

## TOURISM IN ROMANIA

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### **Abstract**

*Of all branches of national economy, tourism has the largest development perspective and assertion, first by the variety of natural and human resources that it holds, and secondly by the fact that compared to other economic sectors its resources are endless and can be used without producing adverse effects on the environment.*

*The essence of practicing tourism involves spending time in a constructively way, in the end the tourist will have a much larger stock of information, the possibility in restoring health and capacity for work, relaxation and recreation.*

**Key words:** tourism, tourism potential, tourism resources, tourism services

### **INTRODUCTION**

Tourism is a complex activity that involves a wide range of goods and services so as to interact with other economic sectors and being able to influence in some way their production.

Tourism is an economic phenomenon able to create jobs, growth and implicit economic and social integration.

We can not talk about tourism in Romania without stopping for a short presentation on tourism in Europe.

In Europe, the European Union is the first tourist destination in the world, with over 40% of global arrivals, almost 8 million from Russia, China, India and Brazil, countries that in recent years have seen significant growth. These arrivals have caused income of 270 billion euros, of which 75 billion were generated by tourists coming from outside the European Union (source Eurostat).

On the European continent the most important tourist destinations are France, Spain, Italy.

Europe offers tourists history, culture, nature, tradition, and a diversity which can hardly equal another continent.

Europe offers leisure throughout the year, starting with the possibility of relaxation in nature and continuing with the cultural life of cities.

At European level tourism manifests a partnership regarding removing obstacles for tourist traffic, and also the establishment of joint service packages and achieving training programs in the field.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

The practice of tourism in Romania is based on a complex and varied tourism potential, but it is not always exploited to its capacity, often lacking specific strategies for promoting the tourism areas.

In the tourism potential stands tourism resources, which are two types (natural and anthropic), each of which have a number of components, which are shown in figure 1.

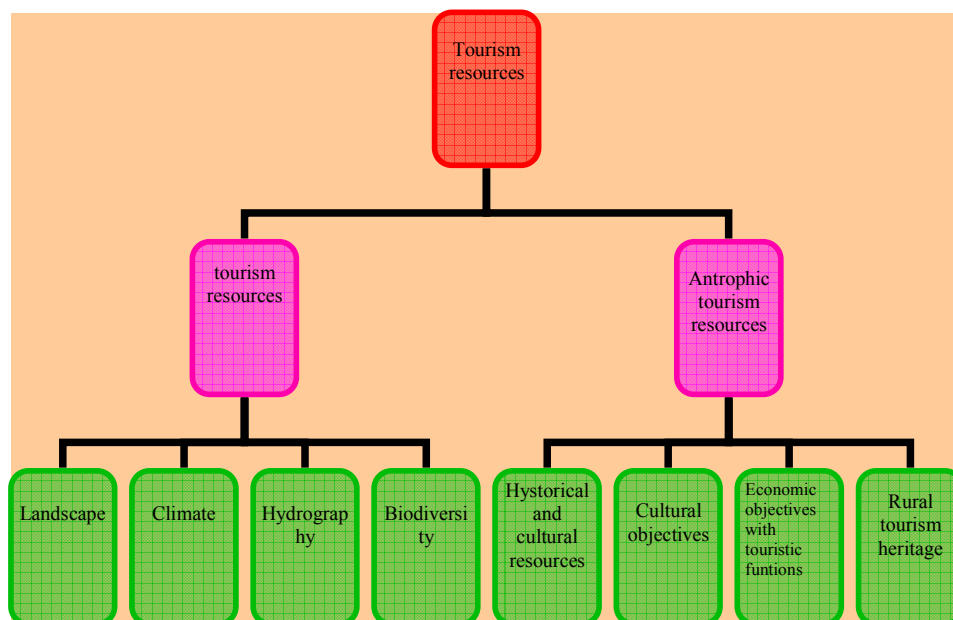


Fig. 1 Classification scheme of tourism resources

The meanings of natural tourism resources necessary to travel through the landscape is the support for tourism activities.

This type of resource has an important role in tourism, especially in the past years when the focus is on the return to nature, if possible with an unmodified human and low pollution.

The anthropic tourism resources leads the raising of the knowledge which are different exploited, often taking into account the state of mind of the tourist (eg. Visiting churches and monasteries).

The combination of different tourism resources, whatever their nature, on a certain area has contributed to the emergence of scenic landscapes, valued, he is heading the streams of tourists. Romania has many tourist attractions such as: the Danube Delta, a unique ecosystem which

includes the largest colony of pelicans in Europe; the Black Sea favorable for helio entertainment and cure; Carpathians, including Prahova Valley Rucăr Bran, Sphinx and Babele, Băile Herculane, Păltiniș, Eastern Carpathians, Cheile Bicazului, Lake St. Anne, Poiana Brașov, Apuseni Mountains, with an impressive karst stone land, Maramureș, Bucovina, Țara Oașului etc.

Holding varied and complex tourism resources in its territory Romania may carry different types of tourism.

