

BUKOVINA'S TOURISM PERSPECTIVES – A STRATEGIC APPROACH

Professor Ph.D. Rodica MINCIU

Academy of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Romania

Teaching Assistant Pavel STANCIU

“Ștefan cel Mare” University, Suceava, Romania

Abstract

Assuming that the market is the component that validates the correctness of decisions on the fate and prospects of a phenomenon, tourism development strategy should be based on good knowledge and assessment of the market, on the requirement to achieve a balance between its two correlative categories, which are supply and demand.

Bukovina is among the touristic destinations known and appreciated by tourists. However, the elaboration of a development strategy should emphasize those tourism sustaining forms that can generate a beneficial multiplier effect upon Suceava County's economy. Promoting a mix between cultural - religious, rural, active, and mountain tourism tour, accessible to a diverse range of tourists, must be coupled with general and specific infrastructural consolidation. These elements will be able to create favourable conditions conducive to the development of touristic “focal points” or will favour the development of “circuit - type” touristic programs with international visibility overlapped to the Bukovina's territory, without excluding the possibility of their interconnection with adjacent areas like Maramureș, Neamț and Chernovtsy Oblast.

Main tourism coordinates analysis in the county of Suceava - arrivals, overnight stays, average stay, capacity utilization index etc. - show insufficient concern from local authorities to this field, which argues the need to develop a realistic strategy to approach the issue of tourism development in a modern, complex vision, connected to the latest theoretical results.

Key words: *Development strategy, Disparity analysis, Touristic destination Bukovina, Supply-demand balance, Cultural-religious tourism.*

JEL classification: *L12, L83, Q11.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Globalisation and the great variety of the touristic markets require a strategically approach of the touristic phenomena. On the other hand, the dynamic and vulnerability nature of the third sector (toward climatic changes, exacerbation of the terrorist actions or long economical – financial crisis) make the synthetisation of a strategically universal model extremely difficult to apply both to touristic destinations and stakeholders in hospitality industry.

Heterogeneity of the involved actors in tourism require the existence of a complex organisational touristic activity system that is able to assure the coordinates between diverse governmental institutions and organisations involved in performing touristic services. Besides a central coordination there must be cooperation between the governmental and / or local organism spokesmen interested in the development of the third sector and the managers of the touristic entities in the territory.

Having the *Master Plan for Tourism Development in Romania* as a starting point, the biggest national strategic touristic initiative in the last five years, this study puts forward the emphasise of weak points in Suceava's touristic industry, trying concomitantly to outline strategic directions starting the way which Bukovina can be restructured and

revitalized in order to be able to compete efficiently on world market.

Within this paper the *Gap analysis method* was chosen, a comparative approach to the most important socio-economic activities (touristic) in Suceava County.

The set off of Bukovina area of interest highlighting disparities was done relating to other national destinations, while achieving strategic connections between the aspirations and development opportunities in Suceava County hospitality industry. Such analysis is required if we consider that this territorial unit is part of North-Eastern Development Region, NUTS-II division with the lowest per capita GDP in Romania and the EU.

2. THE MARKET - ELEMENT OF REFERENCE IN THE BACKGROUND OF DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

In the post-industrial economies, Art, Biodiversity, Culture (*ABC*) and traditions are more than simple spatial-temporal elements (Middleton, Fyall et al, 2009, p.15), advantaged in terms of tourism. They are local landmarks that give community sustainability and economic vitality - goals that can be mainly achieved through education,

strategic rigor and social responsibility (Roman, Stanciu et al, 2008).

If the market favours a certain territorial location of goods trade relations based on population density or concentration of capital, on the tourist market these relationships are determined by the concentration or diffusion of touristic heritage (Nedelea, 2003, pp.9-10), namely upon touristic supply.

You do not have downplayed the fact that the borders of touristic markets are made taking into account the distances for tourists to go through (Pori, Airey et al, 2001, p.53; Snake Baron et al, 2003, p.147) for consumption of the touristic product.

According to Maslow's pyramid, tourism demand responds to specific needs, located in the third hierarchical stage, the consumer needs (Minciu, 2005, p. 138), needs to include human aspirations related to accession or to maintain a certain social status.

In parallel, manifestation of demand, purely as social needs, always appears both antithetical and complementary to touristic supply. On the other hand, diversifying potential needs and their awareness, gives supply and demand the character of drivers (Snake, Baron et al, p.147) favourable for dynamic development of touristic market.

The two sides' correlations of the touristic market, supply and demand, contribute in different intensification and diversification of tourism phenomena, but, the degree of interaction goes far beyond the touristic destination.

Based on the above mentioned strategic issues from the perspective of public authorities, Travel and Tourism Industry has an extraordinary ability to generate a multiplier effect in local and national economic plan, so that fully justifies the adoption of a behaviour-oriented management strategy.

Strategic decisions substantiation focuses on knowing how the marketing mix interrelates with causal factors generating touristic demand and various levels of supply.

In such situations, social - touristic polarization around a well founded tourism development strategy may be an undisputed economic differentiator against competing destinations.

