TOURISM AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract
The paper presents a theoretical approach of the relation between tourism and local development. The research method used is based on documenting and summarizing aspects related to the importance of tourism on local development. According to data provided by the World Tourism Organization (WTO, 2014), compared to 2010, a 91% increase of the number of international tourist arrivals is forecasted in 2030, from 948 million arrivals (2010) to 1,810 million arrivals (2030). Therefore, it is no surprise that tourism is viewed as a development strategy in many national economies. Tourism literature captures a series of arguments that emphasize the contribution of tourism to local development by: creating new jobs, revitalizing cultural traditions, improving infrastructure, environmental protection, etc. For Romania, as well, it may be noted that tourism strategies included in the 2013-2016 Government Programme are oriented towards local tourism by: decentralizing the authorization and approval activity, developing an integrated tourism by capitalizing all the local resources (cultural, agricultural, handicraft, etc.), connecting Romanian tourism to international trends, etc. In order to achieve the aforementioned objectives, the 2013-2016 Government Program provides the clarification on the issue of decentralization, since the current government believes that a balanced development of Romania can only be achieved through transfer of authority to the local, county and regional levels.

Key Words: tourism, local development, the 2013-2016 Government Program of Romania

JEL classification codes: O10, L83

1. Introduction
According to Sharpley and Telfer, the development theory and tourism have evolved almost the same, as early as the Second World War. However, there have been few efforts to connect the two fields of study (Sharpley and Telfer 2002 p.35 after Telfer 1996a) [16]. This is surprising, considering that tourism continues to be an important field of economic development policy in many regions of the world (Sharpley and Telfer, 2002, p.35 after Maleki 1997) [16]. During the ‘60s, tourism was considered as development, with the belief that tourism creates growth in foreign exchanges and in employment, and tourist spending generates a multiplier effect that stimulates the local economy (Sharma 2004, p.201 after Davis 1968 Graburn & Jafari, 1991) [15]. Thus, Sharma (Sharma, 2004, p.262) [15] argues that tourism as a means of achieving economic development embraces two distinct themes:
- on the one hand, tourism is seen as a vehicle for regional development in a developed country, contributing to the elimination of regional disparities, especially between metropolitan centres and suburban areas;
- on the other hand, the developer role of tourism is analysed in the context of a world divided between developed and less developed countries, the assumption being that, in less developed countries, the gap between the two can be reduced by tourism development projects.

Tourism professionals acknowledge the importance of tourism as a development strategy, the evidence of such being the variety of works (books and articles) published in the 21st century (G Richards et al. (2003), J.J. Pigram, S. Wahab (2005), J. Lea (2006), D.J. Telfer, R Sharpley (2007), G. Moscardo (2008), LF Girard, P Nijkamp (2009), etc.) with main focus on the relationship between tourism and development.

2. Tourism – A Constantly Evolving Industry
The most compelling reason to consider tourism as a development strategy has to do with the alleged positive contribution it has in the national and regional/local economy. In developing countries, tourism has become one of the main sources of income resulting from currency exchanges, but even in developed countries, income from international tourism can have a significant contribution to the balance of payments, in general, and to the travel account, in particular. Tourism is also considered to be an important source of employment. In Cyprus, for example, about 25% of the workforce is directly or indirectly employed in tourism. It is also one of the reasons why tourism is often considered a new activity or a replacement activity for areas where traditional industries have declined. For many developing
countries, with a limited industrial sector, with few natural resources and dependent on international aid (e.g. Gambia - one of the poorest and smallest countries in Africa), tourism is the only realistic way of creating jobs and attracting foreign investments (Sharpley and Telfer, 2002, p.15; and Sharma, 2004, p.152) [16].

Already since 1950, when approximately 25 million international tourist arrivals were recorded, international tourism has shown a steady and remarkable growth (aspect confirmed by OMT data of 2014) [4]. Thus, in the second half of the 20th century, the importance of tourism in the economic and social activity is outlined as the tourism industry.

