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ACCOMMODATION SPACES ON RIVER AND SEA SHIPS – A TOURIST ALTERNATIVE IN THE TULCEA AREA

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Abstract: The study aims to highlight aspects of the use of cruise ships and small vessels as innovative forms of accommodation and tourist experience in the Danube Delta and the coastal area of Tulcea County. In the context of the development of sustainable tourism and the diversification of the Romanian tourist offer, the study presents aspects of these accommodation structures, but also the competitive advantages of this form of tourism compared to traditional accommodation structures, by integrating mobility, direct contact with the natural environment and the valorization of the local natural and cultural heritage. The use of SWOT analysis allows a complex assessment of the potential of this form of accommodation.

• Introduction

The development of tourism in Tulcea area, the gateway to the Danube Delta, requires the diversification of accommodation forms and the orientation towards unconventional solutions, adapted to the natural and cultural specifics of the region. In this context, accommodation spaces arranged on river or sea ships represent an innovative alternative, which combines mobility, authentic experience on the water and the valorization of natural heritage.

This type of tourist infrastructure offers significant advantages: harmonious integration into the aquatic environment, flexibility of routes and the possibility of attracting segments of tourists interested in ecotourism, short cruises and personalized experiences. At the same time, these spaces can contribute to the extension of the tourist season and to the reduction of pressure on traditional accommodation structures in the Danube Delta.

• Material and method

- The research on accommodation structures on sea and river ships in the Tulcea area, as a tourism alternative, was based on a mixed approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods, in order to obtain an integrated perspective on the tourism and infrastructural potential of the region.
- Primary and secondary documentary sources were used, including: statistical data provided by the National Institute of Statistics, Tulcea County Directorate and the Romanian Naval Authority; strategic documents and local tourism development plans (Sustainable Development Strategy of Tulcea County, County Territorial Development Plan, etc.) and online databases on floating accommodation units.

