

## SOME CONSIDERATIONES ABOUT TOURISM AND THE INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE FIELD

SANDA GHEORGHE GABRIEL

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, FACULTY OF ECONOMICS,  
“CONSTANTIN BRANCUSI” UNIVERSITY OF TARGU-JIU

### Abstract:

*Tourism, in the modern era, is an economic sector complex and dynamic. The tourism market is the space facing tourism supply and demand. Creating tourism offer, namely preparing programs for foreign tourists, is the operation that requires a permanent study in the tourist area for it to become attractive on content and, therefore, recoverable.*

*Tourism is, by its content, a phenomenon characteristic of the modern era, being one of the major components of the economic and social life that polarizes the interest of a growing number of countries. Responsive to the transformations of the contemporary world, tourism is evolving under their incidence; its dynamics is integrated into the overall development process. In turn, through the vast human and material potential trained in its development, as well as through the beneficial effects on the areas with which they connect, tourism acts as a factor stimulating the economic and social progress.*

**Key words:** tourism structures, national tourism capacity

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### 1. Introduction

In the world of tourism, the competitive strength of the company stems from creating an appropriate management process to achieve optimum performance.

In a sense, the term "tourism" is reduced to a single purpose, namely, the one that refers to the movement that a person or a group of people make from home to various places ( in the country or abroad ) for rest, comfort, spa treatment or in order to know the corners of nature, cultural and historical monuments, etc. Partly, this meaning is explained by the fact that the very word from which it derives (considered by many experts to be the English verb "to tour") means making a journey. It should be noted, however, that the concept of tourism has been extended to movements aimed primarily at international reunions, as well as business trips. The inclusion of the latter within the overall tourism has its justification in the fact that the person who goes from a town in another country (and its country) for a limited time, regardless of the main objective of the trip, uses some free time for relaxation and especially for his own information and knowledge.

Although tourism involves, above all, the movement, the journey being a mandatory step in the manifestation of this phenomenon and, therefore, a primary indicator highlighting its proportions in each moment, its contents is not reduced to the act of travel; in terms of "consumer" tourism, the customer, the key is meeting the travel motivations at the destination point.

Addressing tourism within the above issues represents a limited approach, its circumscribing on the field of using in a pleasant manner of one part of the leisure of the population, usage synthesized by the French literature in the phrase "loisir". This way to consider tourism ignores, in fact, the activity called to ensure to the beneficiary (tourist) the full range of products and services it needs while traveling with a tourist character. It is known that during the stages from the residence to the final destination, during the stay and before, the tourist resort to a set of activities that directly or indirectly satisfy various needs and that are in close interdependence and correlation, as a result of the fall as successive moments of a "flow sheet" unitary.

## 2. The tourism development – influencing factors

The analysis of the tourism phenomenon invariably leads to emphasizing a causal ensemble characterized by interactions between elements and components. Each of these elements-factors has, in turn, an internal structure, an action potential and its own reaction, through which they work, and an amount of that potential that is favorable for tourism activities, but should not be missed either the restrictive area, the presence of the opposite "loads", which tends to hold back, to prevent its occurrence and to raise many obstacles stand in their assertion. The tourist potential is influenced by a number of factors: **natural factors** (which remain generally unchanged) and **economic, demographic, political, psychological** factors (characterized by a dynamic routing and possibilities in the desired direction). Natural factors have a decisive role in practicing tourism, the landforms, the river, the climate, the flora, the fauna differs tourism in: mountain tourism, seaside, skiing, hunting tourism etc.

**The economic factors** exert a strong influence on tourism, it being an activity practiced primarily by those who have secured at least their livelihood. This implies a certain level of life satisfaction beyond which the individual can save money to other needs natural (but not indispensable!): rest, recovery, enlightenment, etc.

