

- SECTION MARKETING AND TOURISM -

THE TOURISM PERFORMANCES AT REGIONAL LEVEL IN ROMANIA

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Abstract

After joining the EU, Romania tried to answer the adherence requirements, establishing its cohesion politics basis, in the 8 development regions, each of these having a certain specific task and a development potential which must be capitalized.

In this research paper the evolution of tourism is analyzed at regional level and especially in the South East region, during 1990-2014.

As a whole, Romania has an important tourist potential, a large interest domain, which is evidently an advantage for the South-East region, although the identified tendency is that of overthrowing the leader position of this region, characterized by a seasonal tourism, compared to other regions (Bucuresti-Ilfov, Center), but also in the detriment of other tourism forms (business, cultural, monachal, weekend etc.).

Keywords: tourism, regional tourism of Romania, performances of tourism,

J.E.L. classification: Z30, Z32

1. The impact of tourism

In many countries of the EU, tourism contributes significantly to the creation of national incomes (GDP, GNI, GNN), while having a separate contribution to the realization of added value, training and stimulating production in other annexed domains. The development of tourism can act as a „more dynamic element of the global economic system”[1], but, in the actual condition of globalization and pronounced natural resources impoverishment, we must take account of durable development principles and respecting the environment conditions.

The economical effects of tourism are also represented by its contribution to liquidity and currency flow, based on internal and international tourism. The importance of tourism is diverse, because it can represent, at the same time, a way of educating, of instructing, of culture and human civilization.

The International Organization of Tourism created one of the most complete definitions of tourism, being represented „activities deployed by people while on trips and staying outside of their living environment for a consecutive period which does not amount to more than a year, for spending free time, business or other reasons unrelated to doing a remunerated activity at the visited spot” [2].

For our country, tourism represents a domain with large possibilities of growth based on some unexploited touristic resources or insufficiently valued and represent an activity sphere which can absorb a part of the work force which remains available from the economical restructuring. Tourism acts in the economic system of the national economy, which generates specific goods and services, demand which trains a growth in their sphere.

The specialized activities done for satisfying the necessity of goods and services of tourists during trips, as they were defined by the International Organization of Tourism, make tourism a distinct branch of economy, a real industry which interacts with other economical branches.

Tourism needs, for deploying its activity, goods from the transport services, booking, alimentation, divertisement, health, culture and public safety spheres. Also, in tourism goods and services from connected branches are consumed, such as agriculture, food industry, construction and transports, which positively influence work force.[3]

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We can say that tourism contributes not only to satisfying material needs but also to satisfying the spiritual needs of people. „Each step of a trip becomes a knowledge adventure; the novel rejuvenates you, nature uplifts you on the pedestal of each day, witness of your own miracle”. [4]

By virtue of regenerating the work force of people by its resting and recreation shapes, as well as balneary-medical treatments, tourism represents an education method of uplifting instruction level, culture and civilization of people.

2. The Evolution of Tourism in Romania at a Regional Level

The analysis of the principal indicators which define the evolution of the tourism sector has as its base dates given by the National Institute of Statistics of Romania.

2.1. Establishment of touristic reception with functions of tourists accommodation

The structure of touristic income which include hotels for teens, hostels, apartment hotels, motels, mansions and tourist cabins, touristic and aggro-touristic guest houses, campings, vacation villages, bungalows, students and pre-students camps and booking spaces on ships start from a national number of 3213 in 1990. This number has met in its progress a growth of approximately 0.7% yearly, but with two important moments of tendency modification: one at the start of the period (1991-1992), right after the liberalization of romanian economy, when a growth of private incentive was registered, followed by a decrease in 1993 with approximately 1,8% due to the specific economic conditions of that year (fulminant inflation). The second distorting moment was during 2010-2011, being strongly influenced by crisis, when a sudden decrease of 4,3% was registered, amounting to a total of 5003 tourist structures.

These two moments are experienced especially in the South-Eastern region (fig.n.1)

In 1993 it registered a massive decrease in the number of tourist accommodation in the South East region of 62.9% from 1414 in 1992 to 890.

In 2011 there was a sudden decrease of 29,67% until the level of 1999 by approximately 985 tourist units, but followed by growth in 2014 to 1100 units.

