

EVOLUTION OF TOURIST ACCOMMODATION STRUCTURES AND TYPES OF ACCOMMODATION IN BIHOR COUNTY BETWEEN 2019-2021

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Abstract

In this paper I tried to analyze the evolution of tourists that visit the Oradea city between 2019-2021. Following this evolution we noticed that the largest number of tourists who visited the city was in 2019 being preceded by 2020, when due to the coronavirus crisis number of tourists was lowest. We also analyzed in what types of units did these tourists stay when they arrived here.

We started by presenting the city and a bit of its history. After which we wanted to get acquainted with this locality from a cultural point of view being the capital of art nouveau, from the point of view of hydrography there are thermal waters invested in the Nymphaea Aquapark park, from a gastronomic point of view Oradea has a network of public food units specialized in local gastronomic products. All these strengths bring Oradea to the first tourist cities in the country.

Key words: a public-private partnership, thermal water, tourist destination.

INTRODUCTION

Oradea, a while ago named Oradea Mare, is a municipality located in western Romania, on the banks of the Crișul Repede river, in the immediate vicinity of the border with Hungary, the county seat of Bihor, being the most important city in historical region of Crișana. Located only 13 km from the western border of Romania, Oradea city occupies a privileged Central European position, constituting an important communication node, located at almost equal distance from the capitals of the region: Bucharest (651km), Vienna (518km), Budapest (248km), Prague (676km).

At an altitude of 126 m above sea level, Oradea is located at the opening of the Crișul Repede Valley towards the plain, in a contact area between the extensions of the Apuseni Mountains and the Banato-Crișana

Plain, a passage area from the hilly relief (The Western Hills, The Hills of Oradea, the Gepişului Hills) to that of the plain. The climate of the city is determined by the West Winds, being a temperate continental climate, with an average annual temperature of 10.4 C, for July the average does not exceed 21 C, while in January it is recorded an average of -1.4 C, with rainfall recording an annual average of 585.4 mm.

The official area of Oradea is 11,556 ha, placing it among the top 10 cities in terms of extent. The population of the city (not taking into account the metropolitan area) is 206,463 inhabitants, according to the 2002 census, of which 54% is an active population. In Oradea, the majority of the population is of Romanian ethnicity ("70,4%"), and there is also an important Hungarian minority ("27,5%"). In addition to Romanians and Hungarians, the city also hosts Gypsy ("1.2%"), German ("0.3%") and Slovak (0.2%), with other ethnic groups (Jews, Ukrainians, etc.).

It is a city with a rich history that was not necessarily the result of a foundation, but on the contrary it was the result of a long evolution throughout history, crossed by a series of events that represented a factor of harmonious development, a hindrance or stopping the growth of the city.

In the period between the two world wars, the municipality maintained itself as a powerful industrial and commercial center. As in the case of other large cities in Western Transylvania, the efforts were directed towards the transformation of Oradea into a powerful Romanian cultural center.

Our city has experienced, in years of the communist dictatorship, an undeniable development. Starting from 1949-1950, after nationalization, the enterprises carried out their activity in accordance with the five-year plans, characteristic of the time. The focus of industrial development was on the machine -building, energy, steel and chemical branches, but light and food industry was also representative. As a result of these economic developments, Oradea's population increased significantly, the natural increase being added to it an important component of population movement towards the more developed areas. Progress has also been made in the area of public services, transport, health. Also, tourism was a concern for the authorities of the time, in this respect Baile Felix and Băile 1 Mai, whose thermal water resources with curative effects had a reputation constituted since the XVI century, were brought to the standards of the time.

As far as the economy of Oradea is concerned, it has always been one of the most prosperous cities of Romania, largely due to its proximity to the hungarian border, thus becoming a gateway to the West. Gdp per capita is about 150% higher than the average in Romania. After 1989, due to the large number of consumers, Oradea experienced an economic revival, not so much in the industrial sector but in the service sector.

The unemployment rate in Oradea is 6.0%, slightly lower than national average, but much higher than the average for Bihor County, of about 2%. 60% of Bihor's industrial production comes from Oradea, the population representing 34% of the total per county. The main industries are: furniture, textile, lohn, footwear and food.

From the point of view of tourism in Oradea it has been demonstrated, year after year that there would be potential. In 2015, the Association for the Promotion of Tourism in Oradea and the Region (Visit Oradea) was founded. This organization is realized on the basis of a public-private partnership with the purpose of promoting the city of Oradea as a tourist destination. The marketing work highlighted the main strengths of this municipality and from that moment on all the investments that were made had as a starting point the rehabilitation of the anthropogenic objectives in this area.

The first major investment was in the restoration of Oradea fortress. In turn all the important buildings have been rehabilitated, with the main purpose of highlighting the nouveou art style. From 2015 until now, the change in architecture and the city is visible. The purpose of these investments was to increase the standard of living in the city, as well as to increase the number of tourists visiting Oradea.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

For this work we used statistical data provided by the National Institute of Statistics and the department of statistics in Oradea. The work covers well the field of qualitative research, seen as a first-order alternative, but also as a necessary complement to quantitative methods. For the research method we used qualitative exploratory research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

On July 31, 2021, the accommodation structure in Bihor County was 278 tourist units, the number of accommodation places was 6889 and a number of 14304 people can be accommodated here. We analyzed the evolution compared to 2019 and 2020 and we noticed an increase, small but still an increase. In the total accommodation structures you can see the figure and table number 1.

Table no. 1

Tourist accommodation structures by classification categories, as of 31 July 2020

Structure	%
5 stars	1,7
4 stars	12,3
3 stars	54,6
2 stars	24,3
1 star	5,9
not classified by stars	1,2

Source:Tempo online

We can easily see that depending on the classification category of the tourist units, the 3-star ones predominate. The 3-star accommodation units in Oradea are RHC Royal Hotel, Impero, Hotel Lyra, each with its own specificity. Among them the Stokker Hotel is representative due to the authentic restaurant and wine cellar and the strategic positioning in the middle of the city, surrounded with a lot of greenery. Within Oradea municipality, according to the structure of the accommodation places, the hotels predominate, after that the pensions according to table number 2.

Table no. 2

Structure of the existing tourist accommodation places, by type of structures, as of 31 July 2021

Types of tourist accommodation structures	%
Hotels	55.0
Agrotourism pensions	15.3
Tourist pensions	9.7
Tourist villas	4.7
Hostels	3.9
Other types	11.4

Source:Tempo online

Number of tourists who visited Oradea was increasing from year to year, according to INS dates in 2018, 250395 tourists visited Oradea. In 2019 the number was 256487 tourists and in 2020, due to the pandemic, the number dropped to 113122 tourists. Usually most tourists came to Oradea in August, 34,395 in number. In July, the city was visited by 27,661 people, and in June by another 22,044. At the opposite pole, the month with the fewest tourists was February: 14,281 visitors.

CONCLUSIONS

Since 2015, when the Association for the Promotion of Tourism in Oradea was founded from year to year, the number of tourists visiting the city is increasing. Due to the well-thought-out promotion through the participation in national and international fairs and exhibitions, through the printing of brochures with the cultural edifices of the city as well as due to the fact that Oradea is the second time the city of good deeds from radio Zu, the number of tourists in our city is increasing.

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