



UNIVERSITATEA  
BABEȘ-BOLYAI

FACULTATEA DE  
**BUSINESS**  
IN PARTNERSHIP

in partnership with



Universitatea  
Ștefan cel Mare  
Suceava

Universitatea "Ștefan cel Mare" din  
Suceava  
Facultatea de Științe Economice și  
Administrație Publică



Universitatea  
Româno- Americană

Universitatea Româno-Americană,  
București

# Generational impact in the Hospitality Industry

October 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Cluj-Napoca, România

<https://tbs.ubbcluj.ro/ehi18/>

**RISOPRINT**

Cluj-Napoca  
2018

Proceedings of the International Conference **ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY**, 5<sup>th</sup> edition, *Generational impact in the Hospitality Industry*  
October 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Cluj-Napoca, România

**Edited by:** Smaranda Adina Cosma, Cristina Fleşeriu, Adina Letiția Negrușă, Marius Bota, Valentin Toader

**ISBN: 978-973-53-1395-2**

### **Scientific Committee**

Prof. dr. Heike Bahre, University of Applied Sciences Berlin/ University of Economics, Technology and Culture, Germany  
Assoc. Prof. dr. Carmen Băbăiță, Universitatea de Vest, Timișoara, România  
Assoc. Prof. dr. Gina Ionela Butnaru, Universitatea AI Cuza, Iași, România  
Prof. dr. Medet Yolal, Anadolu University, Turkey  
Assoc. Prof. dr. Carmen Chasovschi, Universitatea Ștefan cel Mare, Suceava, România  
Prof. dr. Smaranda Adina Cosma, Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai, Cluj-Napoca, România  
Prof. dr. Daniela Firoiu, Universitatea Româno-Americană, București, România  
Prof. dr. Delia Popescu, Academia de Studii Economice, București, România  
Prof. dr. Bogdan Glăvan, Universitatea Româno-Americană, București, România  
Prof. dr. Laura Bacali, Universitatea Tehnică, Cluj-Napoca, România  
Prof. dr. Onur Gulbahar, Okan University, Turkey  
Prof. dr. Gabriela Țigu, Academia de Studii Economice, București, România  
Prof. dr. Valentin Hapenciuc, Universitatea Ștefan cel Mare, Suceava, România  
Prof. dr. Carmen Năstase, Universitatea Ștefan cel Mare, Suceava, România  
Assoc. Prof. dr. Adina Letiția Negrușă, Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai, Cluj-Napoca, România  
Assoc. Prof. dr. Alexandru Nedelea, Universitatea Ștefan cel Mare, Suceava, România  
Prof. dr. Gabriela Prelipcean, Universitatea Ștefan cel Mare, Suceava, România  
Prof. dr. Felicia Stăncioiu, Academia de Studii Economice, București, România  
Prof. dr. Gabriela Stănciulescu, Academia de Studii Economice, București, România  
Assoc. Prof. dr. Marius Bota, Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai, Cluj-Napoca, România  
Prof. dr. Felix Arion, University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, Cluj-Napoca, România  
Prof. dr. Marian Zaharia, Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiesti, România  
Assoc. Prof. dr. Vicky Katsoni, Technological Educational Institute of Athens, Greece  
Prof. dr. Teodor Rusu, University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine, Cluj-Napoca, România  
Prof. dr. Kemal Birdir, Mersin University, Faculty of Tourism, Turkey  
Assoc. Prof. dr. Mihaela Birsan, University Ștefan cel Mare of Suceava, Romania  
Assoc. Prof. dr. Valentin Toader, Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai, Cluj-Napoca, România  
Assoc. Prof. dr. Mariana Lupan, University Ștefan cel Mare of Suceava, Romania  
Prof. dr. Diana Mihaela Pociovalisteanu, "Constantin Brâncuși", University of Târgu-Jiu, Romania, România  
Prof. dr. Delia-Cristina Bălaș, Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai, Cluj-Napoca, România  
Assoc. Prof. dr. Oana Adriana Gică, Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai, Cluj-Napoca, România  
Prof. dr. Antón Alvarez-Sousa, University of Coruna, Spain

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Adina Negrușă, Valentin Toader</b> - GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN THE CASE OF FILM FESTIVAL ATTENDANCE.....	<b>1</b>
<b>Aurelian Sofică, Smaranda Cosma</b> - OPERATIONALIZING EXTENDED MARKETING MIX FOR HRM RECRUITING PURPOSES:HOW TO SELL A JOB.....	<b>8</b>
<b>Carmen Mihaela Băbăiță, Damaris Galați, Andrea Nagy</b> - DISCOVERING THE ROOTS – ANCESTRAL TOURISM IN ROMANIA.....	<b>15</b>
<b>Cristina Fleșeriu, Smaranda Cosma, Vlad Bocăneț, Marius Bota</b> - THE INFLUENCE OF AGE ON HOW ROMANIANS CHOOSE A HOTEL.....	<b>20</b>
<b>Patricia Silvia Dodu, Emanuela Anton, Ioana Cristiana Patrichi</b> - DEVELOPING ROMANIAN CRUISE TOURISM BZ INCLUDING PORT OF CONSTANȚA AS MAIN HUB. MARKETING RESEARCH APPROACH.....	<b>28</b>
<b>Mihaela-Filofteia Tutunea</b> - TRAVEL BOOKING. METHODS AND TOOLS PREFERED BY GENERATIONS.....	<b>36</b>
<b>Konstantina Zerva, Carola Martí</b> - PERSONNEL’S SERVICE QUALITY ON LUXURY HOTELS: THE TRANSITION OF CUSTOMERS’ PERCEPTION TOWARDS EMOTIONS.....	<b>40</b>
<b>Smaranda Cosma, Lasse Berntzen, Cristina Fleșeriu, Ionuț Călin Căzan</b> - EXPLORATORY STUDY REGARDING TOURISM DESTINATION GVERNANCE.....	<b>47</b>
<b>Ioana Maria Tripon</b> - COMPETITIVENESS IN TOURISM: A THEORETICAL OUTLOOK.....	<b>51</b>
<b>Mihai Cristian Enachi, Claudia - Mihaela Enachi</b> - ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.....	<b>57</b>
<b>Ionuț Călin Cazan</b> - ENTREPRENEURS MOTIVATION IN TOURISM SECTOR. A LITERATURE REVIEW.....	<b>62</b>
<b>Răzvan Onu, Gabriela Martin</b> - INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TOURISM. VOLUNTOURISM AND ORGANIC FARMING EXPERIENCES IN ROMANIA. CASE STUDY.....	<b>67</b>
<b>Dorin Bota</b> - EUROPEAN FUNDS FOR RURAL TOURISM IN CLUJ COUNTY.....	<b>75</b>
<b>Daniela Andreea Caraba</b> - INTERNATIONAL VISITORS, AN UNEXPLORED OPPORTUNITY FOR THE STAGE ARTS MARKET DEVELOPMENT IN CLUJ-NAPOCA.....	<b>78</b>