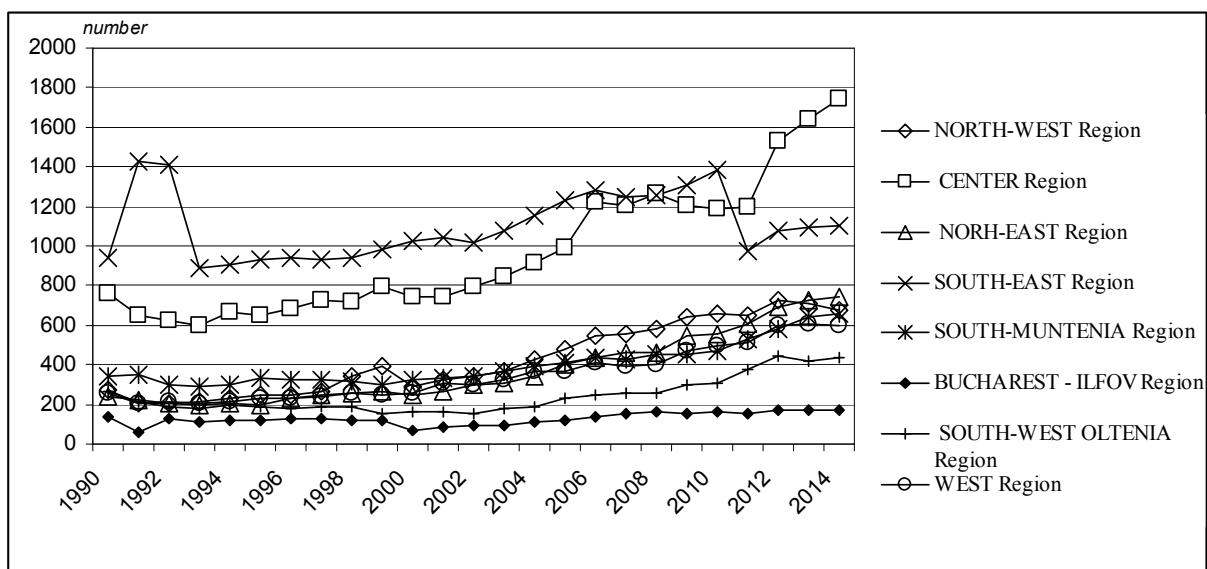


Fig. no. 1. Establishment of touristic reception with functions of tourists accommodation [6]

The other regions have passed easier over these two moments, 5 out of the 8 regions continuing the growth tendency. Today, the indicator presents a redressing tendency after the economic crisis, registered values reaching 6130 in 2014 nationally, almost double compared to 1990.

In this context, starting with 2012, there is are massive growths for the Central Region, of 27% compared to 2011 (fig.no.1), reaching the highest number of tourist structures owned by a region. In 2014 there were 1745 tourist structures, which is 28,4% of the total booking structures of Romania, of 6130.

2.2. Existing touristic accomodation capacity (Booking capacity)

Romania had in 1990 a number of 353.236 tourist booking places. In structure, the hotels hold the biggest share in the booking capacities with a number of 167.979 places, representing 47,6% of the total, followed by tourist mansions with 46.757 (13,2%), student and pre-student camps with 46.598 places (13,2%), campings with 46.473 places (13,1%) and others.

Approximately 46,1 % of the tourist booking capacity of Romania from 1990 is in the South-Eastern Region, especially Black Sea seaside stations (fig.no.2), followed by the Central Region, with a 12,5% share, the other regions holding a 32,4% share, followed at a great distance by the Central Region with a 19,5% share, the other Regions having an under 10% share, the smallest being in South-Eastern Oltenia (6,1%).

In 2014, there are changes in the distribution of the booking places regionally, the South-Eastern Region continuing to have the first place nationally, with a 32,4% share, followed at a great distance by the Central Region with a 19,5% share, the other regions each having shares which are under 10%, South-Eastern Oltenia having the lowest, 6,1% (fig no.2).

In dynamic, in the South-Eastern Region, there is a decreasing tendency during 1990-1995, then a reasonably big interval follows with very small variations from a year to another. During the crisis, in 2011 there is a significant decrease of 136.875 places in 2010 to 95.587 places in 2011, which is a 30,2% contraction. Starting with 2012, there is a slow redressing, but the level of 2011 and before is never reached again, with a booking capacity of 100.888 in 2014.