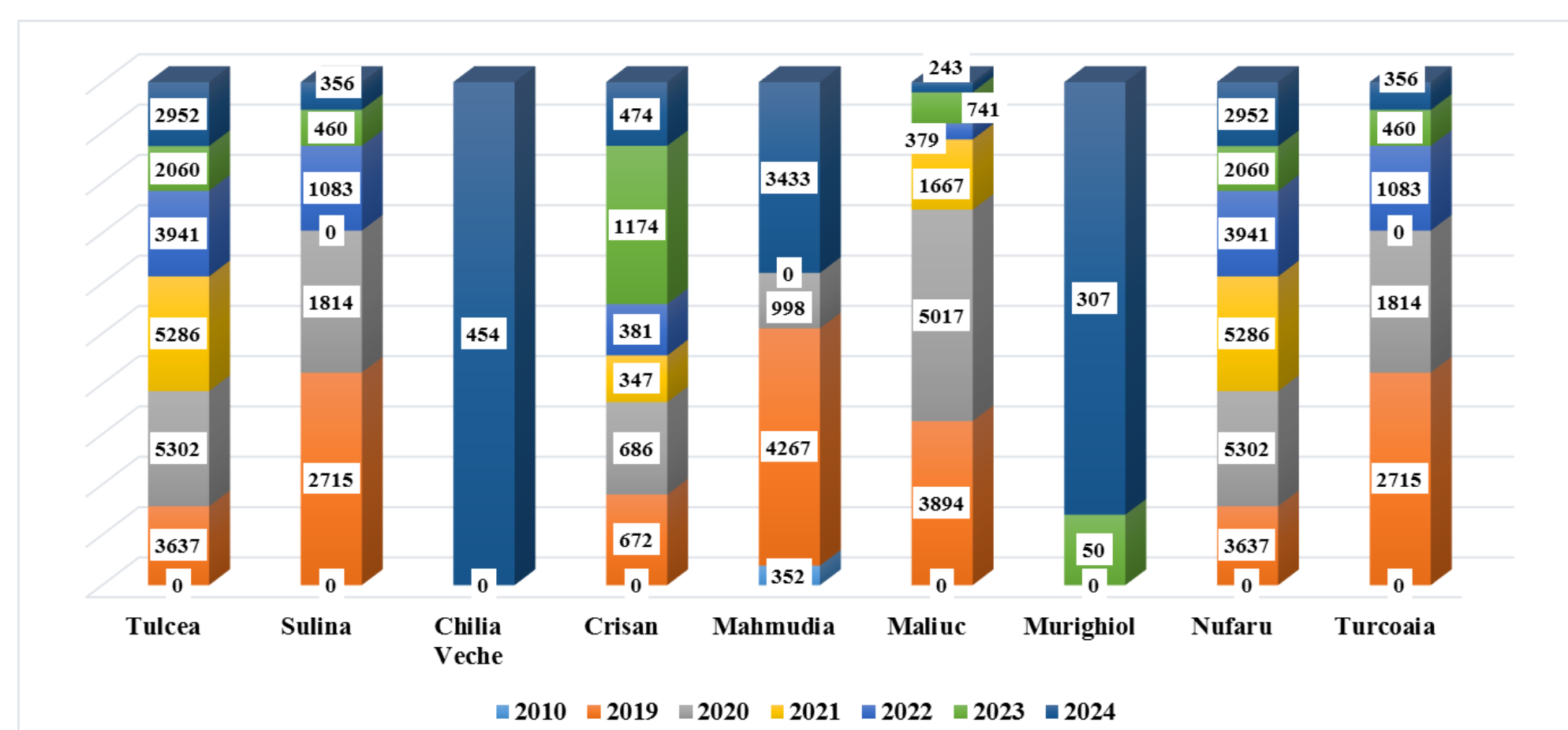


Figure 3. Overnight stays within the analyzed structure (number)

Conclusions

Tourism in the Tulcea area, closely linked to the natural resources and the uniqueness of the Danube Delta, is faced with the need to diversify accommodation services and adapt to modern trends in the tourism market. In this context, the development of accommodation spaces on sea and river ships is emerging as a viable, sustainable and attractive alternative, capable of meeting the demands of a public interested in authentic experiences and responsible tourism.

In conclusion, accommodation spaces on sea and river ships can represent a valuable tool for consolidating the tourism brand of Tulcea County. By responsibly exploiting natural resources and adapting the infrastructure to the requirements of sustainable tourism, this form of accommodation can significantly contribute to sustainable development and the diversification of the regional tourism offer.

• Results and discussions

Sea and river ships, including floating pontoons, used to accommodate tourists during the trip or as floating hotels anchored in ports, are classified by star rating (from 1 to 5) depending on the quality of the facilities and services they offer.

The area under study includes the following localities near Tulcea: Sulina, Chilia Veche, Crisan, Mahmudia, Maliuc, Murighiol, Nufaru and Turcoaia, which have such types of accommodation. In some localities, such as Chilia Veche, Nufaru and Turcoaia, these types of structures are more recent

