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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TOURISM AND NATIONAL ECONOMY

RELATIA DINTRE TURISM SI ECONOMIA NATIONALA

S. RUSU[1], R. CURETEANU[1], F. L. ISAC[1]

[1]"Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, Romania; sergiurusu @yahoo.com

Abstract: *Nowadays, the specialists' efforts are moving with scientific rigor to determine the content of tourism, its interdependencies with other elements of the economy.*

Key words*: tourism, economy, travel*

INTRODUCTION

Today tourism is a distinct field of activity, a crucial component of economic and social life for a growing number of countries around the world.

Tourism is constantly evolving under the changes in the contemporary civilization, its dynamic is integrated in the overall development process. Tourism also acts as a stimulating factor of progress and development of the vast human and material potential rised in its deployment.

Even if elements of tourism are present since ancient times, such as pilgrimages of the ancient Greeks, or the Romans visits at the thermal waters in the provinces, tourism has crystallized in the second half of the nineteenth century.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Davidoff declares: The human need to travel has persisted throughout history. However, until recent times most travel was for necessity rather than pleasure, because it were difficult and dangerous

journeys. It is not coincidence that the root word for *travel* and *travail* (heavy labor) is the same. Travel was hard. Travel is an activity that occurs in income and educational level within our society. [Davidoff P.G., Davidoff D.S., Sales and Marketing for Travel and Tourism, National Publishers, 1983, p.29]

Tourism is an activity involving a complex mixture of material and psychological elements. The material elements consist of accommodation, transportation and attractions. The psychological factors are represented by a wide range of specific attitudes, desires and human emotions. [Foster D., Travel and Tourism Management, MacMillan Education Ltd., 1985, p.5]

Defining tourism is a key step in its research, and the existence of many definitions in relation to this phenomenon demonstrates the complexity and importance of tourism.

Defining tourism is difficult and should be referred to several key elements:

1. tourism is statistically invisible - there are gaps in the record data of interest in the individual countries and globally;
2. There are different ways to collect tourism statistical data in each country;
3. Data can differ from one country to another for various reasons: changes in boundaries, discontinuities in data collection etc. [Williams A., Shaw G.,Tourism & Economic Development, European Experiences, John Wiley & Sons Ltd., 1998, p.15]

Lesley Pender said: The tourism takes place away from home and so involves an element of travel. The Tourism Society in the UK has adopted a short definition developed by Burkart and Medlik which is now widely accepted: "Tourism is a temporary short term movement of people to destinations outside the places where they normally live and work, and their activities during their stay at these destinations". [Pender L., Marketing Management for Travel and Tourism, Stanley Thornes Publishers Ltd. UK, 1999, p.2]

A very interesting definition comes from David Weaver and Laura Lawton: "tourism is the sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the interaction among tourists, the tourism industry, host governments, host communities, origin governments, universities, community colleges and non-governmental organisations, in the process of attracting, transporting, hosting and managing these tourists and other visitors."

[Weaver D., Lawton L., *Tourism Management,* John Wiley & Sons, Milton, Australia , 2002, p.3]

World Tourism Organization proposed a definition of national tourism: the national tourist can be considered any person visiting a place that is not his usual residence, located within its country of residence and having a purpose different from that of exercising paid employment, and making at least one overnight stay (24 hours). [Snak O., Baron P., Neacşu N., *Economia turismului*, Ed. Expert, Bucureşti, 2001, p.22]

Tourism covers the production and consumption of goods or services which contribute to the heterogeneous needs of the tourists [Petcu N., Statistica în turism 2005, teorie şi aplicații, Editura Albastră, 2005, p.106]

Jafari describes tourism as consisting of a "study on man away from his usual habitat, of the industry which responds to his needs and the impacts that both he and the industry have for the host socio-cultural, economic and physical environments." [Mason P., Tourism Impacts, Planning and Management, Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann, 2005, p.5]

Thus tourism can be seen as a phenomenon, not a productive activity, and as an experience or process, not a product. [Theobald W., Global Tourism, Elsevier-Butterworth-Heinemann, 2005, p.29]

After defining tourism we should look into defining tourist as well. In 1936 The Committee of Statistical Experts of the League of Nations defined foreign tourist as "one who visits a country other than that in which he habitually lives for a period of at least twenty-four hours". Its successor, the United Nations, amended this definition in 1945, by including a maximum stay of six months. [Theobald W., Global Tourism, Elsevier-Butterworth-Heinemann, 2005, p.12]

So tourists can be considered:

- Persons taking a trip of pleasure or recreation or for any other reasons (family, health);
- persons traveling to attend conferences or scientific meetings, diplomatic, religious, sports etc.
- people who are on business trips;
- persons in sea cruises, even if the duration of their stay in the country visited is less than 24 hours.

Are not considered tourists:

- people who arrive in a country with or without labor contracts, to occupy a position or to exercise a professional activity;
- people who come to establish permanent residence in a country;
- students temporarily residing abroad;
- persons traveling temporarily in the border areas, and persons who permanently reside in one country but work in another country;
- transit passengers who do not stop crossing into the country even if the duration exceeds 24 hours.

The tourism literature focuses on economic, social and psychological positive effects that tourism brings, which is based on attracting foreign courrency, the development of international relations, opening intellectual and cultural horizons, creating conditions for better understanding between different nations. But there are voices expressing critical views of the tourism phenomenon, considering tourism as a disease that spreads through the world.

I. Niță & C. Niță making a comparison with other industries, present the numerous advantages of tourism:
- Tourism's added value is higher than other industries due to the fact that the importing of raw materials in this sector is negligible;
- is not an energy intensive industry;
- allows to convert the human and material resources into currency, which can be exploited in another way;
- uses mostly local raw materials;
- rate of return in tourism has advantages over other branches;
- ensures the balanced development of all areas of the country.

According to Mak: "The most important difference between tourism and most forms of recreation is that consumers must travel to consume tourism. Recreation does not imply travel. A game of tennis or a stroll in a neighborhood park constitute recreation, but the distance traveled to the location where these acts take place may be minimal... Tourism implies the removal of a person away from his habitual place of residence and his stay in another location." [Mak J., Tourism and the Economy, University of Hawai'i Press, 2004, p.5]

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Linkages between tourism and other sectors of the economy are larger and more complex, wearing different forms, manifested directly or indirectly, regularly or permanently, horizontally or vertically. For example, for the tourist activity are necessary inputs from other industries: food, agriculture, construction and building materials, energy, machine building. Direct links are those with telecommunications, transport, arts and culture. From these results the important position of tourism in the structure of the economic mechanism and its active role in the economic development and modernization of society.

CONCLUSIONS

Over the years the concept of the tourism has changed and enriched with new elements, but in conclusion tourism is a complex with a vast economic load and which is positioned at the crossroads of many industries and economic sectors.

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