The economic factors can influence directly and indirectly the promotion of tourism. The direct influence is manifested through increased labor productivity and population income, which leads to increased rate of time necessary for activities other than productive, respectively the financial resources of the people. Tourism is a manifest that concerns the individual's life, the social group (family) or the community only in the moment when their financial resources exceed the critical threshold of meeting the immediate human needs (food, shelter, clothing, schooling, health maintenance). Moreover, the history of tourism development follows faithfully the rising curve of revenue and living standards of people in different places and eras. The indirect influence, beneficial for tourism, derives from the drawbacks of developed economies. Thus, industrialization and urbanization have split more the human from the original natural environment, pollution and stress amplified the recreation and rehabilitation needs of the human bodies undergo, in a short evolutionary period, insufficient for adaptation to particular pressure of the economic environment.

**The demographic factors.** Tourism is a process, a *sine qua non* condition for which the human as an individual or corporate cannot develop culturally, socially, economically. The human need for recreation, physical and psychological recovery and knowledge is, in fact, the leading cause of tourism. The demographic factors act by increasing number of trekking and traveling, increasing longevity and increasing the share of youth and old age groups. The tourism product, regardless of their structure and composition, their concentration or territorial dispersion, is generated and used by the human factor; consequently, as the number of people, the current population, is higher, the higher the likelihood that the number of practitioners of tourism increases. This feature is expressed through the concept of tourism density (which means the number of tourists per 1000 inhabitants). The increasing number of the world's population is not only a main source of tourism practitioners, but also an indirect factor of growing the need to make tourism due to social stress, especially in the context of large urban areas or regions with high density. The increasing longevity has led to tremendous growth in the share of the elderly group in the population structure. It is the age group at retirement, when, in terms of social involvement and leisure time, there are the best conditions for recreational activities and the acute need for biological recovery and health maintenance performed by curative tourism. The young population has seen an increase, mainly due to increased schooling of the children of the world, eager to know the realities in which they live, but also to maximize current living standards.

**Political factors** may contribute often, for short periods, to the affirmation or restriction of tourism activities by the regime imposed to displacements between states in conflict or with different social and economic ordinances. It is known in this sense that the great obstacle to the free movement of persons, the "cold war", promoted by the two opposite ideologies (communist and democratic), which co-existed for nearly half a century in Europe. After the removal of the totalitarian regimes of Eastern Europe, the organized tourism has benefited from a number of facilities on visa and collaboration with the countries on the planet. The year 2001 brought to most countries in Central and Eastern Europe countries visa-free entry to the Schengen Agreement, an important step for the free movement of persons in the future.

The movement toward Western Europe remains difficult of financial reasons, but also of restrictive measures taken by the governments of some countries to stop immigration.

Tourism is **a product of international understanding atmosphere**; it contributes, by its conduct, to the deepening and expanding cooperation among peoples, irrespective of the existing social and political peculiarities. The conflicts in some parts of the world and the expansion of terrorism, through the uncertainty produced, but also the disastrous consequences on the tourism infrastructure, disturbs deeply the tourist traffic in the concerned perimeters, often taking them out from the catalog offer. The conflicts in the Arab world are among the last decade disputes, which generated the Gulf War, those in India and Pakistan, the armed conflicts in Yugoslavia have slashed the number of tourists and hence, the related income. Not to mention the war in Lebanon which transformed one of the most visited countries in the Middle East in ruins.

The psychological factors play an increasingly important role in promoting leisure activities. If the economic elements are indispensable for ensuring the materials conditions of any trip, the political elements for the development framework, the psychological elements determine the need for travel. We consider the pressure on the human psyche by all daily stressors, the gradual removal of human from the nature, the environment in which it appeared and stated as species with high character, the imperatives of knowledge of other things and realities. Also on the psychological pathway, there is often the need to restore and maintain the biological health or the escape from the usual routine, which is customized to each person in the level of training, the interest in culture, the desire acquaintance, the character and the individual temper.

In addition to the reasons mentioned above, the need to travel, the psychological factors are active during deployment (for example, the pilgrimage). They require the individual, in an important share, but difficult to estimate the type of tourism and its particularities. Through the particular sensitivity to the quality of infrastructure, the tourist propaganda, to everything that can offer the individual the rapid and complete satisfaction of the needs of recreation and physical-psychological rehabilitation, the mentioned factors directs from "shadow", i.e. within the individual conscience, the parameters of future activities. The decision is based on consideration of all aspects of the other factors mentioned (economic, political, social) involved in the act of tourism, the psychological element becoming a conditioning of prime importance to the tourism phenomenon in general.