Chart no. 1. Evolution of international tourist arrival (expressed in millions of persons) per regions/continents, during the period 1990-2013

Source: made by the author based on the statistical data obtained from *Faits saillants OMT du tourisme* [4], Édition 2014, p.4, available on the following website: http://dxtq4w60xqpw.cloudfront.net/sites/all/files/pdf/unwto_highlights14_fr_hr.pdf; accessed on 08.08.2014

Chart no. 1 shows that the number of arrivals on the “old continent” has constantly grown from 261.1 million in 1990, to 563.4 million in 2013 (double as compared to 1990). Compared to other continents, it can be observed that Europe remains the main destination for tourists from around the world.

According to statistics, 2013 was a very dynamic year for tourism in Europe, recording an increase of 5% compared to 2012 (in 2013, the number of tourists increased by approximately 29 million compared to 2012). Europe, the number 1 tourist destination in tourist preferences, holds more than 52% of the international arrivals (*Faits saillants OMT du tourisme*, 2014, p.7) [4].

Forecasts of the World Tourism Organization suggest that international tourism will continue to grow in the coming decades.

Table no. 1, International tourist arrivals (expressed in millions of persons) – prospective data for 2020 and 2030

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continents of the world-tourist destinations</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>Prospective data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2020</td>
<td>2030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Europe</td>
<td>484.8</td>
<td>620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia and Pacific</td>
<td>204.9</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>America</td>
<td>150.6</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>49.9</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East</td>
<td>58.2</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total international arrivals</strong></td>
<td><strong>948</strong></td>
<td><strong>1360</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: made by the author based on the statistical data obtained from *Faits saillants OMT du tourisme* [4], Édition 2014, p.15, available on the following website: http://dxtq4w60xqpw.cloudfront.net/sites/all/files/pdf/unwto_highlights14_fr_hr.pdf; accessed on 08.08.2014

As shown in Table no. 1, forecasts with regards to the number of arrivals are optimistic, in 2020 the number of international tourist arrivals tending to 1.4 billion and in 2030 reaching around 1.8 billion arrivals (OMT, 2014, p.15) [4].
3. Local Development

In the tourism literature one may find an intense focus on local development: conceptual approaches, local development models, legislative support for local development, etc.

For some authors, local and regional development is limited only to the mobilization of local resources, being considered "a process of diversification and enrichment of the economic and social activity on a territory by mobilizing and coordinating its resources and energies" (Parent et al. 2009, p. 80 after Greffe, 1984) [11]. Thus, local economic development is defined by increasing the capacity of the local economy to create wealth for residents of a certain town/region. This objective can be achieved if local resources (labour, unexploited land, etc.) are productively used by new investments that will lead to the creation of new jobs and diversification of the local economy.

A similar definition can be found, as well, with authors Blakely and Bradshaw (2002, p.71), who believe that local development is a process that stimulates the full use of existing human and material resources in a partnership arrangement with the private sector or with other structures, to create new jobs and to generate wealth in the locality concerned (Matei, Anghelescu, 2009, p.14, after Blakely and Bradshaw) [9].

Other authors believe that local development involves the development of partnerships between the public and private sectors, aspect identified as well in the definition given by Profiroiu (1998, p.16) [13] who states that: local development is an economic intervention strategy, by which the local representative of the public and private sector, cooperate for the development of human, technical and financial resources of a community, associated within a sectoral or cross-sectoral structure of public or private activity, aimed at creating new jobs.

Defining the concept of local development is realized not only in relation to municipalities (commune, town, municipality, county for Romania) but also in inter-communal, inter-regional and even cross-border context (Matei, Anghelescu, 2009, p.7 after Matei) [9]. Thus, as Klein (2006) also states, "local development cannot be limited to endogenous but requires the combination of local and external resources." Moreover, says Klein, "what allows a city or region to rebalance its relations with more central regions or cities is precisely its ability to mobilize the external resources, that is, the state resources. Otherwise we only reproduce a relation of inequality". (Klein, 2006, pp.156-157) [6].

Jacquier and Mendès introduce social results of investments made in the concept of local development, thus local development representing "a global process, an integrated strategy whose aim is to promote a different kind of considering cities, focusing on the concepts of solidarity and citizenship, thus fighting against exclusion mechanisms, amplified by bureaucratic and technocratic apparatus" (Parent et al., 2009, p.81 after Tremblay, 1997, p.129) [11].