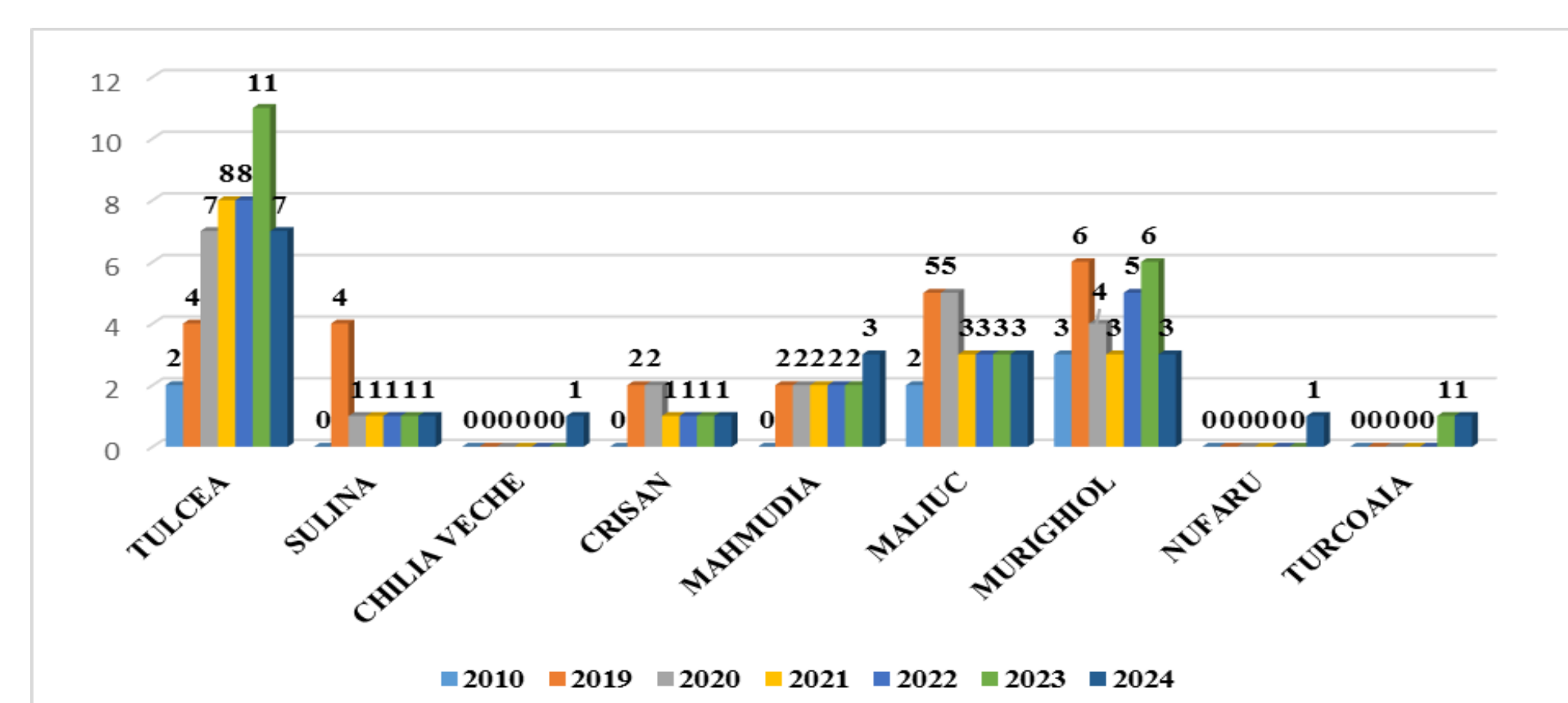


Figure 1. Total reception structures in the studied area (number)

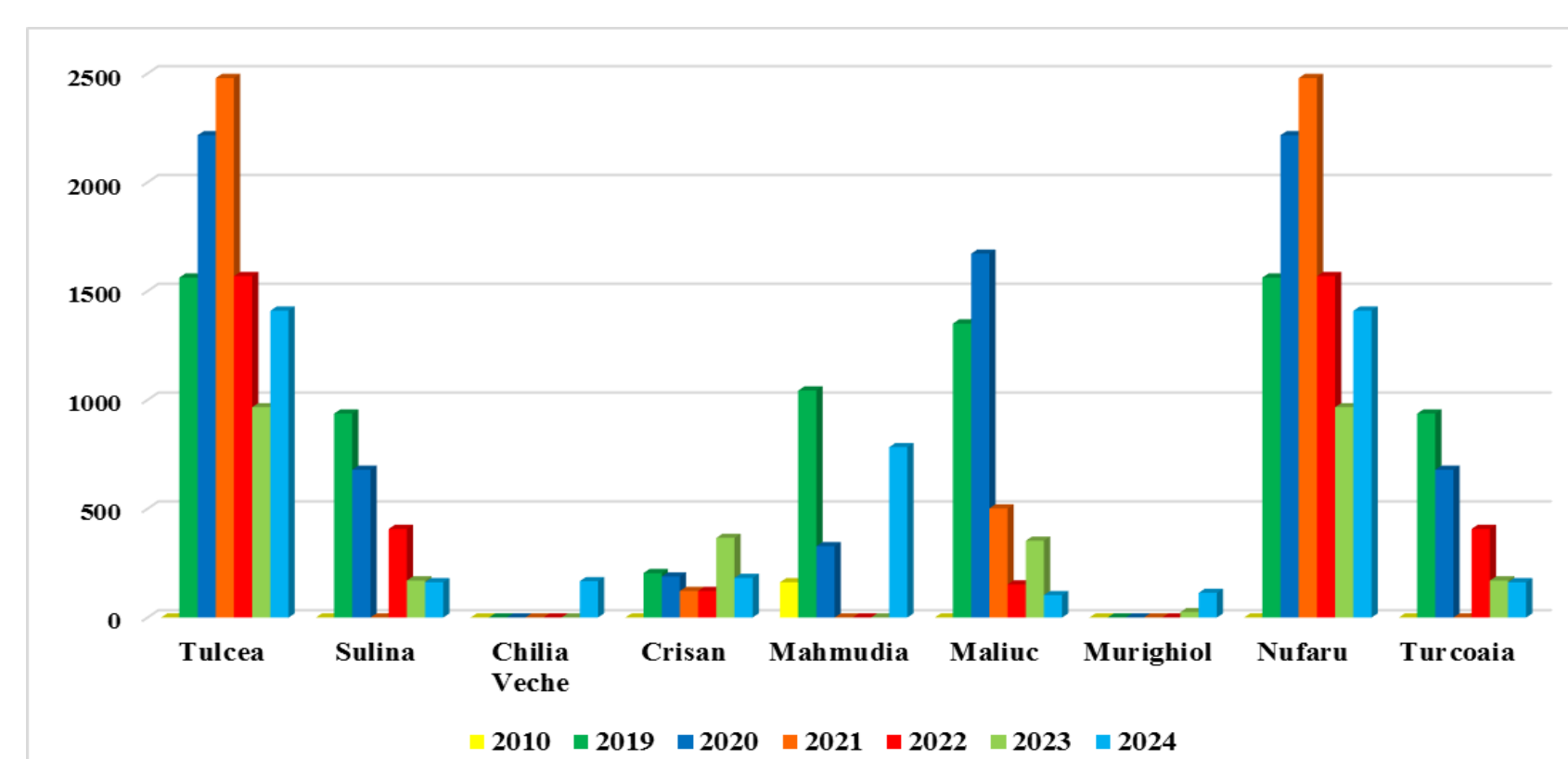


Figure 2. Situation of tourist arrivals within the analyzed accommodation structure (number)

