objectives, historical monuments ranked as unique, partaking of the patrimony of universal culture.

*Secondly*, provided that tourism, as an economic activity, is viewed as a reinvigorating factor for the whole of Romanian economy, we believe that this study represents a response to the need that information should be exchanged within the field of tourism. A major touristic area, such as the district of Suceava, represents an environment where the need for such research is highlighted, precisely because supply and demand in tourism should be most efficiently balanced.

The study presented wishes to set the foundations of a new methodology, based on both quantitative and qualitative information, in order to estimate the dynamics of the touristic phenomenon from the point of view of evolution and economics. In addition, Bucovina displays insufficient managerial concern with judiciously exploiting the touristic resources, both on the part of governmental agencies and on that of private enterprises.

One should grant no less consideration to the impact of tourism on the environment. Although adequate legislation has been provided towards the exploitation and protection of the environment, an acute need is felt for both local and national studies on touristic potential and, consequently, on the impact of tourism on the environment.

This complex study regarding the tourism in the district of Suceava has also in view a possible strategic orientation of the companies involved in touristic activities.

### **3.1. General aspect about the expertise in tourism activity**

The research method in economics focuses on a complex process of selection and analysis of various aspects of reality. This implies observing and establishing the instruments required for the analysis of the economic phenomenon, understanding the mechanisms of development, and finding the most efficient means of taking proper action. The statistical method represents the scientific means of realizing a study on a population's behaviour, trying to trace out the general features of a certain field – in this case, tourism.

The statistics in tourism is used in the study of the most stable features of touristic activity behaviour. This study will allow the configuration of a general outlook, which is necessary in order to take the best decisions when it comes to elaborating forecasts in the field.

The basic instruments of the touristic study rely on the observation of the touristic phenomena, accomplished with the help of *censuses* or partial

observations such as *polls*, consisting in selecting and analysing a representative sample of the community under consideration.

Traditionally, the records of tourists crossing the border into the country, of tourist and check-in numbers at the accommodation units, of foreign currency transactions, and other aspects of the touristic activity provide an estimation of the corresponding variables. The quantitative information thus gathered concerns international rather than national tourism.

The qualitative aspects such as the tourists' social and occupational profile, their motivation, the factors that influence their decision to travel, the structure of the touristic expenses, the extent expectation is satisfied to upon completion of the journey, their past and future behaviour, the tourists' budget, etc. – all these form the object of specific *inquiries*.

The *poll* is a method of statistical observation that permits a relatively fast, yet probable, knowledge of the characteristic features of a population that could not be examined as a whole. Nowadays, most of the commercial information available to the public or private institutions (lodging, catering, and transportation units) is provided by polls. Even in such cases when the number of persons to interview is relatively small, it is difficult to accomplish total observation for economic or practical reasons. There are certain constraints connected with cost, duration, and time of research which call for a poll as a statistical observation method in tourism.

The primary information thus obtained will become part of a database that can be used in order to compute specific indicators related to the issue under consideration.

Acquiring the touristic statistical information faces certain difficulties. Moreover, one has to be aware that the whole statistical system works at the expense of the society (it comprises the value of the human, material, and financial resources necessary in order to set up and sustain the system). There are a large number of countries that are not able to fully undertake such expense.

In the case of tourism, one also has to take into account the difficulty that arises from the observation of a phenomenon which is dynamic by nature, the continuously changing state of the touristic phenomenon being generally acknowledged.

The desire for clear and precise definitions that should be unanimously accepted in tourism, the nature of the touristic product, the geographical spread of the phenomenon, its constant evolution, all these represent further limitations of statistical observation.

Within such an economic, social, cultural, and political context, tourism faces the following categories of problems:

1. Tourism, as an economic activity, is forced to find such forms of manifestation as to



comply with the newly formed context in order to integrate itself in a market economy structure;

2. Due to the complex changes of the human factor, that orients and structures the demand for tourism, new aspects have arisen for the touristic product offerors, who are forced to find diverse solutions, but only after minute acquaintance with and thorough examination of the current situation.

The present study focuses on the latter category and intends to present several elements that are connected to tourism such as:

- the analysis of the touristic demand in the district of Suceava, taking into account the new economic, social, cultural, and political contexts in which the individual lives and moves, with his own concerns, wishes, and real possibilities of touring;

- the study of the motivations and holiday behaviour of the Romanian and foreign tourists who have stayed in the accommodation units in the district of Suceava;

- the analysis of the touristic activity from the point of view of service quality;

- the identification of the relationship between service quality and corresponding fares;

- the study of the opinions and options of various categories of tourists in the district of Suceava regarding tourism.

By examining the results of this study, one may find answers to questions such as:

1. Is there any interest in tourism after 1990? What is the Romanians' interest in tourism after 1990?

2. Has the attraction for tourism been so powerful that part of the limited budget of a family should be allotted to holiday expenses?

3. Does the fear of unemployment influence the tourists' behaviour?

4. What social categories cannot afford to tour, etc.

Such research may provide useful information to the executive department, both on a microeconomic level (represented by the touristic company) and on a macroeconomic level, represented by tourism within a district, region, or country. The acquaintance with the touristic market, the identification of changes in the tourists' behaviour, etc. represent defining conditions regarding the consolidation of an efficient strategy that may allow for certain solutions to various present or future problems.

## 4. DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY

The next chapters will present shortly the steps that you have to follow in order to develop a research that will focus on the theme: how could tourism improve the development of a region.