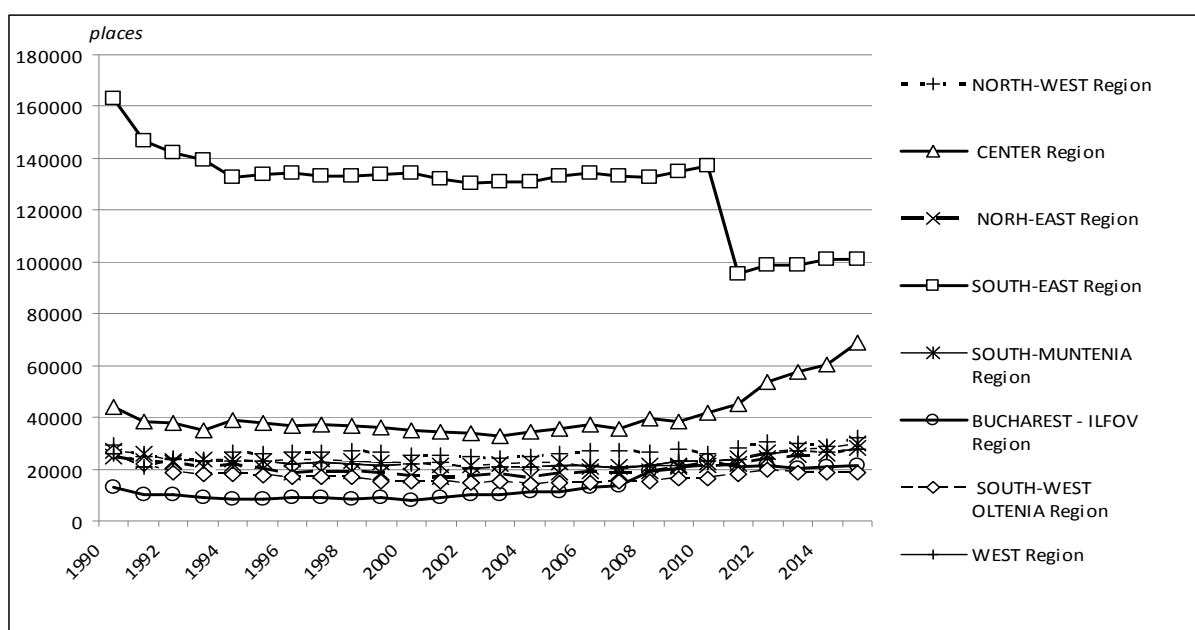


Fig.no.2.- Existing touristic accomodation capacity (places)[6]

2.3. The Evolution of the Tourist Arrival Indicator

The tourist activity measured with the help of the Tourist Arrival indicator registered at a national level a tendency of massive decrease during 1990-2004, followed by a growing period, with fluctuations and notable differences from one region to another. (fig.no.3),

Between 1995 and 2001 the number of arrivals in the booking units decreased by over 31%. This negative tendency continued without stopping since 1991, especially because of the decadence of the romanian infrastructure competitiveness, in the context of the growing capacity of travelling of the romanian tourists for tourist activities, following the liberalization of entering EU countries. But, in Romania approximately 8,5 million tourists were registered, out of which 2 millions were foreigners.

If until 2005, the first place in the Tourist Arrivals was held by the South-Eastern region, with over 1 milion tourists, due to its seaside tourist potential as well as seasonal, after this year, the first place is held by the Central Region, with over 1,2 million tourist arrivals, due to the massive investitions in tourist structures.

In 2014 the highest number of arrivals was registered in the Central Region, with over 1.9 million tourist arrivals, but the number was 2,4% smaller than the one registered in 1990.

We should remark that starting with 2012, the second place is taken by the Bucharest-Ilfov Region, which attracts tourists, because of the fact that there is an important business service sector [5] (it is also the region which registered a 13,4% growth in 2014 compared to 2013, as well as a significant 45,6% growth compared to 1990).

The least attractive region from the tourist arrivals point of view is South-West Oltenia in the analyzed period (fig.no.3), which also registered the highest decline (-52,7% in 2014 compared to 1990) .

In the South-Eastern Region the decrease in 2014 compared to 1990 was approximately 50% (fig.no.3).

In 2014, there is a turnaround in the regional arrival distribution, when there was a 23,1% share registered in total for the Central Region, followed by Bucharest-Ilfov with a 19,3% share, and the South-Eastern Region on the third place, with a 13,9% share.