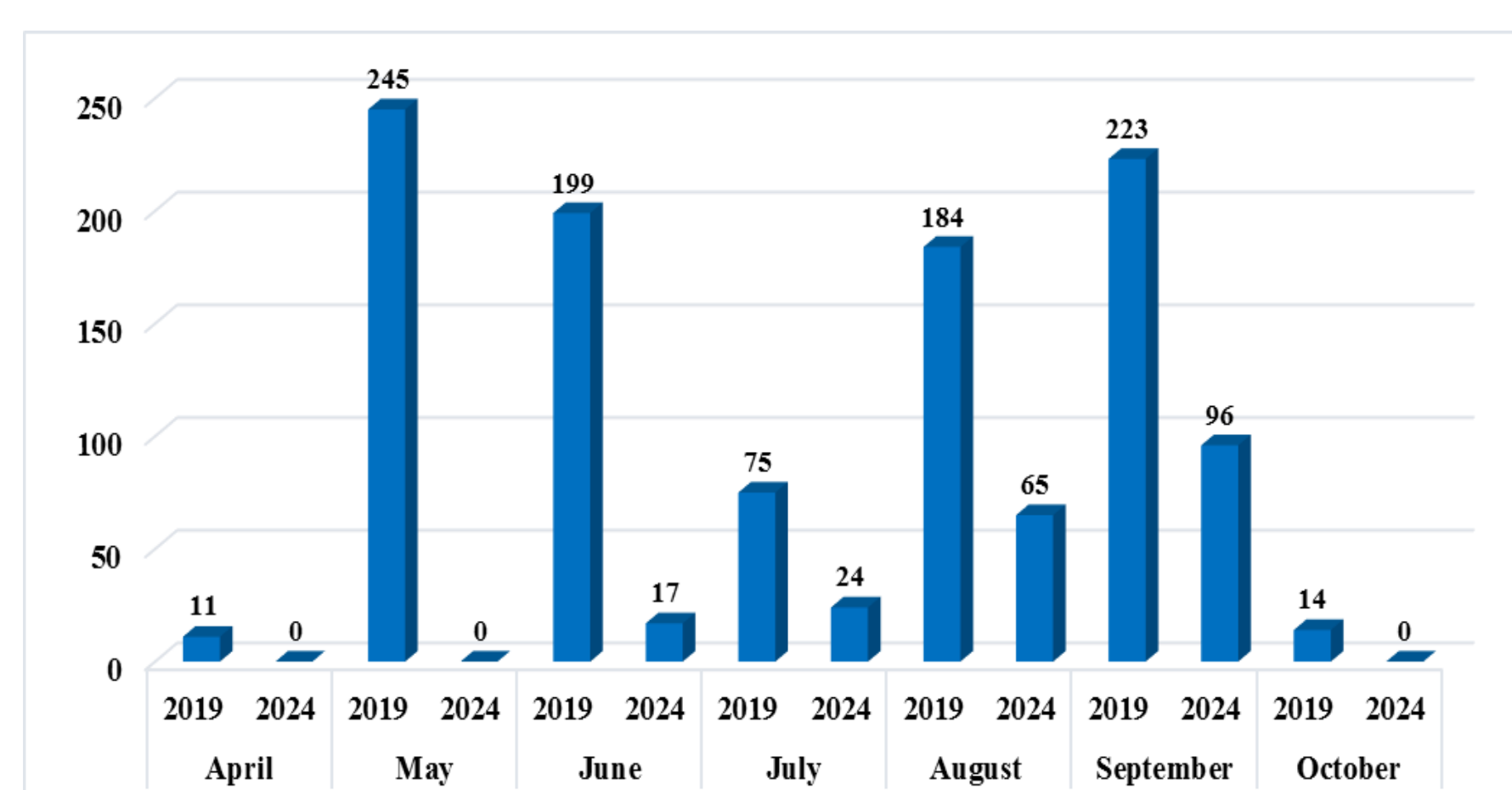


Figure 4. Situation of foreigners who opted for this type of accommodation (number)