3. SPECIFIC PROBLEMS OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

The problem of identifying strategic development priorities, namely the functional levels of the tourism, involves a laborious research that includes measurement of as many exogenous and endogenous factors and indicators. In investment field of such as establishing prioritization among tourism stakeholders level is done with the help of general methodological principles of substantiation efficiency investment projects.

The role of development strategies, as part of tourism strategies, is to efficiently exploit the operational material base, the existing touristic potential and human resource, appealing to powerful marketing and promotional techniques.

Development strategies are those that require certain material and financial conditions conducive to maintain and favour on long term the supply - demand balance on the touristic market. In terms of space, the tourism of a destination development strategy should consider, mainly, issues related to:

- Accurate identification of zonal attractiveness;
- What are the tourism entry "gates";
- Distance from the main emitting areas and interior corridors within the region.

Development objectives may be achievable only in conditions of a strategy to clearly establish alternatives for development of the area and, accordingly, explicitly outlining the main lines of action. Although from the practical point of view the development options of a destination are relatively limited, there are some economic levels (Roman, Stanciu et al, 2008, p.51) - principally investment and innovation - that can alleviate the disparities in the territory, ultimately contributing to increase of the destination's attractiveness.

It is essential that tourism development strategies aimed at achieving not only economic objectives but also to lead to positive developments in terms of social, cultural and environmental point of view. Thus, the influence direction and factors of tactics have to be studied in a statistical and marketing predictive optic to identify ways to attract potential tourists to potential supplies (Nedelea, 2005, p.51), without neglecting some aspects of tourists motivation and optimal exploitation of touristic potential.

Most touristic destinations that base their touristic development on growth strategies have the following distinctive elements:

- Are destinations with a certain reputation, above the national average;
- Benefit by an exceptional touristic potential, judiciously exploited internally, but which through an externally professional promotion can fulfill the conditions required for converting the target area into an international creditable destination;
- Public authorities sustain regional tourism, by allocating large sums to develop the infrastructure and material base both general and specific;
- Show a growth rate comparable to the markets that sell touristic products;
- Local authorities sustain direct investment in both the hospitality industry and related sectors;

- Present the tendency to create demand for its products, rather to adapt to market's requirements;
- Show some flexibility in establishing the price for touristic services;
- Tourism activity focuses, especially, around small and medium businesses but without minimizing though the importance of large chains and touristic corporations, the existence of a considerable number of SMEs on the tourism market implies greater adaptability to demand fluctuations;
- Have a general attitude oriented towards sustainable exploitation of local resources;
- Are based on well defined touristic products susceptible to be enhanced by social innovation's help (Hapenciuc, Stanciu et al, 2009, p.483), specialization and promotion of employees focused on clearly defined touristic segments.

In the elaboration process of tourism development strategy, especially for emerging markets, indicators such as GDP per capita at PPP (Purchasing Power Parity) should be taken into account: population number, growth rate of the economy (Țuclea, Raicu, 2007 p.127), investment in economic activities and income from tourism. Țuclea and Raicu (2007, p. 103) recommend the following policies and models of touristic capitalization of the territory:

- Improving security;
- Promote growth;
- Proactive communication;
- Changes in business strategies;
 - Quantitative and geographic adjustment of the offer;
 - Judicious application of discounts;
 - Formation of strategic alliances.
- Development of unique products;
- Creating added value;
- Provide more experience oriented services;
- Increasing economies of scale and lower prices through concentration.

The essence of strategic planning is reflected in the strategic plan, which together with the tactical plan, are the central instrument for directing and coordinating the effort of administrative strategic management, of destination of guidance ahead of the touristic activity.

In both the tactical and operational level success depends on community capacity strategy to form joint working groups (administrative - tour operators) to implement structured programs at the strategic level to monitor, evaluate and, if circumstance so requires, to rectify inconsistencies found during this period.

Broadly, the strategy of developing tourism destinations must undergo a series of interrelated and also delineated steps (Figure 1).