### **3 Basic elements and importance of tourism infrastructure**

In an effort to point to the importance of competitiveness in the tourism sector, one should primarily recognize the fact that tourism, as a phenomenon, depends on a very wide range of factors, and that it greatly affects the direction of the overall development of the area, and society in general. Tourism is a very complex sector of the economy, whose development affects the progress and prosperity of the national economy. Tourism sector is a component of a large series of development initiatives within any economic system. It is obvious that tourism is in an interdependent relationship

with economic growth and other economic activities (Zhang, 2015). In this regard, it does not strictly mean that tourism cannot be a major source of revenue and jobs in a society, but that its impact and role vary over time. “Tourism has been a major growth industry globally for over five decades. Factors underpinning this growth include the growth of incomes and wealth, improvements in transport, changing lifestyles and consumer values, increased leisure time, international openness and globalization, immigration, special events, education, information and communication technologies, destination marketing and promotion, improved general and tourism infrastructure and so on“ (Matias et al., 2007). Effects that tourism generates over time are related to the economic, social, and environmental components of society. In fulfilling the social component, tourism is manifested in what is a primary or secondary activity for the majority of the population living in attractive tourist regions of the world, but also those who live in other locations and are employed in these regions (Aziri Nedelea, 2013). However, expression of these effects requires investment in tourism, where one of the most important aspects is investment in tourism infrastructure. In this regard, each country has a task to encourage maximum utilization of available tourism potentials, whose attractiveness can attract significant numbers of tourists. With the increasing number of tourists, certain destinations become more competitive and more attractive for investment in the development of tourism infrastructure. It is clear that the tourist destination develops in a particular area at a particular time, and that it directly and indirectly affects the shaping of that area, both physiologically, through various tourism infrastructure facilities, suprastructure, and the presence of a large number of tourists, and by function, where the destination, next to the existing functions, gains the tourism function, which can be the dominant or the only function (Jovičić, 1980). Despite the fact that a destination has a number of natural beauties, lack of accommodation facilities and quality of road infrastructure can be an obstacle for successful tourism development. The subject of the work is the assessment of the relationship between infrastructure and tourism development, while having in mind that tourism development depends on the modernization of infrastructure, and points to the need to intensify investment in infrastructure, as an important driver of improving the tourism sector

Tourism infrastructure can be regarded as the physical elements that are designed and erected to cater for visitors. The strong relationship between tourism development and infrastructure has been theoretically established by a number of authors (Adebayo, Iweka, 2014). Some authors point to the difference between tourism infrastructure and suprastructure, claiming that suprastructure depends on infrastructure. Tourism infrastructure includes ancillary and complementary facilities, equipment, systems, processes, and resources necessary for the functioning of every tourist destination. This primarily includes roads, railways, airports, and the like, which make a tourist destination accessible for tourists. In addition, infrastructure includes health care systems, services, and public services. Building on infrastructure, suprastructure includes building facilities, which exist only because of tourism activities. Their main purpose is accommodation and meeting the needs and desires of tourists, in the form of hotels, campsites, restaurants, sports facilities, and the like (Popescu, 2011). Tourism infrastructure is the basis of tourism development, as well as a base for utilization of destination resources. The importance of tourism infrastructure is reflected in the fact that it can contribute to increasing the efficiency of production and distribution of tourism services, and, in some cases, such as remote destinations, even increase the supply of tourism services. For tourists to be able to reach some tourist destinations, there should be the developed transport infrastructure, which is a precondition for consuming other tourism services of the destination itself. The arrival of tourists enhances the efficiency of human resources at the destination, as tourists require certain services in order to feel better during their stay at the selected tourist destination. In particular, there is an increase in the demand for infrastructure services in terms of water supply, waste disposal, communication and electricity supply, as the necessary elements for comfortable functioning of tourists at the selected