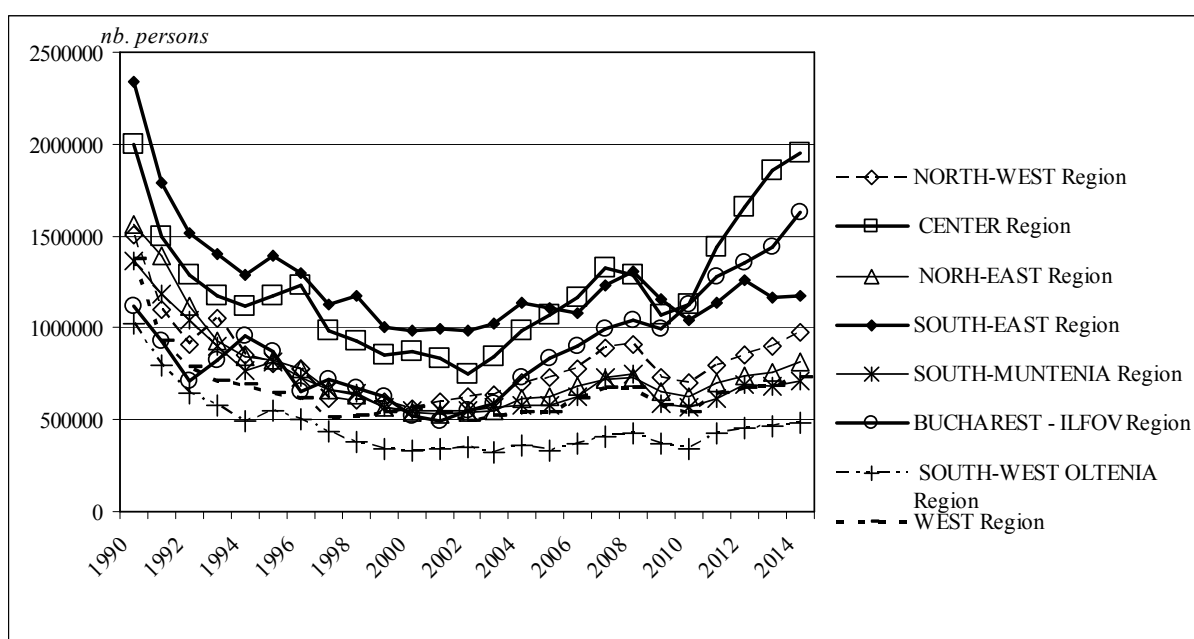


Fig. no. 3. Arrivals of tourists [6]

If we also study the content of these arrivals on romanian and foreign tourists, we can see that the share of foreign tourists recovers to 22,6% in 2014 (1915000 arrivals) after unfavorable fluctuations, like in 2009 with a 20,6% share (1276 thousand arrivals) compared to 2006 when there were 22,2% (1.380 thousand arrivals).

The indicator for foreign tourist arrivals, though, registered a constant increase of foreign tourist arrivals during 2006-2014, of 38,7% in 2014 compared to 2006.

Approximately half of these arrivals (48,1%) are in the Bucharest-Ilfov Region, following the promotion of weekend, cultural and business tourism (increasing from 37,3%).

The main reason of foreign tourist visits are the spending of free time, followed by transit travels, business-related or one-day trips.

The favorite destination of Englishmen in Romania are: the Danube Delta, the Black Sea, Maramureş and balneary treatments. Americans prefer the medieval cities from Transilvania, Bucharest rural tourism and the Bran Castle. The main destination for Germans are the seashore and balneary treatments, Italians prefer Northern Moldavia, Bucharest, the Black Sea, the Danube Delta and the Prahova Valley [7].

2.4. Index of net using the touristic accommodation capacity in function

This indicator which shows the occupancy at the touristic accommodation capacity in function, only available nationally, starts from 43,1% in 1993. This year, the index of net using is 48% for hotels, with the highest usage degree among the touristic accommodation capacity in function booking capacities.

The decrease tendency remains continuous during the studied period (1993-2015), reaching 35,2% in 2000 and 25% in 2010, while being interrupted in 2011 when it surpasses 26%, and continuing to rise until 28,7% in 2015 (fig.no.4).