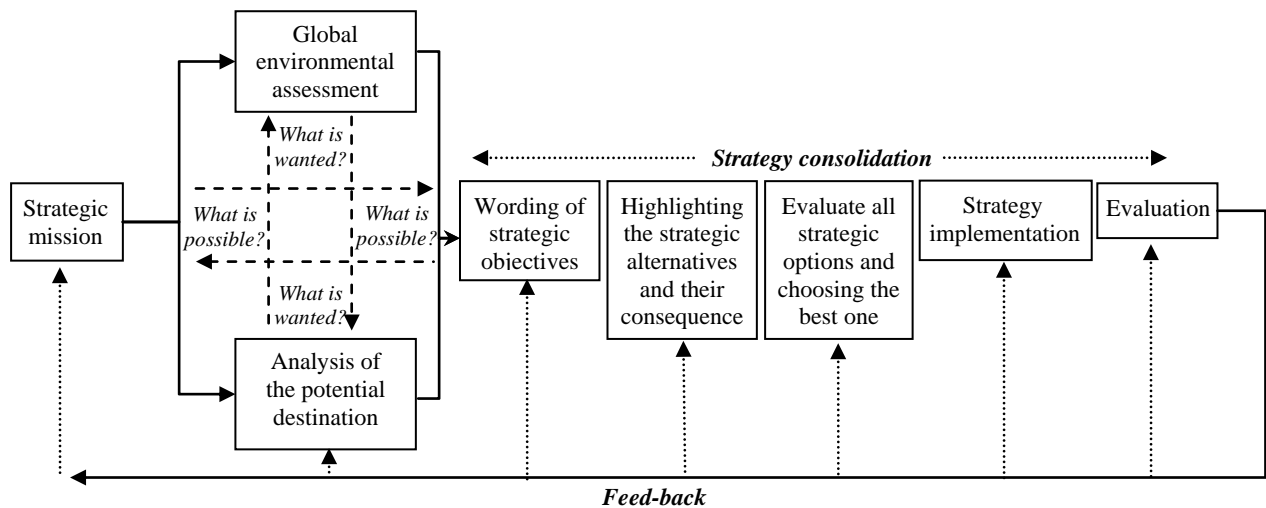


Figure 1 - Strategic management process model

Source: adapted from Ashegian, P., Ebrahimi, B. - *International Business: Economics, Environment, and Strategies*, Harper Collins, 1990 Grand Rapids, p.398-399.

Generic model of consolidation of the strategic management process seeks to promote the conceptualization of the intentions and aspirations concerned, diagnose tourism destination, defining and achieving specific goals, target acquisition position, reducing risks, errors and finding the best solutions to achieve competitive advantages (McDonald, 2008, p.70), likely to contribute to the multilateral development of the tourism sector. Feed-back is

measured by dynamic growth in the number of tourists and thus achieves an optimal level of satisfaction.

Creating superior value through fulfilling or exceeding the expectations of tourists in the touristic product attributes and achieve satisfaction tariff level are essential lines of action to a destination's tourism development strategies.

Timing strategy requires developers to make strategic action plan in line with the average length of

stay, average number of nights, the time difference and commuting between the transmitting zone and receiving one. Spatio-temporal coordinates have significant effects on the number of tourists and in conjunction with other motivational factors determine defining characteristics of the destination: the typology (transitory or staying) and seasonality; two touristic disturbing vectors that can be alleviated by designing a touristic development strategy based on the touristic supply.

4. STRATEGIC BENCHMARKING DEVELOPMENT OF BUKOVINA'S TOURISM

Although the touristic potential of Bukovina is widely accepted as being an exception one, to the analytical approach of tourism phenomenon lacks a clearly defined strategic vision to support sustainable development in the region. Bukovina, like many other established touristic destinations in the national plan is still not guiding by principles and courses of action required by a laborious strategy but only on a structured overview of the potential.

In recent years a series of research and statistical analysis focused on the study of Bukovina's tourism have been done, (Hapenciuc, 2003; Stanciu, 2006, Roman, Stanciu et al, 2008; Stanciu, Hapenciuc, 2009; Bouaru, 2009; Hapenciuc, Condratov et al, 2009, pp.81-84) in parallel with presentation materials of potential, or attempts to systematize some tourism development strategies, made or promoted by local authorities.

Even if they have made some progress in this regard, we conclude that a well-founded elaboration of a tourism development strategy in the county of Suceava is appropriate, especially given that the number of tourists visiting the north of Romania has seen a slight rebound, a decrease caused mainly by the discomfort made by the following factors: the poor state of access roads in the last decade (Roman, Stanciu et al, 2008, p.51) generalized reduction - amid deepening economic crisis - the income from the public system, some unprofessional attempts to strengthen the regional brand, action unsupported by a representative logo and, last but not least, the international superficial promotion of Bukovina's touristic area.

In the past 20 years, Bukovina touristic destination has gained a certain national notoriety but became partially known international, especially due to the spiritual aura determined by the wide representation of places of worship in the territory of different religious denominations (Orthodox, Orthodox old rite, Roman Catholic, and Mosaic Religion) buildings which still retains unaltered ecumenical rituals, traditions and religious customs.

To build a picture of attractive force on the importance of the territory known as Bukovina must be underlined: the natural beauty, the eight religious

buildings owned by the International UNESCO (UNESCO, 2010): Church of Arbore, Humor Monastery, Moldovița Monastery, Church Pătrăuți, Probota Monastery, Voroneț Monastery, Monastery of St. John the New of Suceava, Sucevița Monastery; also the Roman Catholic Church Cacica and the Great Temple of Rădăuți - one of the most impressive Jewish cult place of worship in Central and Eastern Europe.

Starting with these basic issues with certain local value, an integrated analysis of Bukovina's tourism supply and demand creates the premises of a partial diagnose of the touristic market and favours the outlining of the main strategic directions from the gap analysis .

In the touristic market research an important element assigns to the analysis of economic disparities that have been foreshadowed and maintained between destinations. Generalizing, we can estimate that the gap appears, first, as disparities - differences between regions in western European countries with a tradition of tourism and touristic areas in emerging countries such as Romania or Bulgaria.

It is interesting to note that more and more Romanian's tourism in recent years has been compared with the tourism of Bulgaria. Reality shows that the gap between national and European tourism, did not appear to be reduced, but on the contrary, they know a phenomenon of ingravescence, even when we report to the Bulgarian tourism (WTTC, 2009). In these circumstances, knowledge of inter-regional disparities becomes an essential indicator in developing and implementing corrective measures to revitalize the Romanian destinations.

