

TOURISM PERSPECTIVES OF THE ROMANIAN ECONOMY

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Abstract

The world economy, as an assembly of national economies, develops in terms of quality and quantity due to each national complex economy, which maintain its own characteristics. This means that in terms of tourism, Romanian economy can make its contribution to the present and future structural changes of the global social-economic system of our planet. The achievement of this goal involves the implementation of a sustainable approach of the development of tourism, which are comprised in a long-term program.

Key words: *tourism, sustainable tourism, tourism policy*

JEL classification: L83, L84

According to specialized analysts, regarding 2030, namely in the current and next decade, the estimates reveal a great potential for the future growth of the tourism. Therefore, the secretary general of World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Taleb Rifai declared in his report at the 19th conference of the United Nations World Tourism Organization of 11th December, that: ‘...traditional destinations as well as new destinations may take advantage of this new trend and opportunity, if they offer good conditions and impose adequate policies regarding economic environment, infrastructure, facilities, marketing and human resources.’ (Taleb Rifai, 2011) This growth offers great opportunities for tourism, and there are some extra responsibilities for the development of economic growth, social progress and sustainable environment.

Generally speaking, tourism is a branch of industry, with a great development potential concerning the growth of the number of visitors as well as the decrease of unemployment and the attraction of foreign capital. (www.bed-and-breakfast.ro/pdf/masterplan)

However, our tourism was affected until last decade because of the lack of general view, concerning the orientation and control of its current system, especially in the future.

Understanding this reality, Romanian Government concluded that there is a great need of a Master Plan for the development of tourism, in order to establish a new sustainable approach of the development of tourism. Therefore, the important measures which Romania should take in order to develop tourism, are *providing facilities* of products and services so as to fulfill the visitor’s expectations, *the staff training* so as they offer quality services and nevertheless, *the development of infrastructure* so as to support all these facilities.

Eventually, the Master Plan was elaborated by a team of experts of the World Tourism Organization along with their colleagues from Romania, that are working for the Romanian Government. This intends to promote the principles of the sustainable development of tourism as it is defined by the World Tourism Organization: ‘*The sustainable development of tourism fulfills the current demands of the tourists and the touristic areas and protects and grows the future development opportunities. The result is considered to be the management of all*

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resources, so as the economic, social and aesthetic needs are fulfilled and the cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and bioclimate are maintained. (www.infotravelromania.ro/interviul27_mster_plan_turism.html)

The aim of this document is to transform our country in a touristic destination providing his cultural and natural heritage being in concordance with the demands of the European Union concerning the providing of services and products until 2013. Furthermore, it aims to support a sustainable development of tourism in a superior rhythm of development unlike other tourism destinations in Europe. The Master Plan for the national tourism in Romania consists of a serie of target-aims which intend to achieve during 2007-2026 and also it estimates the contribution which tourism has on the national GDP and at the level of central and local authorities; these information can be accessed by students, researchers and field practitioners by looking at the details of the structure of the project.

The information regarding the arrival of foreign visitors consist of visitor-tourists (the ones that stay at least one night), as well as the visitor-campers (the ones that come daily). In terms of overnight stays at the registered accommodation, these also include foreign visitors, as well as Romanian visitors, out of whom many might stay in more than one unit. It is estimated that foreign visitor arrivals will increase 25 times until 2026, reaching 15.485 visitors. This represents an average annual growth of 4,8%, twice as much as the estimation of the World Tourism Organization, regarding the output flows of tourists from the Vision for 2020 regarding the international trends and identified opportunities in Romania. The information in the following table is important because it shows the target-objectives of foreign tourists in Romania.