Definitions presented show that local and regional development consider the following aspects:
- it necessarily has a territorial dimension;
- is based on the solidarity and initiatives of the community (partnerships between the public and private sector);
- relies on endogenous and exogenous forces (interregional and cross-border);
- integrates the economic (creation, accumulation and redistribution of wealth), social (improvement of life quality), cultural and environmental (protection), political (revitalization of local democracy) dimensions;
- Describes the ways of adapting and autonomous initiatives to the profound changes of global economy, thus fighting against exclusion mechanisms.

These issues cannot be achieved unless we speak of local autonomy.

The European Charter of Local Self-Government, adopted in Strasbourg on October 15, 1985 defines local self-government as the right and effective capacity of local government authorities to solve and manage, within the law, in their own name and in the interest of the local population, an important part of the public affairs (Part I, Art. 3 (1), p.2) [1]. The Charter also presents the aspects related to the importance of cooperation and association, as activities of the local development process, according to which local government authorities are entitled, in exercising their powers, to cooperate and to associate, under the law, with other local government authorities in order to carry out tasks of common interest (according to the European Charter of Local Self-Government - Part I, Art. 10 (1), p.4, ratified by Romania by Law 199 of November 17, 1997) [1].

The idea of local autonomy entails the decentralization process which is the result of a transfer of administrative responsibilities from the central level to the local authorities. This transfer of responsibilities between the two levels (central and local) must also be accompanied by the provision of the financial resources.

From the perspective of decentralization, local development diversifies activities in a certain area, by mobilizing existing resources and energies in the area (Matei, Anghelescu, 2009, p.14, after Xavier F.) [9].

As defined by the World Bank, decentralization means "the transfer of authority and responsibility for public functions from central government to local or intermediate governments, or non-governmental organizations and/or private sector" (The World Bank Group) [17]. In the broad sense of the term, decentralization means the transfer of authority, responsibility and powers to a lower level (territorial, regional, local, etc.) or outside the public sector (privatization or denationalization).
Reasons for decentralization may be (Dodescu, 2013):

- Government dysfunctions that cause lack of reaction or low sensitivity to local needs;
- (political, economic, implicit fiscal, budgetary, etc.) crises;
- transitions (from authoritarian political systems to democratic systems, from command economy to market economy, to EU Member State status, etc.)

At the level of European Union, defending the interests of citizens and local communities to which they belong was institutionalized, for the first time, by the Maastricht Treaty (1992), by creating the Committee of the Regions, its purpose being to strengthen the social and economic cohesion for the local and regional collectivities, and the defence of the principle of subsidiarity. The Treaty of Amsterdam (1997) reiterated the amplification of the integration level, paying particular attention to the problems faced by local collectivities in the EU regions (Porojan, Iftimoaie, 2008, pp.17-18) [12]. The Lisbon Treaty (2007) added to the objectives of the Cohesion Policy, the aspects concerning the territorial cohesion. Territorial cohesion is the expression of the balanced, coherent and harmonious development of the area, in terms of economic, social activities, of facilities, accessibility and quality of the environment, the existence of living and working conditions equitable for all citizens, regardless of where they are (according to the Territorial Cooperation and Cohesion, document available on the following website: http://www.mdrt.ro/dezvoltare-teritoriala/cooperare-si-coeziune-teritoriala/coeziune-teritoriala ) [2].

4. Relationship between Tourism and Local Development

World Tourism Organization stated in Manila Declaration that “global tourism can help establish a new world economic order which will help eliminate the growing economic gap between the developed and developing countries, and ensure the economic acceleration and constant social development, as well as the progress, especially in developing countries” (MANILA DECLARATION ON WORLD TOURISM 1980:1, document available on the following website: http://www.univeur.org/cuebc/downloads/PDF%20carte/65.%20Manila.PDF) [8]. As can be noticed in the previous statement, the purpose of World Tourism Organization focused primarily on the contribution of tourism to development in less developed countries of the world. In this context, tourism is seen not only as a catalyst for development, but also as a political and economic change. Thus, international tourism is considered a means to achieve “the development and economic and social progress” (Sharma, 2004, p.149; Sharpley, Telfer, 2002, p.13) [15]-[16]. Even if, in specialized works, attention was focused most frequently on the developer role of tourism in less developed or peripheral countries, tourism has also played an important role in most countries members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). For example, in Western Europe, there is a series of evidence regarding the involvement of national governments to support the tourism sector, some evidence dating back to the 1920s and 1930s, but also most recent, which claim that “tourism, together with other select activities, such as financial services and telecommunications, has been a major component of economic strategies” (Sharma 2004, pp.150-151 after Williams &Shaw, 1991, p.1) [15].