Unfortunately, Bukovina makes no discordant note. Although it is a national reference destination for tourism, however, recent years have been characterized by a reduction in touristic flows into Bukovina.

Botten (2009, pp.44-46) and Van der Merwe, Ferreira and Van Niekerk (2008) consider the method to the diagnostic gap one of the analyse pillars, arguing that the idea by analysing the current situation (and results) always represents the base of the future strategic objectives.

Gap analysis aims at the following indicators (Zinovia, 2006, p.56):

- Aspirations specific for the destination (**Ai**);
- Touristic development opportunities (**Ei**);
- Gaps between aspirations and opportunities of touristic development (**Di**);
- Recommendations to eliminate disparities (**Ri**).

Based on SWOT analysis of tourism in Bukovina (Nedelea, 2003, p.220) and correlating this information with Development and Promotion of Tourism Strategy in the County of Suceava (Suceava's County Council, 2005) and the gaps' theory principles we have been able to identify six acting directions, found in below:

A_1 – Positioning among the top five touristic destinations in Romania.

E_1 – According to The National Tourism Development Master Plan 2007-2026 (MDRL, 2007, p.170), the main touristic regions of Romania are: the Black Sea shore, Danube Delta, Bucharest, Transylvania, Bukovina and Maramureş, without making a strict hierarchical delimitation.

Relying on the data included in the national strategy for tourism development (MDRL, 2007, p.170), Bukovina belongs to those of major national touristic destinations; however, Bukovina's possibility to be included in first five Romanian touristic destinations is approximately 50 - 70%. The main destination with which it will compete to occupy the 5th position is the area of Maramureş.

Table 1 - National positioning: identified gaps and recommendations

D_1	R_1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bukovina is currently a representative of the national touristic destinations, but in the absence of studies on this subject it is difficult to prove its location in the top 5 destinations in Romania; - Locally, in terms of rural tourism and preserving traditions (including those of a religious nature), Bukovina strongly competes with Maramureş; - Positioning the first 5 national destinations assumes a diversified material base, specialized personnel and enhance of optimal conditions for carrying out a quality tourism, elements to which Bukovina is much behind other destinations, such as Transylvania, Bucharest, the Black Sea; - International promotion of the destination is lower compared to that undertaken on behalf of other destinations such as: Sibiu, Sighişoara or Braşov area - Bran in Transylvania or Peleş - Sinaia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact of touristic studies are required, for identifying the touristic motivations and preferences of interest, of dividing the main touristic areas transmitters, of identification of representative touristic flows; - Comparative analysis is needed to avoid competition and repositioning between tourism destinations on distinct market niches; - Identification of measures that are to be taken and highlighting opportunities to encourage two-way flows between sending and receiving areas, on seasonal principle and local specificity; - Strengthening regional brand: Bukovina and local brands: Suceava, Suceviţa Vatra Dornei, Voroneţ, Gura Humorului, Marginea; - Enhance the promotion of Bukovina touristic destination on internationally; - Establishing firm contacts (partnerships) of collaboration with traditional established touristic areas or traditional flow generators touristic countries (Germany, Italy, Scandinavia).

A_2 - Identifying Bukovina as the largest cultural and religious tourism destination in Romania.

E_2 - Bukovina chances to become in the next 5-10 years the most important cultural-religious touristic destination is estimated at around 75%. Other touristic destinations which can target the same objective are:

Maramureş, Neamţ and possibly northern Oltenia (Horezu Area - Arnota - Bistriţa). The notoriety that Bukovina has gained on this market niche gives, at least for now, a leadership status because the area represents the highest concentration of important religious buildings per km² in the country.

Table 2 - Competitive advantage capitalization: gaps identified and recommendations

D_2	R_2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inconsistency of thematic routes to capitalize the potential of cultural-religious potential, vaguely defined in time and space; - Bukovina monasteries tour has the many facets of a modern "pilgrimage", superficial and inadequate in conjunction with its ritual and religious dogma; - Circuits of cultural and religious tourism usually include a profusion of sights, imposing a exhausting rhythm this way, (tired) for the tourist; - Cultural and religious tourism has in general a spontaneous disorganized and discouraged character because of the lack of guides who are specialized in religious tourism; - Cultural and religious tourism circuits in Bukovina are seasonal and involve a certain degree of discomfort for priests, monks, nuns and true pilgrims; - Archdiocese of Suceava and Radăuţi is reluctant when it comes to the increasing touristic flows; - There is some frustration of the Archdiocese of Suceava and Radăuţi regarding the potential religious anthropogenic, linked to the non-involvement of public authorities to fund restoration and preservation of the Church Fund. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Start of roundtables with key stakeholders involved: representatives of the County Council, the Tourism Minister, municipalities, tourism agencies, the Archdiocese of academic specialists and specialized tour guides; - Organization of study-tour sites in order to identify the best cultural and religious tours; - Training specialized guides in cultural and religious tourism; - Elaborating a code of conduct and best practices in religious tourism; - Reducing touristic seasonality by designing religious touristic tours dedicated to-related religious themes, religious holidays, other holidays or encouraging other pilgrimage; - A more intense involvement of tourism stakeholders in protecting and preserving the natural landscape murals in the churches; - Redirecting a share in the revenue generated from tourism for conservation and rehabilitation of places of worship; - Regular consultation with church forum and joint management of certain religious touristic routes with an ecumenical character.