Table 1.1.: Target-goals regarding the arrivals of foreign visitors in Romania, by source (country) in 2006-2026

| Origin | 2006 Base (thousand) | 2011 (thousand) | Growth 2006-11 % annual | 2016 (thousand) | Growth 2011-16 % annual | 2021 (thousand) | Growth 2016-21 % annual | 2026 (thousand) | Growth 2021-26 % annual |
|---------------|----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| EU | 2803 | 3777 | +6,15 | 4990 | +5,73 | 6569 | +5,65 | 8642 | +5,64 |
| -C/E | 1547 | 1974 | -5,0 | 2402 | +4,0 | 2852 | +3,5 | 3307 | +3,0 |
| -N | 544 | 781 | +7,5 | 1121 | +7,5 | 1610 | +7,5 | 2311 | +7,5 |
| -M/S | 611 | 877 | +7,5 | 1259 | +7,5 | 1808 | +7,5 | 2595 | +7,5 |
| -V | 101 | 145 | +7,5 | 208 | +7,5 | 299 | +7,5 | 429 | +7,5 |
| Europ Non-EU | 2886 | 3428 | +3,5 | 4022 | +3,25 | 4663 | +3,0 | 5340 | +2,75 |
| North America | 164 | 235 | +7,5 | 337 | +7,5 | 484 | +7,5 | 695 | +7,5 |
| Israel | 62 | 89 | +7,5 | 128 | +7,5 | 184 | +7,5 | 263 | +7,5 |
| Japan | 14 | 23 | +10,0 | 37 | +10,0 | 60 | +10,0 | 86 | +7,5 |
| Other | 108 | 155 | +7,5 | 222 | +7,5 | 319 | +7,5 | 459 | +7,5 |
| Total | 6037 | 7707 | +5,0 | 9736 | +4,8 | 12279 | +4,75 | 15485 | +4,75 |

Source: The estimation of the Master Plan regarding the information of the arrival of the foreign visitors in Romania.

Analysing the information in the tabel, we may observe that for the countries belonging to the European Union and outside Europe, the request is bigger than for the countries which do not belong to the European Union. Therefore, regarding the first two country categories, the growth will be of aproximately 1,5%, respectively 7.5% a year, whereas in the non-european countries this growth will be just 3.1%. This information consists of all the arrivals, as well as the daily and stay tourists. The basis of these target-objectives is the analysis of the potential of the market from the different reports of the market in 2006 by different research centers in 14 generating countries. Definetly the information regarding the analized period, must be changed due to the negative impact of the economic crisis from the last years. The information in chart 1.2. is essential in this case, even for a short period of time, regarding romanian and foreign tourists, that are staying in tourist accommodation with this function, by type of establishment.

According to this information in the chart, during these three years, the number of romanian and foreign tourists, that stayed in the accommodation facilities , decreased. This was due to , on one hand, the negative impact of the economic crisis and on the other hand, due to the Romanian tourists emphasized preference to stay during their trips at relatives or friends (aprox. 66,6%). However, according to National Institute of Statistics Romania, the number of touristic trips made by the Romanian citizens during the year 2011 was of 13.480,5 , an increase with 12,6% compared with 2010. Furthermore, during the first trimester of 2012, compared with the same period of the former year, the arrivals as well as the staying in the touristic accommodation, grew by 19% due to the beginning of the revival of the touristic activity in our country.

Table 1.2.: The arrivals of foreign and Romanian tourists, in the accommodation structures

| Types of structures | Number of tourists | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 |
| Hotels | 5250988 | 4547718 | 4594146 | 5348673 |
| Motels | 272485 | 202700 | 204513 | 240327 |
| Touristic inn | 1877 | 914 | 638 | 1000 |
| Hostel | 125528 | 107828 | 104364 | 127000 |
| Chalet | 261792 | 233177 | 212848 | 213636 |
| Bungalow | 22810 | 26204 | 14410 | 14364 |
| Cottages | 107110 | 86961 | 73992 | 80000 |
| Holiday village | 3815 | 1968 | 1757 | 2000 |
| Camping | 113104 | 84789 | 84100 | 76206 |
| Student camps | 98004 | 84655 | 65741 | 66000 |
| Tour stop | 12442 | 10399 | 8952 | 11000 |
| Pension | 478058 | 412162 | 406632 | 480000 |
| Agrotouristic pension | 357617 | 325686 | 289923 | 361000 |
| Tourist houses | 10001 | 6918 | 1981 | 1794 |
| Ship accommodation | 9676 | 9056 | 8670 | 9000 |
| Total | 7125307 | 6141135 | 6072757 | 7032000 |

Source: Statistical Yearbook of Romania, 2011 and 2012, processed data.