During 2010, World Tourism Organization was concerned, on the one hand, with the promotion of tourism as a factor of socio-economic growth and development, and on the other hand, with encouraging its inclusion as a priority in national and international development policies. This endeavour was supported by the following message: tourism means jobs, trade, economic growth and development. (UNWTO Annual Report – A year of recovery, 2010, p.11, document available on the following website: http://media.unwto.org/sites/all/files/pdf/finalannualreportpdf.pdf) [18].

Any development project should ensure a balance between the conservation of resources (human, ecological, cultural, etc.) and economic profitability, considering the needs and specificities of local communities. Delisle and Jolin (2007) argue that community tourism, by its inherent characteristics, is the closest to the objectives of sustainable tourism claiming that “this form of tourism aims to (...) encourage the protection of human, natural and cultural heritage” (Parent et al., 2009, p.83 after Delisle and Jolin, 2007, p.51) [11]. Thus, community tourism aims both to maintain and even improve the cultural and natural strengths and living conditions.

Community Tourism has to adapt to the profound changes of global economy, otherwise they risk marginalizing the communities and causing their stagnation or even decline. Community tourism approach proves to be a breeding ground for implementing the connection between local and global. This connection has to be made with potential markets to ensure durability of the offer in the community tourism (Parent et al. 2009, p.85) [11]. Because tourists need a variety of goods and services at the destinations they are in, including accommodation, food and beverage, entertainment, local transportation services, souvenirs etc., tourism offers basically more opportunities than other industries, in terms of liaising with the entire local economy. Such opportunities include both direct connections, such as the expansion of the farming industry in the area, in order to provide food for local hotels and restaurants, as well as indirect connections, such as the construction industry.

A variety of other secondary reasons can be suggested for the popularity of tourism as a development option, options including the idea that:

- tourism development can lead to improvements in infrastructure and provision of facilities which are useful both to local communities, as well as tourists;

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tourism often provides justification for environmental protection;

- tourism can encourage revitalization of traditional cultural crafts and practices.

These secondary reasons, together with the primary ones explain why all countries in the world have developed to a greater or lesser extent, the tourism industry (Sharma 2004, p.159) [15].

In Romania, in order to ensure an integrated development of tourism, the central government authority responsible with tourism conducts consultations with representatives of the central government authorities in the field of (according to the Tourism Law published in 28.07.2010, Ch. III, Art. 5(paragraphs d-l) pp.5-6) [7]:

- transport and infrastructure – related to the establishment and maintenance of all categories of transport networks that provide access to localities and sights;

- urbanism and territorial planning – to ensure the conditions for sustainable development and preservation of local identity;

- culture – on the rehabilitation and maintenance of monuments included in the national / international heritage;

- labour, family and social protection – in order to reduce unemployment by creating new jobs (seasonal and part-time) in the field of tourism;

- health – regarding the development and implementation of national health programs for rebuilding work capacity and increasing population health;

- environment – in order to establish a number of national programs on the conservation and exploitation of natural resources with therapeutic properties;

- education – in order to develop and conduct national training, qualification and retraining programs for personnel specialized in tourism.

With all these provisions in the 2013-2016 Government Programme (p.120) [14] a number of issues which affected the tourism sector were discussed, including: lack of policy guidance and tourism development, the existence of a poor regulatory system, lack of fiscal facilitations on enhancing economic competitiveness and stimulating investments etc. To eliminate these problems, new institutional, legislative and fiscal measures were established in order to stimulate Romanian tourism. Among the tourism strategies developed under the 2013-2016 Government Programme, a tendency to shift towards local tourism can be observed:

- taking over the organizational model regarding Local Tourism System of countries with experience in tourism, in order to capitalize, on the cultural, agricultural, handicraft, local resources, etc., in an integrated system;

- decentralization of the authorization and approval activity;

- consolidating the experiences and traditions of Romanian tourism (spa tourism, mountain tourism, seaside tourism, cultural circuits, rural tourism, etc.) by connecting them to European and global trends and practices; etc.