**Horațiu Borza, Marius Bota** – RELIGIOUS TOURISM AS WAY OF PERSONAL FULFILLMENT...**83**

**Ionuț Călin Cazan** - PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS DIGITALIZATION. AN EASTERN EUROPEAN  
COUNTRY CASE STUDY.....**89**

# GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN THE CASE OF FILM FESTIVAL ATTENDANCE

**Adina Letiția NEGRUȘA, Valentin TOADER**  
**Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania**

## **Abstract**

*Lately, festivals register one of the most dynamic developments between all the cultural events, providing opportunities for socialization or cultural enrichment for different categories of people. Behaviors and motivations to attend such an event vary according to the attendees' lifestyles and characteristics. In line with this aspect, the paper analyzes the motivations of different generations to attend the film festival with the purpose of emphasizing the impact of motivation on festival behavior.*

*The results show a significant difference between baby boomers and Z generations, on one side, and X and Y generations on the other side. The first is characterized by a spontaneous behavior during the festival, while the second category plan in advance the activities and the movies they will attend during the festival.*

**Keywords:** generations, film festivals, attendance reasons

**Jel Classifications:** L83

## **Introduction**

The last 10-15 years there is an increasing interest for analyzing the impact of generational nexus toward different aspects of the people life activity. Thus, in the literature can be identified the following major topics approached in this regards by many researchers: understanding the work values of the new generations, there is an notable number of studies done in the sense of analyzing differences of work attitudes, values, motivation and behavior from one generation to another; different buying behavior and satisfaction from one generation to another. If there are considerable studies in the literature in the last 10 years referring to the generational influences upon work attitude, work satisfaction, managerial style, buying behavior, there are very few which focused on identifying such differences on the subject of spending free time and relaxing activities. Thus, the research done in this article is trying to bring new information in this regards.

## **Literature review**

Generational theory was for the first time popularized by Strauss and Howe who define generation as a cohort of individuals born within the similar span of time and over these phase of life they shared a common location in the history (Strauss & Howe, 1997) and were shaped by similar events, trends and developments (McCrinkle & Wolfinger, 2009). Each generation was influenced, especially during childhood and adolescence, by a set of factors, like parenting behaviors and philosophies, educational system, church, media, political, economic and social events, popular culture's trends and cultural values. This complex background creates for each generation a common value system which allows a distinguish from one to another generation because remains stable from the childhood till the young adulthood (Lubinski, Schmidt, & Benbow, 1996) (Meglino & Ravlin, 1998). This system or view of the world is like an anchor against which later experiences are interpreted (Scott, 2000)

In the literature can be found unanimous opinion regarding labeling the following generations and most of the researchers suggested that group effects are linear rather than categorical (Twenge, 2010):

Baby boomers (born from 1946 to 1964), Generation X (born from 1965 to 1980), Generation Y (born from 1981 to 1990), Generation Z ( born from 1991 to 2000), Generation Alpha (born after 2001)

The main characteristics of each generational cohort, as different studies confirmed are presented in a synthetic way in table no.1.

Tabel no.1. Generational cohorts chart

	Baby Boomers	Generation X	Generation Y	Generation Z
Core values	Anything is possible Equal rights Extremely loyal to their children Involvement Optimism Personal Growth Want to "make a difference"	Balance Diversity Entrepreneurial Highly Educated Independent Pragmatism Seek life balance Self-reliance Skepticism/Cynical Techno literacy	Achievement Avid consumers Confidence Like personal attention Self confident Socialability Most educated generation Extremely techno savvy	Independent Multitasking Altruistic Seek stability in life Pragmatic Instant gratification Socially conscious Digital natives
View of leisure	Work is shortcut to leisure	Work to have money for leisure	Work-life balanced	Proponents of work-life balance

Because different studies showed that many generational commonalities cross global boundaries many of these generational labels can be considered at the global level (McCordle & Wolfinger, 2009), (Fountain & Charters, 2006).

If there is an agreement regarding the generational groups there is much disagreement about the start and the end dates of some of these generations, especially for Generation X and Y (King, 2001). Thus, for this study were defined the following generation groups:

Generation X people born in the period 1965-1979 ; Generation Y people born in the period 1980-1992; Generation Z people born in the period 1993-2005

Beside the main characteristics of each generation some studies which examine how generation membership affects travel characteristics and touristic behaviors, in terms of travel information usage, previous destination experiences, future destination choices, destination evaluation, and travel activity preferences revealed important differences.

For example regarding the evaluation of a destination research results suggested that Silent Generation and Baby Boomers are similar in rating the importance of accommodations, service quality, friendliness of people, ease of getting to country, safety & security, value for money, tourist information, and cleanliness. Both generations place more importance on these attributes than Generation X and Generation Y (Li, Li, & Hudson, 2013). According to Huang and Petrick (2010) BB participated less in amusement park activities but more in visiting museums, historical places and sightseeing in cities than both Generation X and Y. The growth in cultural tourism of BB is explained based on their interest to have a learning experience as a part of their vacation (Sugerman, 2003). Regarding the travel information sources BB and Generation X consider online sources more important than Generation Y (Li, Li, & Hudson, 2013).

Concerning the behavior of generational cohorts during events and cultural events some studies identified important gaps among them. Thus, young generations are informed for new performances mainly by word-of-mouth and Internet (Euzebay & Martinez, 2012). Generation Y is more price-sensitive in comparison with Generation Z (Stoyanov & Stanoeva, 2016). On the other hand Generation X spend the most when attend to an event, having the highest total spending (Kruger & Saayman, 2015).

Starting from the literature, there were elaborated the following research hypothesis:

H1: The generational differences determine different motivations to attend a film festival.

H2: The generational differences in motivations influence the attendees' behavior during a film festival.

## **Material and method**

The research focuses on the visitors' behavior during the 2018 edition of the Transilvania International Film Festival (TIFF), analyzing the impact of their motivations on festival behavior. The analysis was implemented through the perspective of the differences that the generational characteristics of attendees may determine.

To achieve the paper's objective, an exploratory and descriptive research was conducted. An exploratory research, focused on different characteristics and behaviors of generations, was performed firstly, to identify potential research hypothesis. Secondary, a descriptive research based on a questionnaire was implemented during the film festival using a face-to-face interview.

The minimum size of the sample, statistically representative at 95% confidence level and  $\pm 7\%$  precision level, was calculated using Daniel and Terrell (1995) (Daniel & Terrell, 1995) formula for finite population: the minimum number of questionnaires for statistical representativeness being 182, while the number of valid questionnaires collected was 304.

The questionnaires were implemented randomly in the festival's locations, during all the ten days of the festival.

The questionnaire has 14 structured questions, organized in three categories: the first is dedicated to the motivation of attending TIFF, the second focus on attendants' behavior, while the third contains the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Motivation to attend TIFF was evaluated based on a set of 7 items identified in the literature (Bacellar, 2012), using a Likert scale (from 1 = very important to 5 = the least important). The analysis of visitors' behavior focused on their loyalty towards TIFF, their tickets purchasing behavior, the number of movies seen and the size of their group joining the festival.