A_3 - Guidance for the touristic supply towards international markets too.

E_3 - Given the current economic context and given the relatively limited possibilities of funding is unlikely to divert Bukovina touristic supply mainly to

the international tourism market. Bukovina's probability to become in perspective of next 5-10 years, an attractive touristic destination worldwide is about 15-25%.

Table 3 - International visibility: identified gaps and recommendations

D_3	R_3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bukovina is par excellence, a destination for Romanian tourists; - At least for now, Bukovina may not issue a claim to be an internationally competitive touristic destination; - Although this area benefits of a great tourist potential, some forms of touristic, like health tourism, mountain tourism, or the active tourism are insufficiently developed and poorly capitalized; - At regional level is not known which are exactly the main lines of action, mainly insisting on rural tourism, a tourism form promoted by other coastal or international destinations also. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of infrastructure and creating favourable conditions for practicing winter tourism spa, climate (ozone in the air at Solca, salt Cacica, wide extension of forest), mountain and active; - Establishing partnerships with representatives of touristic destinations with similar profile (Maramureş Chernivtsi region, Tirol - Austria, Slovakia, Alsace, etc.); - Orientation towards tourism markets such as Italy, Spain, Portugal where a large number of Bukovina's Romanian work, which can facilitate the shaping of reverse flow (foreigners that can escape into the summer season in touristic areas with a high degree of thermal comfort); - Encouraging Spa tourism and Bukovina's spa among European pensioners as an alternative to already established international destinations: Baden-Baden, Karlovy Vary, Spa; - Promoting an active tourism for categories of tourists interested in adventure (youth in general, motorcyclists, trekkers).

Launch of the Regional Investment Forum, September 2008, of the "Pilgrim in Bukovina" project, reiterating it in 2009 and its partial implementation by the County Council in 2010 was hailed as a positive strategic initiative. Consequently, promotion of namesake touristic product titled Tourism Fair in Vienna and declared support for Mrs. Martin Eichtinger - Austrian Ambassador to Romania - are likely to create premises for future collaboration in perspective that can build a tourism partnership between Romania and Austria.

At least for now, it is premature to say that Bukovina will be able to attract a significant number of Austrian and German tourists, but policy of small steps is favoured by the relationship line (path) too, between the historic Northern Bukovina and Austria. Pragmatically speaking, Bukovina's chance appears to be redirecting to the European market supply, speculating and taking advantage of weaknesses in other international destinations, more rigid in relation

to tourism demand. Relocation of European touristic flows to the north of Romania is possible if differentiation strategies are targeted by promoting attractive prices (Porter, 2006) for their own touristic products. In this sense, the most vulnerable destinations seem to be Alsace-Lorraine, Bavaria, Piedmont, Tirol, French Alps.

A_4 - The creation of vertically integrated packages that would capitalize at the highest level the existing natural and human potential.

E_4 - According o Nedelea's and the County Council undertaken studies (Nedelea, 2003, p.220; Suceava's County Council, 2005), Bukovina is considered primarily a transit zone, even if it is included in 80-90% of touristic circuits in Romania. This is due to the fact that locally there is a limited diversification of touristic programs, mainly focused around cultural and religious tourism.

Table 4 - Vertical touristic integration, identified gaps and recommendations

D_4	R_4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Touristic resources are dispersed in the territory, which does not encourage trips longer than 2-3 days; - Touristic packages consist mainly of 1-2 basic services and occasionally additional services are promoted; - Lack of polyvalent touristic concentration that provides "in situ diversity", according to the tourist's interest; - Lack of tourists to optate for a wide range of touristic services without travel a distance of less than 20 km. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Are required to be designed and customized services to encourage touristic stays of 5-7 days and not just touristic circuit type products. In this respect, resort towns Gura Humorului (with area Ariniş: ski, polyvalent room, Olympic swimming, Nordic walking trail opportunities for cultural and religious tourism, etc.) and Vatra Dornei (slope, trail Nordic walking, tourism and cultural opportunities), are advantaged, and have made progress in this direction; - Diversifying the touristic supply and move on from the promotion of basic services (transport - accommodation, tour of the monasteries - accommodation, accommodation - meals - and spa treatments) to integrated touristic products; while the international trend is to integrate in touristic package a wide range of optional services as: city-breaks, sauna, spa, wellness, outdoor walks, outdoor sports etc..

One of the major goals of future tourism development strategy in Suceava County must be channelled towards increasing the length of stay of tourists in the area, from 2.1 to 2.4 days now (INS, 2009) at initially 3-5 days, following on long-term, average length of stay in Bukovina to be extended to 5-7 days.