Thus, the 2013-2016 Government Programme (p.34) [14] also provided the fact that balanced development of Romania can be achieved only by transfer of responsibilities to the local, county and regional authority level, among which we mention:

- economic development of the region;

- management of EU funds at the regional level;

- management of regional infrastructure with regards to the road, rail, inland waterway, maritime and air transport;

- management of the health and medical care infrastructure at regional level;

- promotion of tourism objectives of regional interest;

- territorial regional planning;

- development of the technical and vocational high school education at regional level;

- development of programs of regional interest for agricultural development in order to encourage access of Romanian products on the domestic and foreign markets, as well by creating regional brands;

- management of social protection programs at regional level;

- environmental protection at regional level;

- management of emergency situations at regional level;

- other responsibilities etc.

Lately, we have been witnessing new debates on decentralization, granting new dimensions to the decentralization process. According to the Romania Liberă newspaper (March 13, 2014) [19], implementation of decentralization shall commence on January 1, 2015 and shall target the transfer of competences from the ministries to the county councils and municipalities (information available on the following website:

http://www.romanialibera.ro/politica/institutii/guvernul-ponta-iii-relanseaza-desentralizarea-328996, accessed on 18.08.2014). Thus, if legislative acts will be approved, a number of directorates (for example: public health services, touristic facilities, environmental protection, fishing, sports facilities, etc.) under the authority of the Ministries of Health, Agriculture, Transport, Tourism, Culture, Sports and Environment) shall be transferred under the coordination of local authorities.
Fields such as education, public transport, infrastructure (roads), environment, construction, local services (including accommodation, food, recreation services, etc.), sports and culture are directly affected by the implementation of an integrated tourism based policy. Thus, an integrated strategy allows the fulfilment of regional and local needs, while prompting the prosperity of the whole nation (OECD, 2010, p.34) [10].

5. Conclusions

Tourism is a complex structure involving various other fields (economics, sociology, politics, law, culture, etc.) and, therefore, contributes to their revitalization and economic development of many regions, the maintenance of world peace, educating nations, environmental protection, preservation of historical and traditional sites, without counting the increase in employment and living standards, the expansion of national consciousness, improvement of national and international legislation, etc. This view is also supported by authors as Cansiz and Keskin (2010, p.24) [5] which state that tourism contributes to: increase in employment, while accelerating the socio-economic development; raise of living standards, thus stopping migration; development of national consciousness, etc. The tourism activity can capitalize on a number of natural resources (topography, landscape, climate, thermal waters, etc.) and anthropogenic (monuments, museums, castles, etc.) resources that cannot be valued in other activity fields. Therefore, taking such resources as landmarks (which attract most tourists) real tourist resorts can be created in different parts of a region, which will lead to the economic and cultural development of the respective area and, consequently, to the creation of better living conditions.

As far as Romania is concerned, the first step would be to apply decentralization in order to develop integrated tourism at local level.

In such circumstances, in our opinion, the future lines of action at the level of local government and other policy makers in tourism should be the following:

- actions towards limiting constraints, barriers, difficulties encountered by beneficiaries of projects in tourism (reducing bureaucracy, timeliness of reimbursement, rethinking the pre-financing system, regular meetings with potential beneficiaries in order to discuss problems that have occurred and the required solutions, etc.);
- increasing the accountability of the local government in supporting the development of local tourism (drawn up, implementation and monitoring of a development strategy for local tourism based on the complementarity of touristic offers);
- incentives for all stakeholders operating in the tourism sector (units, agencies, tour operators, etc.) to mutually promote each other and to develop joint touristic packages (creating networks of entrepreneurs in local tourism, providing facilities for the development of joint tourism packages, etc.);
- integrated development of tourism.

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6. Bibliography