## **Results and discussions**

Most participants are educated young adults (the average age is 34.6 years, over 80% have at least a bachelor degree), married or in a relationship (over 60%), earning medium to high levels of income (over 40%, out of 70% who responded to this question). Regarding the generational distribution of respondents, most of them are a part of Y generation (61%), Z and X 15% each, while baby boomers represent 9%.

Analyzing the demographic characteristics from the perspective of generations, the following aspect should be mentioned:

- in the case of baby boomers, most of the respondents are female (70%)
- X generation has the highest level of postgraduate education
- in terms of monthly revenue, the X generation obtain the biggest amount on average
- most of the baby boomers are married, while most of the Z generation members are single
- X and Y generations are the most active on the labor market

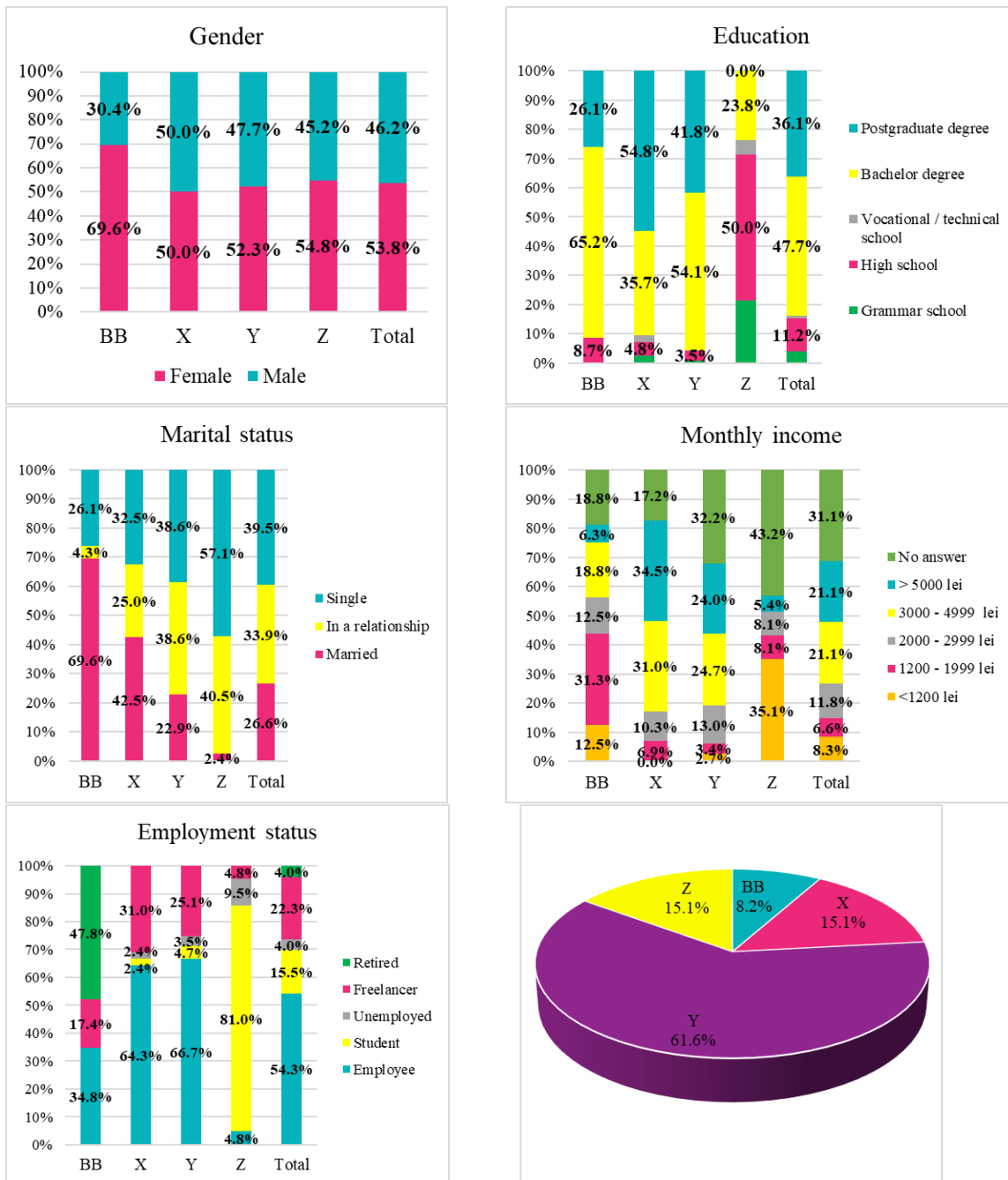


Figure 1. Demographic characteristics of people attending TIFF  
 Source: authors' calculations

The first aspect analyzed was the main reason for visiting Cluj-Napoca during that time span. The results proved that TIFF has a significant capacity to attract tourist of different ages to Cluj-Napoca, at least 60% out of total respondents, no matter what generation they were part of. It worth to mention that in the case of baby boomers, the second reason for being in Cluj-Napoca is the visit of friends and relatives. As a result, TIFF provides people with good opportunities to spend their leisure time together with their friends and families.

The main motivations of attending TIFF are the event experience and the content specificity. Overall, the content of the movies (their message and values promoted; the fact that most of these movies are not available in a cinema) represent the most important motivation for most of the participants. In the case of the X generation, the most important aspect is to live the festival experience. They also like movies, but they want also to relax and enjoy the city atmosphere. The youngest participants on the other



side, are interested in the novelty the festivals bring every year and the new experiences they may live. They are more focused on the social dimension, spending time with their friends being an important reason why they attend TIFF.