To achieve this goal should be encouraged concentration and diversification of touristic activities - including Public-Private Partnerships (PPP). Without support and direct involvement of public authorities Suceava is impossible to develop integrated touristic products capable of providing to tourists long stay vacations type longer than four days.

In the long run, the polarization of touristic activities in tourism resorts around Vatra Dornei and Gura Humorului - ongoing trend of crystallization - creates the potential to enhance type-stay touristic products offering diverse opportunities for leisure for tourists. Vertically integrated tourism development bases in addition to providing spa - climate treatment, entertainment, winter sports and active tourism, or tour of the monastery has a chance of succeed at a rate of 40-50%.

A₅ - Reinforcing a cross-border touristic destination Suceava - Chernivtsi oblast.

E₅ - Although adequate such an initiative is timely hard to put into practice because of the reluctance with which it is seen by the Ukrainian authorities. Chances of success are below 10%.

In principle, this strategic goal should be to focus on historical development, common socio-cultural but this very element sluggish strengthening of a border destination, which will also asset sufficient advantages to compete on an equal footing with destinations such as Transylvania, Meteora (Greece) or even Switzerland.

Chernivtsi Oblast (province partially identified with the northern historical part of Bukovina) receive input from namesake city, cosmopolitan urban centre

with compelling facets of interest - real architectural jewel of the former Habsburg crown. In terms of touristic city, Chernivtsi is nationally comparable with Braşov and Sibiu national and at regional level, architecturally speaking, has features in common with cities such as Budapest, Krakow and Prague.

Suceava may assign only part of the valences of a large urban centre of tourism, its limit being the result of nearly 50 years of Marxist - Leninist systematization and industrialization carried to extremes by the Ceauşescu regime. The mere enunciation of some of the problems facing the most important city in Bukovina is likely to reinforce the previous statement:

- Architectural chaos;
- Lack of the old civic centre;
- Heavy traffic with frequent traffic jams;
- The city is served by a small airport that does not allow a large influx of tourists.

In relation to the Chernivtsi city has though the advantage of better positioning at the intersection of two European highways - E85 and E57 and offers easy accessibility to the area. And last but not least, historically speaking, Suceava was for centuries the capital of the Romanian Region of Moldova.

Ukrainian authorities' reluctance does not allow, at least for now, although the development of joint touristic packages, although marketable mixed touristic products would provide tremendous opportunities for economic development of the area. The two border regions: Suceava and Chernivtsi oblasts can not grow in terms of tourism without international cooperation and common promoting. In the event of a touristic cooperation, the attractiveness of cross-border regions would clearly benefit by induced synergistic nature and hence would be able to attract a greater number of tourists, including from ex-soviet space.

Table 5 – Bukovina’s transformation into a -border touristic destination

<i>D₅</i>	<i>R₅</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bukovina is par excellence a border destination but the region's touristic development is restricted by geopolitical restrictions caused by the reluctance of the Ukrainian authorities; - Current conditions in Bukovina tourism is restricted by circumscription of territorial zones in the county of Suceava, de facto situation in association with relatively small area does not provide sufficient recreational alternatives; - There is not an urban centre that would constitute a real economic input touristic gate to Bukovina; - Tourism in Bukovina is strongly dependent on the ring road Suceava - Gura Humorului - Câmpulung Moldovenesc - Suceviţa - Marginea - Suceava. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of the Romanian - Ukrainian joint tours to exploit the touristic potential offered, complementary to Chernivtsi region and Suceava County; - Promotion of a second touristic ring positioned somewhat peripheral to border tourism region Suceava - Chernivtsi: Suceava (or Botoşani) - Dolhasca - Fălticeni - Târgu Neamţ - Vatra Dornei - Cârlibaba - Sighetul Marmăţiei - Rakhiv - Chernivtsi - Siret - Suceava (or Botoşani) to exploit more efficiently the potential of natural and anthropogenic marginal area. Starting from this ring sketching a variety of routes versions is possible, including the interference between the two rings; - Initiation of joint touristic partnerships with regional authorities Chernivtsi, Ivano-Frankivsk, Transcarpathia (Ukraine) and the counties of Maramureş, Neamţ and Botoşani (Romania) for economic development and creating a touristic common macroregion “<i>Bukovina - Maramureş</i>” or “<i>Transcarpathia</i>” internationally competitive.

Given those starting point directions identified by the method of gaps analysis, true strategic anchor for touristic development in Bukovina, and linking with specific attributes like some places of hospitality host (hosts), the quality of touristic services of interest or touristic supply diversity becomes evident that the adoption of development strategies that integrate these elements is appropriate and absolutely necessary.

The next step is identifying and best capitalization of destination's advantages, so that profiled in the hospitality industry operators in Bukovina to be able to enjoy a competitive advantage on the type of promoted touristic product as compared to competing units from areas with similar orientation.

Porter and Kramer (2006, pp.78-92) claim that by way of obtaining competitive advantage, stakeholder power is given by one of the following factors: cost advantage, differentiation or focus. The factors set out by Porter and Kramer as definitive in entrepreneurship can be transposed and customized for touristic destinations, including Bukovina. Extrapolating, one can summarize the three possible types of generic strategies for developing tourism in Bukovina: by attractive prices for touristic products of interest, by the distinction in relation to competition and by focusing on niche items.