### 4.1. Defining the research topic

Defining the research topic implies setting its goal on the basis of partnership and collaboration between the beneficiary and the author of the research. The contractual relationship thus established focuses on the decisional alternatives that form the object of investigation, the evaluation criteria of the alternatives, as well as the decision importance and exigency degree. This study comprises various aspects regarding the touristic activity in the district of Suceava.

### 4.2. Selecting the target population and the territory on which the survey will be conducted

Defining the target population, out of which a sample will be selected, represents the first step of the sampling procedure. For the present study, the target population is represented by the tourists in lodging on the territory of Suceava district during 2004.

### 4.3. Choosing the research type

*The sample-based inquiry* is the most common selective research method targeting a collectivity. In the field of tourism, it can provide significant data regarding the particular features of the touristic demand over a certain period of time, namely that while the inquiry takes place.

The essential element that should mark the poll-based inquiry is its scientific character that should differentiate it from the media surveys or from some articles that present facts and opinions disregarding their statistical value or the objective reality.

### 4.4. Hypotheses and objectives

Highly significant to any market research is to formulate the research topic and hypotheses. While the research topic implies that the usefulness of the study and the effort involved depend on the way in which the topic is chosen, the formulation of hypotheses requires particular attention, their quality determining the success or failure of the study to a great extent.

Aiming at describing and emphasising the features of the touristic demand in the district of Suceava, identifying the differences between the needs, attitudes, and behaviour of the Romanian and foreign tourists, the present study has resulted in descriptive research. This involves the explanation of certain specific facts and phenomena, starting from an

unproved supposition, that is, from a hypothesis that will be either accepted or rejected as the inquiry progresses, in preestablished probability conditions.

Starting from these *research hypotheses*, the goals of the present study have been outlined, for which the analysis and presentation of the following aspects serve as guidelines:

- Interest in tourism in the present and as compared to the period before 1990;
- Romanian and foreign tourist visiting frequency in the district of Suceava;
- Regions and countries of origin of Romanian and foreign tourists respectively;
- Tourist average duration of stay in the district of Suceava (average stay in Romania and intention to return, in the case of foreign tourists);
- Reasons why the district of Suceava has been chosen by tourists as holiday terminus and their rating of Romanian touristic service advertising;
- Information sources used by foreign tourists in their choice of this region;
- Travelling patterns and means of transportation to the district of Suceava;
- The extent of holiday reservations in the district of Suceava;
- Romanian tourists tendencies concerning possible destinations of travelling in Romania or abroad;
- Tourist attitude towards conditions in accommodation units, services in restaurants, leisure activity services, and other services;
- Total holiday expenses in the district of Suceava; estimation of the extent to which the tourists accept to pay more for higher standards;
- Positive and negative aspects noticed by the tourist during his stay in the district of Suceava;
- Touristic activity budget building;
- Solutions favouring touristic activity in the district of Suceava;
- Probable future evolution of leisure time and living standard as factors potentially influencing the tourists' return to the district of Suceava in the future.

#### **4.5. Establishing the sample size and characteristics**

Establishing the sample size is based on the tourists in all the lodging units in the district of Suceava in 2003. The total number of tourists considered, representing the target group, was divided into layers according to *lodging unit type* and *tourist category*. Thus, according to the data offered by the Statistics Board of Suceava, out of the total of 153,515 tourists that were hosted during 2003, 16.56% were foreign tourists.

It was intended that within the researched sample proportionality should be observed between Romanian and foreign tourists, as well as their distribution on lodging unit types. After this first step where the selection was monitored, the inventory of all

lodging unit types in towns and villages followed so that, by *simple random sampling procedure*, the number of tourists to be interviewed in a lodging unit on a given location should be eventually established.

Mainly due to financial reasons, the sample size could not be enlarged as to diminish the selection error, for which reason the  $\pm 5\%$  *maximum accepted error* was the target of this study in order to ensure *selection representativeness*. Given a guaranteed probability of results of 95% ( $t=1.96$ ) for a 5% error, the sample size was 385.

Thus, 321 Romanian and 64 foreign tourists were interviewed according to *the proportional sampling procedure*. By examining the dispersion of the answers to the question (such as) *Where have you stayed during your holiday in the district of Suceava?*, it was found out that the sample distribution on lodging unit types reflects that of the whole group, which provides the first outline of selection representativeness.

### **5. FINAL CONSIDERATION**

The idea of presenting such kind of a study is to find ways of improving the main function of a sector (in our case the tourist sector). Another important thing good to mention is that the tool presented in this study could be extended from a local level (a local project) to a more global one. In order to complete these studies with the others it is important to take into account the following:

A) The research results could certainly be improved by including further details on tourist motivation and behaviour, preferences and destinations, forms of tourism, and on the real opportunities of the whole population in the district of Suceava to practise tourism. This could be accomplished if the research had a larger sample in view, extracted from the whole population in the district of Suceava. Due to time and budget limitations, the study focused only on the touristic product consumers on location. Thus, *the observation unit* was represented by the tourist in lodging in the district of Suceava at the time of the study.

B) In order to acquire as much information as possible on the touristic sector in the district of Suceava and with a view to emphasising the importance of selective observation such as statistical inquiry to the assessment of the touristic phenomenon, further studies will focus on:

- Research on a representative sample of the population in Suceava district regarding mainly the interest in the touristic activity, the motivation to practise tourism, and identification of the main factors influencing the tourism demand;
- Statistical inquiry on the touristic companies in the district of Suceava in order to identify their policies and strategies aiming to improve tourism;

➤ Statistic inventory of the touristic infrastructure created in order to meet the demands of touristic activities – lodging and catering units, ways and means of transportation, leisure and cure facilities, and auxiliary facilities.

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