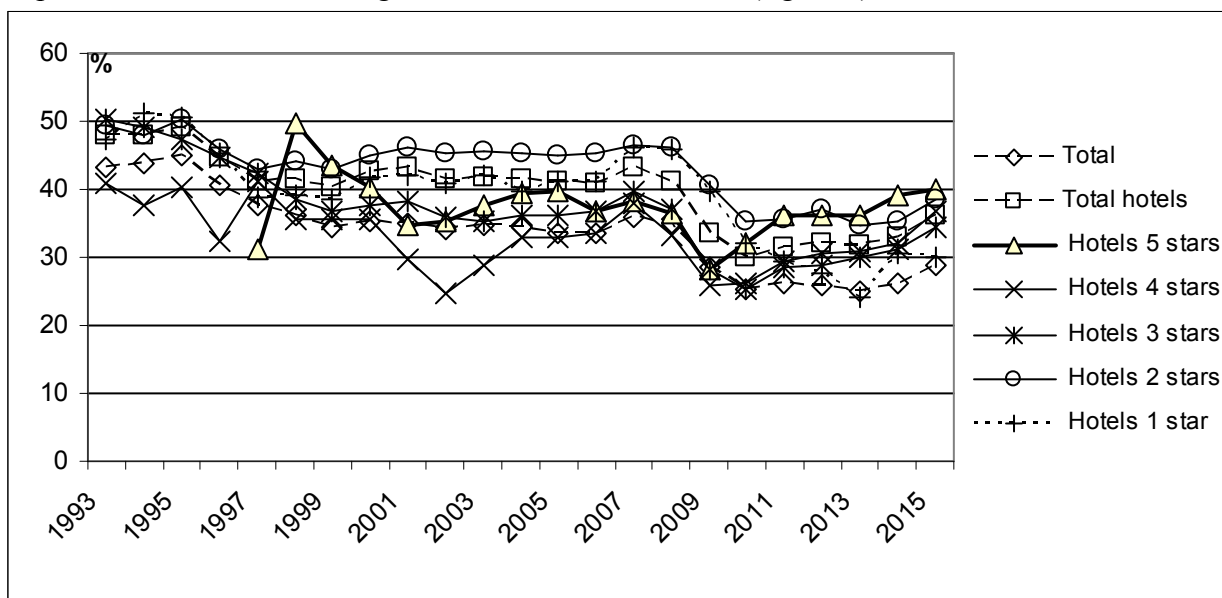


Fig. no.4. Index of net using the touristic accommodation capacity in function [6]

It is interesting to observe the evolution of the 5 star hotel index of net using which have increased their occupancy degree starting with 2009 from 28,3%, which is the lowest registered degree for this category, to 40,1% in 2015 (Fig. no.4.) The tendency of tourist preference change is obvious during the years, the highest index of net using for hotels in 1993 being 3 star hotels, with 50,4%, until 34,5% usage for this category.

Because of the fact that mass tourism was practised, the 1-2 star hotels share surpasses 80%, while 3 star hotels have a very small share.

Balneary stations are on the first place in the booking capacity usage indicator (50,8%) as well as the length of tourist sejours, with an average of 8,9 days. Due to the contribution of the so-called social tourism, in Romania the state gives subventioned treatment tickets for pensioners, which cover a big share of the booking and food costs[8].

Conclusions

The litoral region represents an important source of economic and social growth regional growth.

The South-Eastern Region has a remarkable tourist potential, especially due to the Black Sea romanian seashore, with a 70km coast between Năvodari, Mangalia and the Danube Delta. Thus, Romania's opening to the Black Sea created conditions for the developing of seashore tourism, the 13 existing stations concentrating almost half of their booking, treatment and recreation capacities nationally (42,7%).

Booking structures at the Black Sea seaside are concentrated especially in the seashore side, having limited expansion opportunities.

Starting with 2012, there are massive growths of the number of touristic structures for the Central Region of 27% compared to 2011, reaching the highest number of tourist structures held by a region. In 2014 it has a number of 1745 tourist structures, representing 28,4% of the total booking structures of Romania, which is 6130.

Because of mass tourism practices, the 1-2 star hotels share surpasses 80% while 3 star hotels have a very small share. Thus, investments should focus on the reorientation of actual structures. The usage indicator for 5 star hotels has increased compared to the other categories, increasing the demand for this type of comfort.

In the distribution of tourist arrivals from the last few years, accentuated in 2014, there is a turnaround in regions which register most tourists in the Central Region, followed by the Bucharest-Ilfov Region, and the South-Eastern Region on the third place.

The rehabilitation and modernization of the romanian seaside and aligning it to the calitative degree of european seaside offers continues to be a specifical objective for seaside tourism.

With an adequate management, with the implications of local organs, tourism represents an education method, of raising the instruction, culture and civilization levels.

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