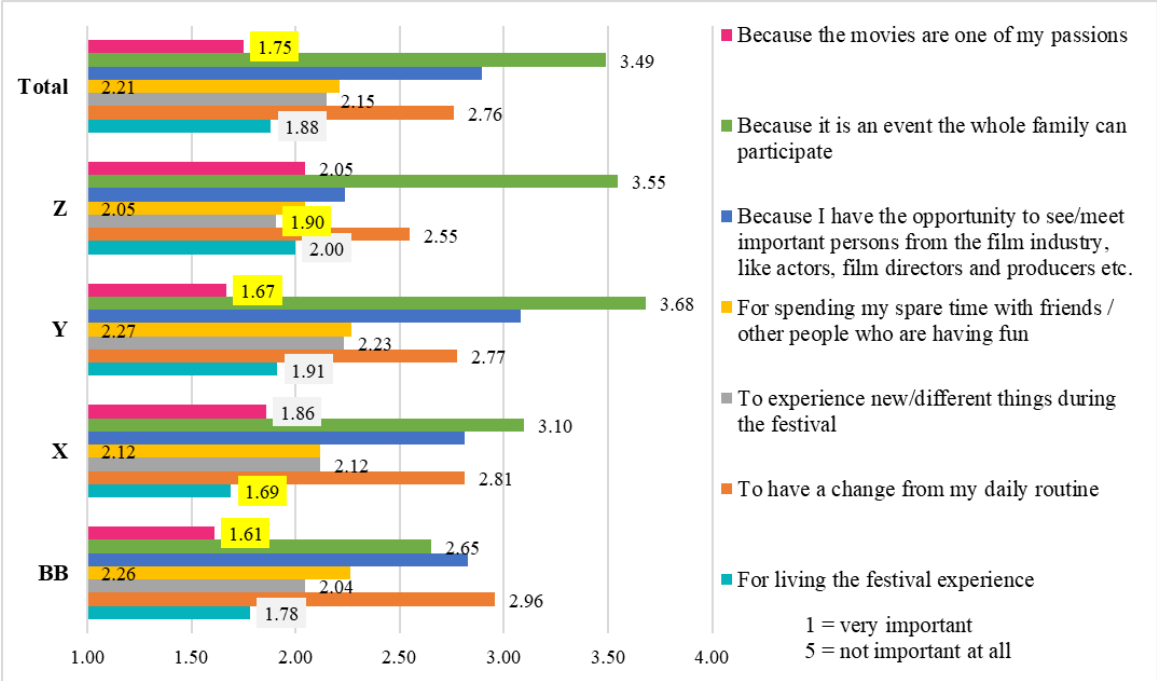


Figure 2. Reasons to attend TIFF  
 Source: authors' calculations

The previous findings validate the hypothesis H1. In fact, when attending an event, each person has more than one reason to do that. Mainly, there is a mixture of cultural and social (leisure) related reasons, this mixture being specific to each generation. Baby boomers and Y generations are more movie addicted, the content of the event and the cultural dimension being very important in their case. But, when we analyze their social reasons, it can be noticed that baby boomers value more the social opportunities (interaction with family members and friends) created by the event than Y generation members – the last category does not consider the event appropriate for the entire family, but they see it a good opportunity to meet their friends.

The X and Z generations are significantly interested in the festival experience but from two different perspectives. The X's generation interest comes together with their cultural interests and the passion for movies, while the Z's members seek new experiences.

Regarding the festival attendance, the first aspect analyzed was the attendees' behavior when they had to purchase the movie tickets. The focus was on the difference between their preference and their effective behavior.

There is a difference between the intention of buying a ticket at least one day in advance and the effective purchase. Firstly, it can be noticed that the baby boomers are buying the tickets at most two days in advance, over 70% of them buying the ticket in the projection's day. Correlating this information with their main reason to do that – "I found out recently about this projection", it can be concluded that in their attendance at TIFF, they have a spontaneous behavior. They like movies (this is their main reason to attend the film festival), but not any movies – they are searching for movies with special content, values or messages promoted, being focused more towards the cultural dimension of the event. As a result, they attend (on average) fewer movies/day (2.26 movies/day) than X and Y participants because they would like to feel the city/festival atmosphere and to relax. They appreciate a lot the diversity of participants, the way the locations are arranged or the participation of actors, film directors or other important

persons from the movie industry, aspects that have a positive influence on their experience and may determine them to attend a specific movie.

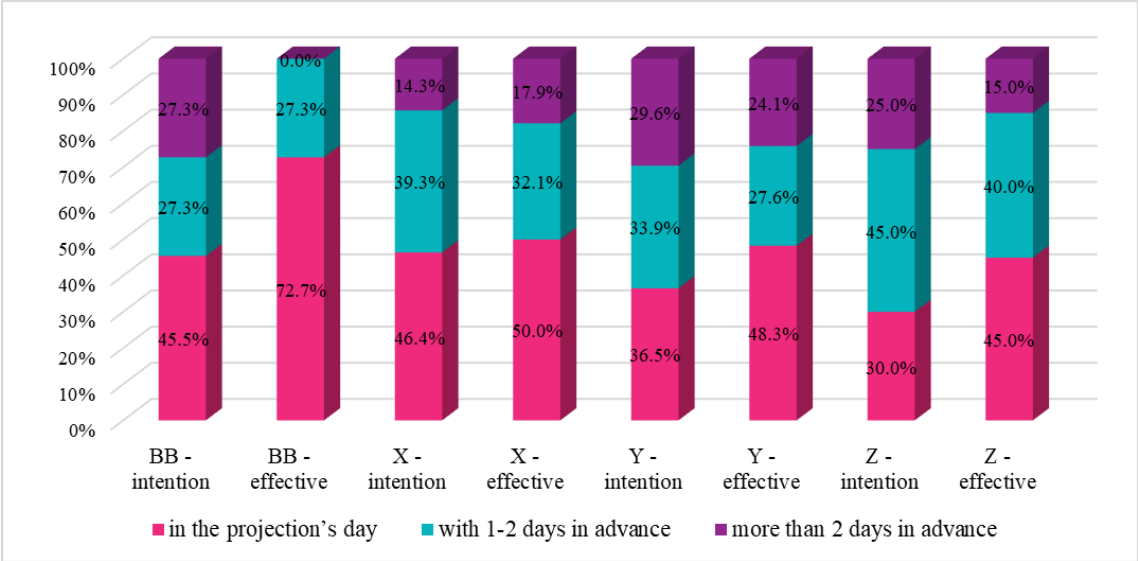


Figure 3. The purchase of tickets: intention vs. effective purchase  
 Source: authors' calculations

Regarding the Z generation, it worth to mention that only two-thirds of them are buying their own tickets, and 45% out of them are buying the ticket in the projections `day. In most of the cases, the main reason for such a behavior was that they had some spare time and they considered it could be a good idea to attend a movie. As a result, they attend (on average) the lowest number of movies/day (2.12 movies/day) out of all the participants, aspect which emphasizes also a spontaneous behavior, like in the case of baby boomers. They are focused more towards the social dimension of the event, exploring the TIFF atmosphere, searching for new experiences and having fun with their old and new friends, the average size of their group being 4.14 persons (being much higher than in the case of the other generations). A positive influence on their experience has also the way the event locations are arranged or the participation of actors, film directors or other important persons from the movie industry.

On the other side, the X and Y generations have a "planned in advance" behavior. Half of them are loyal participants of TIFF, who buy their tickets in advance (most of them) because they know what movies or events would like to attend. In their case, the main reason for buying the ticket in the projections' day is the fact they didn't know in advance if their schedule will allow them to attend the festival.

They attend (on average) a higher number of movies/day (X - 2.52 movies/day and Y - 2.42 movies/day), compared to Z and baby boomers, this being another aspect which proves their planned in advance behavior. The social and cultural motivations intertwine in their case, being interested to see movies with special content, values or messages (movies they cannot see usually in cinema) and, in the same time, to have fun, experience the city's effervescence, relax and spend their time in a "holiday atmosphere".

Considering the aspects discussed previously, it can be considered that the second research hypothesis was validated.