Focusing exclusively on the promotion and practice of intensive cultural and religious tourism in Bukovina home would require a certain amount of risk. If at first glance an ecclesiastical culture seems accessible to the general public and sufficiently attractive to tourists, this very approach is really just the most risky, now when religion becomes increasingly a tourist element niche with a certain dose of taboo limits.

Suceava's tourism as a counterargument relies on the multicultural and polyvalent of the region where religion (Orthodoxy, Roman Catholicism, Mosaic, Pentecostal worship, etc.) has always represented a bridge to more of their own culture. There must not be omitted the fact that, in Bukovina, religious tourism has more facets of a modern pilgrimage, increasingly limited only to simple silence for a few minutes in a place of worship rather than on participation in the celebration of religious act (Mass). Regarding to foreign tourists, they aim especially to capturing ecclesiastical connotations images and seem to be much more interested in the mystical aura of the cult created around the place of worship. Still, an intensive cultural and religious tourism practice based on the touristic flow can lead to clearly defined, ultimately, a secularization of monastic life. So, from here bursts the reluctance, perhaps natural, of the religious forums.

Cultural and religious tourism has the merit of representing competitive advantage in itself only if Bukovina will be able to capitalize on the three elements that distinguish it from the competition: the extraordinary beauty of churches - some of them included in the UNESCO heritage - the first identified

destination for Romanian's religious option for Mass of the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and, and dogmatic diversity and religious harmony typical of this area.

Promoting forms of tourism that encourages body toning - including: spa tourism, fresh air cure (ozoned), the microclimate of salt recovery, active tourism, hiking and mountain tourism - makes the basis of Bukovina's tourism. The distinct note from other potential destinations with somehow similar potential results from alternative cultural and religious tourism, of toning the spirit that defines the destination. We conclude by saying that the strategic principle that Bukovina tourism should be guided is, "*and in the end ... the house specialty*", highlighting here the adjacent role, but essential, of cultural - religious tourism in defining the touristic product Bukovina.

5. CONCLUSIONS

Any destination that wants to be competitive on the touristic market must rely on a tourism strategy based on analysis of the relationship between supply and demand for tourism, through the coercive interdependent control ways, that aims the achievement, retention or recovery of steady state. The tendency to permanent supply-demand dual system - essentially depends on a very wide range of factors that have the purpose to ensure synergy of touristic market.

In most cases, choosing the best strategy turns out to be one of the most difficult management decisions.

The plight faced by Romanian tourism requires the urgent adoption of measures designed to build dynamic efficient capitalization, but in a sustainable position, the great potential we have. The purpose of this initiative should result in identifying those items that may constitute a competitive advantage over competitors.

Unfortunately, as has happened nationally, the touristic supply of Bukovina has not changed very much over the past 20 years, becoming uncompetitive in relation to the requirements of European tourism demand and touristic products of similar value in the international market. We appreciate that Bukovina is in lack of consistency and cohesion of renowned destinations as promotion is done inconsistently and somewhat chaotic, due to more vaguely defined strategic directions.

It becomes obvious that the adoption of a development strategy based on identifying and capitalising as efficiently as possible of the used items that may constitute a competitive advantage related to competing destinations are required to be treated with priority. Suceava County's hospitality industry must find optimal equilibrium level by combining classical with modern in forms of travel, without neglecting the

deep cultural and religious connotations that should focus upon the Bukovina's tourism. Without religious-cultural tourism destination and this destination cannot aspire to European touristic region status.

In tertiary economy, recreation through tourism, heritage and culture are more than just