destination. Infrastructure is defined as the provision of public safety, transportation services, medical systems, financial systems, education systems, and other services involved in the population's, as well as in tourists' demand (Ritchie, Crouch 2005). As a component of the regional tourism product, tourism infrastructure is of special importance for long-term tourism growth and the general progress of tourist destinations in providing the required services to tourists. Literature provides different views on the number and type of components representing tourism infrastructure. Thus, according to the Tourism & Transport Forum (Tourism & Transport Forum, 2012), tourism infrastructure is the supply chain of transport, social and environmental infrastructure collaborating at a regional level to create an attractive tourism destination. Transport infrastructure in this chain provides destination access to tourists from the international and domestic markets, and includes roads, airports, and railways. Social infrastructure relates to accommodation facilities in the form of rooms to accommodate tourists and other supporting physical structures for various kinds of activities and services that attract tourists. This infrastructure includes hotels, convention centers, stadiums, galleries, and other necessary facilities. Environmental infrastructure is a natural value, and refers to national parks, marine parks, and reserves which visitors can tour. In addition to these three types of infrastructure, tourism infrastructure includes the shared infrastructure, made of a network of regional, state, and national tourism organizations on the market where there is a tourist destination, and is engaged in the distribution of tourism products (Tourism & Transport Forum, 2012).

The issue of ownership of tourism infrastructure, which is an integral element of tourism supply chain, depends on the part observed. Infrastructure in the area of tourism is based largely on investment, coming from the private sector, and this share reaches 78% of the total investment in tourism (Tourism & Transport Forum, 2012). Social infrastructure is financed mainly from the private sector, while environmental infrastructure belongs to the state and includes public goods. Transport infrastructure is mostly owned by the state, and it is directly responsible for investment in this area, as well as development. The formation of tourism infrastructure substantially contributes to increasing the complexity of the tourism phenomenon, which affects the increase in functional complexity and territorial, destination, competitiveness (Lovelock, 2013). Today, enhancing the construction of tourism infrastructure concerns a large number of countries, wishing to achieve higher tourism results and its significant impact on economic development. Generating the effects of the overall development is conditioned by the way of managing the relationship between tourism infrastructure, tourism, and the local economy (Swyngedouw, 2000). It follows, then, that both the state and public enterprises, and the private sector are responsible for the quality of infrastructure. Planning the sustainable development of tourism infrastructure in line with this requires overall development of basic infrastructure and facilities, along with all tourism facilities in a balanced way. Smith (1994) points out that the level of development and functional use of tourism infrastructure and lack thereof in the vicinity of tourist destination and in it are obstacles that can really affect the experience and satisfaction of tourists in respect of a certain tourist destination (Smith, 1994). After a visit to a tourism destination, tourism infrastructure has an important role in the tourist's overall experience and impression regarding a specific destination. General infrastructure of the destination and services provided represent one of the most important factors of overall tourism development.

#### **4. Conclusions**

Following the preliminary stages for observing the conditions of tourism development in a particular area, we must ensure that what we invest is profitable. The issue of investment is not purely geographical, but rather economic. A region or a geographical area may have abundant natural

resources and tourism values, but they will be able to exploit them rationally only when potential tourists will be willing to visit these tourist values. Therefore, determining the expected customer typology should be done taking into account the current and foreseeable trends of travelers with destination in that geographic area, provided that must be considered also the emergence of competing offers, which will cause permanent changes in distribution of tourist flows.

It should be noted that investment in the tourism industry is a capital consumer, both because of the high cost of infrastructure and of the equipment of tourism. From this point of view, the tourism industry is growing, primarily, through specific investments, directly linked to the development of material and technical base of the tourist activity itself (accommodation, food, transport, entertainment, etc.) and, secondly, by nonspecific investments, designed for general technical and social infrastructure development, which contribute to the enhancement of the objectives of tourist interest.

The decision to invest in a tourism project depends on a number of criteria based on reality, referring to a stable political situation, the guarantees given to investments, the information on the existing legal framework, the information on financial and banking institutions that could help support the financing program, its ability to be a future source of benefit, obtaining sufficient proceeds to recoup the investment in a timely manner and the risk that we take within the investment.

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