**Conclusions**

This study investigated the differences among generational cohorts and their motivations and behaviors during attending to a cultural event. Both hypothesis tested in the research were validated. The results revealed a number of significant differences among generations and also highlighted some similarities. Generations X and BB are motivated to attend at a cultural event by the festival experience, while Zers are

attracted by the idea of experience new and different things and activities during the festival. This information is important for festival and event managers in the process of creating the agenda and the core image for the festival/event. Generations X and Y have a more pre-planned behavior during cultural events. They seek for specific values and messages promoted during these events/activities. So, the cultural content plays a more important role for them in comparison with Generation Z.

## References

1. Bacellar, C., 2012. Motivation to Attend to a Cultural Event: Profiling Deauville Asian Film Festival Attendees. Cardiff, UK: British Academy of Management.
2. Daniel, W., Terrell, J., 1995. Business Statistics for Management and Economics. Houghton Mifflin Compan ed. USA: s.n
3. Euzeby, F., & Martinez, C. (2012). Spectacle vivant et Internet: Exister en ligne pour accroître la fréquentation en sale, . *Décisions Marketing*, 66,, 59-72.
4. Fountain, J., & Charters, S. (2006). Younger Wine Tourists: A study of generational differences in the cellar door experience. In J. Carlsen, & S. Charters, *Global wine tourism: Research, management and marketing*. CABI.
5. Huang, Y., & Petrick, J. F. (2010). Generation Y's travel behaviours: a comparison with baby boomers and generation X. In P. Benckendorff, *Tourism and generation Y* (pp. 27-37). Cambridge: MA CAB International.
6. King, D. (2001). Defining a generation: Tips for uniting our multi-generational workforce. Retrieved from <http://www.careerfirm.com/index.html>
7. Kruger, M., & Saayman, M. (2015). Music preferences of Generation Y: Evidence from live music performances in South Africa. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*.
8. Li, X., Li, X. (., & Hudson, S. (2013). The application of generational theory to tourism consumer behavior. *Tourism Management* 37, 147-164.
9. Lubinski, D., Schmidt, D. B., & Benbow, C. (1996). A 20 years stability analysis of the study of values for intellectually gifted individuals from adolescence to adulthood. *Journal of Applied Psychology* 81, 443-451.
10. McCrindle, M., & Wolfinger, E. (2009). *The ABC of XYZ*. Sydney: UNSW Press.
11. Meglino, B., & Ravlin, E. (1998). Individual values in organizations: concepts, controversies and research. *Journal of Management* 24 (3), 351-389.
12. Scott, J. (2000). Is it a different world to when you were growing up? Generational effects on social representations and child-rearing values. *British Journal of Sociology*, 51, 355-376.
13. Stoyanov, D., & Stanoeva, I. (2016). Determinant of theatre attendance: Differences between Generations Y and Z. *Vanguard Scientific Instruments in Management*, vol 12.
14. Strauss, W., & Howe, N. (1997). *The fourth turning: An American prophecy*. New York: Broadway Books.
15. Sugerman, D. (2003). Motivation of older adults to participate in outdoor adventure programs. *The Journal of Experiential Education*, 25(3), 345.
16. Twenge, J. M. (2010). Generational Differences in Work Values: Leisure and Extrinsic Values Increasing, Social and Intrinsic Values Decreasing. *Journal of Management*, 36, 1117-1142.

# OPERATIONALIZING EXTENDED MARKETING MIX FOR HRM RECRUITING PURPOSES: HOW TO SELL A JOB

Aurelian SOFICĂ, Smaranda COSMA  
Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

## Abstract

*The need to merge marketing and human resource management gained momentum in the last two decades. The paper addresses the extended marketing mix, or the 7Ps of marketing and identifies and operationalize specific HRM components that fit this framework, building on previous literature. Employment marketing mix (EMM) offers a framework on which, in a social constructionist manner, real and useful tools can be developed.*

**Key words:** human resource management, marketing, employee branding, extended marketing mix, employment marketing mix.

**JEL classification:** M51, M31

## Introduction

Companies should look at the social, political, economic, cultural and technological trends that are shaping the markets and try to position themselves accordingly (Chartered Institute of Marketing, 2009). This kind of marketing strategy started to permeate the HR recruiting strategy because of the challenges posed by recruiting the Y generation, a generation that is described by Eisner (2005, p.5) in laudatory terms, as "the most technically literate, educated, and ethnically diverse generation in the history". In this context, companies that need valuable human resources cannot afford to wait for the candidates to come to them but they need to proactively identify them (segment the market in great detail), design a job that fits their profile (just like designing a product or services), persuade them to apply for the job (advertising), select and hire them (close the deal and make the sale) and engage them continuously (post sales and support activities). The need to merge marketing and human resource management gained momentum in the last two decades. The paper addresses the extended marketing mix, or the 7Ps of marketing and identifies and tries to operationalize specific HRM components that fit this framework, building on previous literature.

## Literature review

The relation between human resource management and marketing is not a new story, now is almost 22 years in to the marriage. Ambler and Barrow (1996) launched the connection between marketing and human resource management coining the term "*employer branding*" "...the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company" (p.187), a concept that infused pretty quick not only the academic environment but also the HRM practices. (Dell and Ainspan, 2001). Gradually it became generally accepted that "The labour market... has at last become a true market: wide open, uncontrolled by individual companies, and unconstrained by geography. And executives need to start treating it like a market. No longer can recruiting be viewed as a reactive, largely clerical function buried in the human resources department. It needs to be refashioned to look much more like the marketing function itself. The hiring process, after all, has become nearly indistinguishable from the marketing process. Job candidates today need to be approached in much the same way as prospective customers: carefully identified and targeted, attracted to the company and its brand, and then sold on the job." (Cappelli, 2001, p. 141). Reasons behind the investment in the employer branding is the fact that a good image create an inertia for the recruiting process, a continuum hands free recruiting campaign, responsible for generating candidates for the specific jobs but also spontaneous or unsolicited candidates, representing a good indicator for the power of the brand. The companies, especially on this rapid changing labour market realized the

importance of proactive recruiting attitude, especially in the face of the powerful influence the generational shift exert over the demographic landscape of the labour market.

The profile of *generation Y*, the generation that will impact the labour market in the next decades, poses specific challenges for HRM practices and an interdisciplinary approach (marketing – human resources management) offers a potential solution. Money has never been a concern because they were raised in a time of economic expansion and prosperity – so the transactional power of the salary decreases. They have a sense of morality and they want to bring their contribution to society – so the CSR component of HRM practices is highly valued. They are willing to fight for their freedom – so the loyalty to the organization principle fades away. They have a high level of education and technical skills – as a result they need pragmatic details. They are connected 24 hours, they prefer interactive information and instant feedback – so transparency and availability is a must. They are family centric, they value parenting and enjoy a full and balanced life – so the jobs should be redesigned to include family and significant others as stakeholders. They are a global generation with multicultural skills – they need to be exposed to the international environment. They are looking for instant rewards and their long term plan means 12 months – so the classical life long career concept needs to be redesigned. They dislike menial and repetitive work and seek new challenges regularly – gamifying their professional experience begins to be the solution. And the list of traits – challenges goes on. (Hill, 2002; Eisner, 2005; Maxwell, Ogden, and Broadbridge, 2010; Solnet and Hood, 2011)