vibrant elements of modern economy. They are vital symbols for the local community providing at the same time a sustainable quality of life and hence education - an essential pillar in the direction of post-crisis economic recovery.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Ashegian, P., Ebrahimi, B. (1990) *International Business: Economics, Environment, and Strategies*, Harper Collins Publishers, pp. 398-399.
2. Botten, N. (2009) *CIMA Revision Cards Enterprise Strategy*, Linacre House, Jordan Hill, Elsevier, Oxford.
3. Bouaru, C.P. (2009) *Strategii de dezvoltare a turismului în Bucovina*, Editura Universitară, București.
4. Cooper, C., Fletcher, J., Fyall, A., Gilbert, D., Wanhill, S. (2008) *Tourism principles and practice*, (4th edn.), FT Prentice Hall.
5. Dwyer, L., Edwards, D., Mistilis, N., Roman, C., Scott, N. (2009) *Destination and Enterprise Management for a Tourism Future*, Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre, Tourism Management, Volume 30, Issue 1, pp.63-74.
6. Evans, N. Campbell, D., Stonehouse, G. (2003) *Strategic management for travel and tourism*, Elsevier Butterworth Heinemann.
7. Hapenciuc, V. (2003) *Statistical research in tourism - A study on the touristic phenomenon in the district of Suceava*, Editura Zoloti Litavry, Chernivtsi, Ukraine.
8. Hapenciuc, V., Condratov, I., Stanciu, P., Bejinaru, R. (2009). *The Use of Internet for Touristic Informing – Case Study Bukovina*, Special Number of Journal of tourism - studies and research in tourism, Tourism and durable development - Fascicle, Year 2009, Suceava University Press, pp. 81- 84.
9. Hapenciuc, V., Stanciu, P., Condratov, I., Nistoreanu, P. (2009) *Relaunching of Romania's Tourism - the Controversy of Safe Tourism During Global Economic Crisis*, Journal of tourism - studies and research in tourism, year 4, no.7, Suceava University Press, pp.47-55.
10. Holloway, J.C., Taylor, N. (2006) *The business of tourism*, (7th edn.). Harlow, Prentice Hall, UK.
11. Jobber, D. (2009) *Principles and practice of marketing*, (6th edn.). McGraw-Hill, London.
12. McDonald, M. (2008) *Malcolm McDonald on Marketing Planning: Understanding Marketing Plans and Strategy*, Kogan Page Limited, London, UK.
13. Middleton, V.T.C., Fyall, A., Morgan, M., Ranchhod, A. (2009) *Marketing in Travel and Tourism*, (4th edn.), Linacre House, Jordan Hill, Oxford, UK, pp.12-15.
14. Minciu, R. (2005) *Economia turismului*, Editura Uranus, București.
15. Nedelea, A. (2003). *Piața turistică*, Editura Didactică și Pedagogică RA, București.
16. Nedelea A. (2005) *The Characteristics and Structure of the Tourism Market*, Amfiteatru Economic, no.18, p.51.
17. Nedelea, A. (2003) *Politici de marketing*, Editura Economică, București, p.220.
18. Poria, Y., Airey, D., Butler, R. (2001) *Challenging the present approach to heritage tourism: Is tourism to heritage places heritage tourism?*, Tourism Review, Vol. 56, Issue: 1/2, pp. 51-53, Publisher: MCB UP Ltd.
19. Porter, M.E., Kramer, M.R. (2006) *Strategy and Society: The Link between Competitive Advantage and Corporate Social Responsibility*, Harvard Business Review, December 2006, pp.78-92.
20. Roman, C., Stanciu, P., Condratov, I. (2008) *Human Factor in Sustainable Tourism Between Ethics and Social Responsibility*, Amfiteatru Economic Journal, year 10, no.23, pp.136-141.
21. Roman, C., Stanciu, P., Hapenciuc, V. (2008) *Different Conceptual Perceptions Regarding Tourism Developing Strategies in Bukovina and Lapland*, Zoloti Lytavry Cernivtsi, Ukraine.
22. Snak, O., Baron, P., Neacșu, N. (2003) *Economia turismului*, Editura Expert, București.
23. Stanciu, P. (2006) *Studiul pensiunilor turistice din județul Suceava*, Turismul la începutul mileniului III - Provocări și tendințe, Editura Sedcom Libris Iași.
24. Stanciu, P., Hapenciuc, V. (2009) *Reliability and Flexibility in the Quality Management of Tourism Products*, Amfiteatru Economic Journal, no.26/2009, pp.482-494, www.amfiteatruconomic.ro/temp/Article_889.pdf.
25. Țuclea, C., Raicu, R.E. (2007) *Management strategic în turism-servicii. Exerciții și studii de caz*, Editura Uranus, București, p.127.
26. Van der Merwe, J.H., Ferreira, S.L.A., Van Niekerk, A. (2008) *A Spatial Gap-Analysis of Tourism Development Opportunity in the Western Cape Province*, Report, May 2008, p.109, Centre for

- Geographical Analysis, Stellenbosch University, last accesad from http://www.tourismlangebaan.co.za/ctru/action/media/downloadFile?media_fileid=12939 my on 15.10.2010.
27. Zinovia, A. (2006) *Elaborarea strategiei de dezvoltare a întreprinderii în baza conceptului de marketing*, doctoral thesis, Academy of Economic Studies of Moldova, Chişinău, 2006, p.8.
28. *** (2009) *Breviarul Turistic al Judeţului Suceava*, Institutul Naţional de Statistică (INS), Suceava.
29. *** (2007) *Master Planul pentru Dezvoltarea Turismului National 2007 – 2026*, Partea a II-a, last accesad from <http://www.mdr.ro/turism/studii---strategii>, Ministerul Dezvoltării Regionale şi Turismului (MDRL) my on 15.09.2010.
30. *** (2004) *Strategia de dezvoltare a oraşului Vatra Dornei*, Primăria Vatra Dornei, last accesad from <http://www.vatra-dornei.ro/modules.php?name=Content&pa=showpage&pid=23>, my on 01.10.2010.
31. *** (2005) *Strategia de dezvoltare şi promovare a turismului în judeţul Suceava*, Consiliul Judeţean Suceava, last accesad from http://www.turisminbucovina.ro/studii/strategie_turism_completa.pdf my on 15.10.2010, p.29.
32. *** (2009) *Travel & Tourism Economic Impact: Romania*, WTTC, last accesad from <http://www.wttc.org/bin/pdf/temp/romania.html>, my on 17.10.2010.
33. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/598/documents/>, UNESCO, last accesad on 01.10.2010.
34. http://www.primariagh.ro/?page_id=998, last accesad on 01.10.2010.