Among all kinds of tourism (recreational and leisure tourism, curative health care, cultural and polyvalent tourism), the most important is curative tourism or health care because the human body's needs to rebuild, regardless of age or sex, especially nowadays when stress has become a part of everyday life. Also is the type of tourism that has contributed in the development as a form of complex tourism resort.

However health tourism has a pronounced decline in Romania. Resorts accommodate only about 150 thousand tourists annually and the tickets arrive in large part subsidized by the state through the Pension Fund. Foreign tourists do not prefer a stay in a resort in Romania because the services are not up to the standards they are accustomed.

The weak activity of the balneary complex is highlighted by the activity and capacity of tourist accommodation in tourist destinations.

The tourist accommodation capacity and activity in tourist destinations:

*Tabel 1*

Tourist accommodation capacity and activity in tourist destinations

<b>Balneary tourism</b>	<b>Year 2009</b>	<b>Year 2010</b>
Tourist reception with functions of tourists' accommodation (number)	377	386
Capacity	37.419	36.706
Average length of accommodation (days)	7,2	6,9

Source: Anuarul Statistic al României

Tourist accommodation base in our country encompasses a variety of types of units that are adapted to the forms and types of tourism which they support and the tourist areas where they are located. In 2010, tourist accommodation in Romania amounted to 311 698 places.

Accommodation by type of units have different weights, on the first place being situated hotels and motels, which represent 61% of the seats, followed by camping and cottage type units, villas and bungalows. At the opposite pole there are located camps and tourist inns.

Tourism activity is valued through tourist flows, national and international, which has recorded in the last years large oscillation during certain periods with a decreasing trend. This decrease is attributed to the reduction of living standards of the population and deterioration of tourism infrastructure.

Domestic tourists travel especially to the Black Sea in summer, to the mountain resorts and for winter sports in the winter and to the different scattered tourist attractions, urban centers respectively areas with historical tourist attractions.

International tourism is headed towards Braşov and surroundings, the Black Sea littoral, some balneary resorts (Băile Felix), the monasteries of Moldova, the Bucovina region.

With all complex and varied tourism potential, tourism in Romania has to suffer because of lack of promotion strategies but mostly because of lack of involvement of specialized Romanian authorities in this field over the years, who considered that tourism does not represent a national priority and therefore it can wait.

For Romania is now very difficult to respond positively waged against fierce competition from other countries in South-Eastern Europe, Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria, Croatia. In fact these countries, according to the World Tourism Organization, are located in the top 50 most wanted tourist destinations in the world.

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Therefore in order to survive such challenges Romania is obliged to invest financial, human and material to reduce the gaps between it and the states mentioned above, although large investment efforts will be observable over the years, but they can no longer be postponed because tourists lost in this moments cannot be recovered quickly.

Lack of strategies in tourism are reflected in weak receipts Romania has compared to other European countries: Austria more than 18 billion \$, Turkey over 17 billion \$, Czech Republic 7.24 billion \$, Hungary 3.84 billion \$, Bulgaria 2,95 billion \$, Romania 1.21 billion \$.

Romania as a tourist destination has a series of strengths and weaknesses, and for solving them the Romanian state has to focus more attention.

Table 2

Strengths and weaknesses of Romanian tourism practice

Strengths of Romanian tourism	Weaknesses of Romanian tourism
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Varied topography;</li> <li>- The existence of the karstic relief well highlighted in the Apuseni Mountains;</li> <li>- The existence of the Danube Delta, that is in the UNESCO World Heritage;</li> <li>- The Danube River;</li> <li>- 3000 mineral water springs, which offers a wide variety of balneary treatments;</li> <li>- Temperate continental climate;</li> <li>- The existence of national parks and protected areas;</li> <li>- The existence of medieval castles in Transylvania;</li> <li>- the presence of Romanian villages, in which the Romanian tradition is still preserved and can be converted into tourist villages;</li> <li>- Well-developed telecommunications network, phone, GSM, Satellite.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Environmental pollution;</li> <li>- Pollution of the Danube and the Danube Delta;</li> <li>- Degradation of many historical buildings and monuments;</li> <li>- Weak quality of roads;</li> <li>- the existence of accommodation which needs to be upgraded;</li> <li>- Labor migration from the tourist industry due to low salaries and difficult working conditions;</li> <li>- Weak presentation of Romania as a tourist destination at international level;</li> <li>- Lack of large investments in tourism;</li> <li>- Reduced contribution of tourism to the GDP;</li> </ul>

In order to train a large segment of population in practicing tourism have been made the first steps through carrying out some social programs such as Littoral for all, Spa Decade, A week in the mountains etc.

**CONCLUSION**

Travel and tourism industry represents the most dynamic sector of activity and also an important generator of jobs. Therefore Romania through tourism potential that dispose can build an economic development perspective.

Compared to other countries in Europe that are touristic developed, Romania may present an advantage in the sense that may become a tourist attraction as far as surrounding states are overburdened and too much known by tourists.

For tourism development our country must put both a special emphasis not only on the existence of tourism resources but mainly on

professional training, on conducting training courses in basic trades of tourism.

It is also important the correlation of the relations between service quality and prices at which they are offered.

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