A bridge between the extended marketing mix and human resource management started to be developed by Wickham, O'Donohue and Hanson (2008), Wickham and O'Donohue (2009). The authors have zoomed in from meta-theory to an interdisciplinary level, still theoretical but with pragmatic potential, exploring how some central tools from marketing theory and practice (extended marketing-mix or the 7P's of marketing) can be translated in to the HR practice (the management of the employment relationship). In order to reach the target of being the *employer of choice or EOC* (strategy of positioning on the labour market on a poll position, in order to attract high-quality employees) and to offer a real *employment value proposition (EVP)* or EVP (unique, specific traits embedded in to the employer brand identity, meant to set the organization apart from competitors in some meaningful way), an organization should align in a cohesive manner the extended marketing mix (product, price, place, promotion, process, people and physical evidence) with the employment practices in what authors coined, *employment marketing mix (EMM)*. These mix should be able in a more coherent way to attract, retain and motivate the targeted candidates/employees. They reframe the employment relationship as a product/service, destined to be consumed on the labour market by potential clients, and paid with their labour/skills. Reframing things like this offers a clearer view over this fuzzy domain, solves the implementation issues associated with translation of the marketing concepts in to the practice of HR and opens a canvas for useful tools development.

## **Material and method**

The paper aims to provide a better alignment between the employment marketing mix (EMM), with the marketing extended-mix (MEM or 7P's of marketing). This alignment can be achieved by pinpointing the specific HR employment practices that can be included under the umbrella of Employment Marketing Mix (EMM) and by operationalizing this practices to the level of acceptable measurability.

The Employment Marketing Mix (EMM) components mirroring the Marketing Extended Mix (MEM) discussed below are: The job (EMM1) as product or service; knowledge/attitude/skills offered by the candidate (EMM2) as price; place (EMM3) as place; recruiting (EMM4) as promotion; process of employment (EMM5) as process; recruiters or talent scouts (EMM6) as people; and realistic preview (EMM7) as physical evidence.

For each EMM component we tried to “zoom in “and identify observable and in some cases measurable dimensions that allow organization to build tools for evaluation or implementation of HRM strategies based on the marketing principles.

## **Results and discussions**

### **The job to be sold (EMM1)**

The job represents the product/service sold to the candidate and is the first component of the employment marketing mix. In order to develop a marketable job, according to HR practices, you need to analyse it, design it and state the technical specifications (job description) in an attractive manner for the candidate.

*Job analysis* (EMM.1.1) is the process of collecting data about a job from various information sources or stakeholders, using various methods to collect information, in order to understand it 360°. So the *diversity of the stakeholders* involved in job analysis (EMM.1.1.1), like supervisors, subordinates, colleagues, experts, clients, family, etc. offers social and professional legitimacy. The *diversity of the job analysis methods* (EMM.1.1.2.), like document analysis, interview, focus-group, questionnaire, employee’s journal, experiment, observation, etc. offers methodological legitimacy.

*Job design* (EMM.1.2) is the process of playing with the core aspects of the job identified during the job analysis in order to augment the job and make it more marketable for the candidates or employee’s needs. For this purpose the first recommended step is the labour market segmentation. *The recruiting sources segmentation* (EMM.1.2.1) identifies: geographical segmentation, demographic segmentation, lifestyle segmentation, behaviouristic segmentation, segmentation by perceived benefits, appropriate sales techniques and price segmentation. *Job design strategy* (EMM.1.2.2.) takes in to account the four layers of design: design for performance (industrial engineering – structuring the job in order to maximize efficiency), design for motivation (traveling in foreign countries, training, leadership opportunities, salary, mentoring, work/life balance, etc.), design for security and health (ergonomics of the workplace, safety laws and regulations embedded in to the job) design for CSR (responsibility for community, environment, and economic help for disadvantaged social classes) (Hollenbeck and Wright, 2011, p. 142).

*Job description* (EMM.1.3) is the output document of the job analysis and it details the core technical specifications of the actual job. The *job purpose* (EMM.1.3.1) is clear in the organizational context (job title, department, supervisors, subordinates, clients, objectives, etc.). The *working environment* (EMM.1.3.2) is well mapped - working schedule, annual leave, pay, physical and social conditions, resources at disposal, travel, authority limits, etc. The *duties* (EMM.1.3.3) and specific activities associated with the job are clearly described and have qualitative and quantitative performance standards attached. The *personnel specifications* (EMM.1.3.4.) identify the essential and desirable traits of the employees occupying the job - education, certificates, experience, knowledge, skills, personality traits, physical traits, etc.

### **Knowledge/attitudes/skills to be offered by the candidate (EMM2)**

EEM 2 is the equivalent of the price in MEM and represents the experience, knowledge, attitudes, skills, etc. that the candidates are ready to pay/exchange in return to the job they will occupy. In this regards it is important to have a balanced contract, understand how the market condition influence the pricing and have a sound price positioning strategy.

*Balanced “contract”* (EMM.2.1), considering both sides: the candidate’s side and the employer’s side. What employers ask and what candidates offer needs to be in the concession/acceptance range of the both parties. The opportunity cost is taken in to account from both perspectives (employer and candidate). *Employers perceive the price as fair* (EMM.2.1.1), allowing them to make a profit. *Candidates perceive the price as fair*

(EMM.2.1.2), allowing them to make a living. The terms in which the *contract can be modified* (EMM.2.1.3) are clear and established by common agreement. The *market conditions influence over the price of the job* (EMM.2.1.4) are acknowledged. The market is favourable for the candidates and influence the price of the job by pulling it down. The market is favourable for the employers and influence the price of the job by pulling it up.

*Price positioning strategy* (EMM.2.2) is done in terms of balance between the quality of the job and the price. Both parties agree on the *quality of the product* (EMM.2.2.1.) (low quality, medium quality, high quality). Both parties agree on the *fairness of the price* (EMM.2.2.2) (low price, medium price and high price). *Positioning according to Kotler price positioning strategy* (EMM.2.2.3): economy (low price & low quality); false economy (medium price & low quality); rip-off or skimming (high price & low quality); good value (low price & medium quality); average (medium price & medium quality); over charging (high price & medium quality); superb value or penetration (low price & high quality); high value (medium price & high quality); premium (high price & high quality). (Kotler, 1988). *Positioning according to Higgs model* (EMM.2.2.4) – advantage in segmenting the market and positioning strategically in one the following: *employer of churn* (low rewards and low culture); *employer of cash* (high rewards and low culture); *employer of values* (low reward and high culture); *employer of choice* (high reward and high culture). (Higgs, 2004)

### **Place (EMM3)**

The place represent the real or virtual space where the company promotes the job and potential employees decides to follow the job offer. It is the place where those two actors make contact in the real or the virtual world.

*Physical locations* (EMM 3.1) where the company promotes the job and potential employees decides to follow the job offer. These are the places where the two make the initial contact. *Organizational space* (EMM 3.1.1), following an internal recruiting strategy (e.g. skills review) or external recruiting strategy (e.g. open days, internships) *Neutral space* (EMM 3.1.2), following an external recruiting strategy (e.g. job fairs, billboards in various locations, conferences). *Potential candidate territory* (EMM 3.1.3), following an external recruiting strategy (e.g. recruiting agent goes to university campuses, headhunting approaches potential candidates directly)

*Virtual location* (EMM 3.2) where the company promotes the job and potential employees decides to follow the job offer. *Social networks* (EMM 3.2.1) the majority of organizations use for recruiting. *Recruiting websites* (EMM 3.2.2), specialized in intermediating candidates on the labour market or matchmaking between organizations and candidates.

### **Recruiting (EMM4)**

Recruiting is the equivalent of promotion in MEM and in human resource management represents the „process of continuously (identifying) attracting enough people, with the right qualification, and encouraging them to apply for a job within organization“. (Mondy and Noe, 1987, p. 190; Hollenback and Wright, 2011)

*Recruiting strategy coherence* (EMM 4.1) sources, methods, channels and messages are on the same frequency. *Recruiting sources diversity* (EMM.4.1.1.) - fresh graduated students, competition's employees, ex-employees, employee's social network, etc. *Recruiting methods diversity* (EMM.4.1.2) - recruiting agent, job fairs, scholarships, internships, contests, etc. *Recruiting channels diversity* (EMM 4.1.3) formal: newsletters, company's website, informal: quality circles, teamwork, lunchtime, unofficial. *Recruiting messages* (EMM.4.1.4) is targeted, attractive, viral and action oriented, etc.

*Reactive vs. proactive* (EMM 3.3) deals with the positioning in time. *Reactive recruiting* (EMM 3.3.1) waits for the need of human resources or the problem of recruiting to get real and then starts the process of recruiting. There is a certain delay between the opening and filling. *Proactive or continuous recruiting* (EMM 3.3.2) does not

wait for the human resources shortage to appear, the recruiting strategy anticipates and recruits in advance. There is a short delay between the opening and filling.

### **Process (EMM5)**

The process represents a broad, interconnected perspective over the employment process: pre-purchase phase (job analysis & design and recruiting) closing the deal phase (selection) and post-sales & support phase (induction and probation). It is somehow the big picture. The process is candidate/customer centred, reduces the effort of the user, avoids bureaucracy, provides specific information and keep the candidate/customer happy.

*Pre-purchase phase* (EMM 5.1) represents the arrangements that are made with the client to purchase a product. Preparing stage (EMM 5.1.1) represents job analysis, job design, and job description. *Job marketing stage* (EMM 5.1.2) represents the recruiting.

*Closing the deal phase* (EMM 5.2) or purchase stage, represents selection and is the process of filtering the candidates attracted in the recruiting stage by using a series of methods destined to identify the degree of match with the job and the organization.

*Post-sale activities & support phase* (EMM 5.3) deals with induction, probation period and career management and needs to be consistent with the promises made during recruiting and selection. The candidate/ employee, doesn't feel like the job was oversold and is treated with the same care and respect.

### **Recruiters or talent scouts (EMM6)**

Recruiter or talent scouts mirrors the people MEM component and represent the *multi-layered human interface* connecting the potential candidate (the customer), the job (the product) and the organization. Staff and supervisors in the HR department are the first layer; functional staff, line senior management and peers outside the HR department but still inside the organization are the second layer and external contractors are the third layer. Their knowledge, skills, representativeness, number and engagement are important.

The *degree of knowledge* (EMM.6.1.1) about the job (core/actual/augmented) and organizational culture (artefacts, exposed values and assumptions and beliefs) the people involved in the recruiting have. The *degree of marketing and sales skills* (EMM.6.1.2) the people involved in the recruiting have. The *degree of representativeness* (EMM.6.1.3) for the company or for the industry the people involved in the recruiting have. The recruiters mirror the profile of the people they are looking for. The *number of internal players* (EMM.6.1.4) involved in the recruiting. The second layer of players (functional staff, line senior management and peers) is turned in to talent scouts in order to reach an internal synergy. The *number of external players* (EMM.6.1.5) involved in the recruiting. The third layer of players or the external contractors and consultants used to externalize recruiting or to amplify the organizational effort. *The balance of process ownership* (EMM.6.1.6), or the degree of externalization or outsourcing of the HR functions. The locus of control is internal (in house design of the recruiting) or external (outsourcing of the recruiting and selection)

### **Realistic preview (EMM7)**

Realistic preview mirrors the physical evidence component of MEM and is meant to alleviate the risk the buyers perceives because of the intangible character of the job. A certain experience of the job and insight in to the organizational culture should be provided prior to the employment. The realistic preview covers the specific pros and cons of the job but also the extended environment of the organization, or the culture.

*Realistic job preview* (EMM.7.1) means to reach a high level of transparency in communication (print/online/phone/face-to-face) between organization and the potential employees by providing enough in-depth and balanced information (the strong points and the weak points) about the *specific job*, allowing them to experience it in a form or



another, before taking an informed “buying” decision. *Proactive approach in describing the job* (EMM.7.1.1) in a transparent and balanced manner. High quality, balanced information about the job description, case studies, pros and cons, etc. is provided in a *written form* (EMM.7.1.2), paper based or electronic. High quality and balanced information about the job (job description, case studies, pros and cons, etc.) is provided in a *multimedia format* (EMM.7.1.3) like video testimonials from the employees and ex-employees, testimonials from the clients, etc. High quality and balanced information about the job is provided in a *direct, unmediated form* (EMM.7.1.4) like group realistic job preview; structured observation; meetings with current employees and customers; social media interaction with current and ex-employees.

*Realistic organizational culture preview* (EMM.7.2) means to reach a high level of transparency in communication (print, online, phone, face-to-face) between organization and the potential employees by providing enough in-depth and balanced information (the strong points and the weak points) about the environment or the organizational culture (artefacts, exposed values and assumptions and beliefs), allowing them to experience it in a form or another, before taking an informed “buying” decision.

*Proactive approach in describing the culture* (EMM.7.1.1) in a transparent and balanced manner. Direct access to the organizational *artefacts* (EMM.7.2.2) like objects, uniforms, office spaces, procedures, rules and regulations, etc. Direct access to the organizational *exposed values* (EMM.7.2.3) like strategies, goals, vision, etc. Direct access to the organizational *assumptions and beliefs* (EMM.7.2.4) like unconscious beliefs, perceptions, feelings, the main sources for action, etc. *Realistic leadership preview* (EMM.7.2.5) in terms of style, employee involvement, conflict management, team development for direct supervisor and for top management team.

## Conclusions

Although we are aware of the classical critique aimed at the marketing mix and the prescriptive character attached to it rather than evidence based research (Constantinides, 2006), we appreciate the unifying potential that it brings when translated in to human resources practices. Employment marketing mix (EMM) offers a framework on which, in a social constructionist manner, real and useful tools can be developed.

The paper opens a promising endeavor in advancing the merging of MEM and EMM. The opportunities that lies ahead are just tip of an iceberg with large amount of challenges to be solved. Each EMM component can represent a research area in its own right.

## References

1. Barow, S. et al. (2007), Employer branding. The latest fad or the future for HR?, <http://www.cipd.co.uk/nr/rdonlyres/56c8377f-256b-4556-8650-8408b0e07576/0/empbrandlatfad.pdf>.
2. Baum, T. (2007). Human resources in tourism: Still waiting for change, *Tourism Management*, 28, Elsevier, pp. 1383-1399.
3. Constantinides, E., 2006. The Marketing - Mix revisited: Towards the 21st Century marketing. *Journal of Marketing Management* 22(3/4), 407-438.
4. Eisner, S.P. (2005). Managing Gen Y. *S.A.M. Advanced Management, Journal*, 70(4), 4-15.
5. Hershatter, A. and Epstein, M. (2010). Millennials and the World of Work: An Organization and Management Perspective, *Journal of Business and Psychology*, online version, <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10869-010-9160-y/fulltext.html>
6. Higgs, M. (2004). Future trends in HRM. In D. Rees and R. McBain (eds) *People management: challenges and opportunities*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

7. Hollenbeck, N. and Wright, G. (2011). *Fundamentals of Human Resource Management*, McGraw-Hill Irwin.
8. Kotler, P. (1988). *Marketing Management: Analysis, Planning, Implementation and Control*. 6th Ed. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey. Prentice-Hall Inc.
9. Kusluvan, S., & Kusluvan, Z. (2000). Perceptions and attitudes of undergraduate tourism students towards working in the tourism industry in Turkey. *Tourism Management*, 21, 251–269.
10. Magd, H. (2003), "Management attitudes and perceptions of older employees in hospitality management", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, Vol. 15(7), pp. 393 – 40
11. Maxwell, G.A., Ogden S.M., & Broadbridge, A. (2010). Generation Y's career expectations and aspirations: Engagement in the hospitality industry. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 17, 53–61.
12. PwC - Price Waterhouse Couper, (2012), Press release on hospitality industry, [https://www.pwc.ro/en/press\\_room/assets/2012/romania\\_tourism\\_pwc\\_study.pdf](https://www.pwc.ro/en/press_room/assets/2012/romania_tourism_pwc_study.pdf)
13. Sofica, A. and Toader, V. (2012). *Human Resource Recruiting Techniques in Rural Tourism - Cluj County, Romania*, The International Conference "Entrepreneurship in Hospitality Industry", Risoprint, 978-973-53-0890-2, Studia Universitatis Babeș-Bolyai Negotia, p. 160-168.
14. Solnet, D., & Hood, A. (2008). Generation Y as hospitality employees: Framing a research agenda. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 15, 59–68
15. Solnet, D., and Hood, A. (2011), *Generation Y as hospitality industry employees. An examination of work attitude and differences - Repport*, Hospitality Training Association Inc.
16. Taylor, S. (2011). *Contemporary issues in Human Resource Management*, Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, CIPD House.
17. The Chartered Institute of Marketing (2009), *Marketing and the 7Ps. A Brief summary of marketing and how it works*, [www.cim.co.uk/marketingresources](http://www.cim.co.uk/marketingresources).
18. Văleanu, C., Cosma, S., Sofică, A., Strategic marketing and management tools used to increase employee efficiency, International Conference Emerging Markets Queries in *Finance and Business*, Procedia Economics and Finance, Volume 3 (2012), pag. 877-882.
19. Wood, R.C. (1997). *Working in hotels and catering* (2nd ed.). London:International Thomson Business Press.
20. Cappelli, P. (2001). Making the Most of On-Line Recruiting, *Harvard Business Review*, 79(3):139-46
21. Ambler T and Barrow S (1996), "The Employer Brand", *The Journal of Brand Management*, Vol. 4, No. 3, pp. 185-206
22. Dell, D and Ainspan, N (2001), Engaging employees through your brand, Conference Board Report No. R-1288-01-RR, April, Conference Board, Washington, D.C.
23. Wickham, M and O'Donohue, W and Hanson, D (2008) *Conceptualising the employment value proposition: the role of the extended marketing mix*. In: ANZMAC - Australian & New Zealand Marketing Academy, 1-3 December 2008, Sydney, Australia.
24. Wickham, M., & O'Donohue, W. (2009). Developing Employer of Choice Status: Exploring an Employment Marketing Mix, *Organization Development Journal*; 27(3), pg. 77.

# DISCOVERING THE ROOTS – ANCESTRAL TOURISM IN ROMANIA

Carmen Mihaela BĂBĂIȚĂ, Damaris GALAȚI, Andrea NAGY  
West University of Timișoara, Timișoara, Romania

## Abstract

*Ancestral tourism is a less explored field in Romania, although it has a great development potential due to the large masses of Romanian immigrants established all over the world, over time. The aim of this paper is to explore ancestral tourism in Romania, to identify what are the main reasons that trigger an individual's desire to start searching his ancestors and to analyze the experience he has during the visit in the country of origin. To reach our research goals, we conducted an interview with six persons of Romanian descent established in several non-European countries that have visited Romania in order to discover their roots, meet their alive relatives or to reconnect with their past. Based on the received answers, we were able to create the ancestral tourist's profile and to identify whether the genealogical experience achieved our respondents' expectations.*

**Key words:** ancestral tourism, genealogical research, genealogical experience, roots exploration

**JEL Classification:** L83, Z31

## Introduction

The genealogical data research phenomenon, both at personal and collective level, started to be analyzed in the field literature at the end of the '70s, when it was intensely discussed in fictional writings and autobiographies (Smith, 1979 in Murdy, Alexander & Bryce, 2018). Also, the desire to connect with origins or birth places determined various TV channels and producers to create different shows, movies or documentaries which allowed people to discover their roots and also inspired masses to start their own ancestral researches. One eloquent example was the TV mini-series "Roots".

According to Iorio and Corsale (2013), one of the most common ways a person uses to discover its origins is by traveling to and exploring the homeland in order to maintain and strengthen personal and emotional bonds. Therefore, people are motivated to travel to places they assume they originate. In consequence, nowadays we assist to an increased interest of immigrants to return to the places their ancestors came from in order to explore the family history as well as for fulfilling their sense of belonging (Murdy, Alexander and Bryce, 2018).

Because of the fact that migrants and their descendants are longing to connect with their homeland and ancestors' history, tourism flows can intensify as they decide to travel to places they have personal interest to explore, as Josiam and Frazier (2008) and Iorio and Corsale (2013) stated in their studies. Hence, we can start discussing about the so-called ancestral tourism, that besides traveling, implies also learning while having the trip in order to accomplish the personal needs of discovering the roots.

The definitions of ancestral tourism can vary mainly because the concept is not unanimously accepted in the field literature, being also referred as roots tourism, genealogy tourism or legacy tourism.

According to Basu (2004 and 2005 in Iorio and Corsale, 2013), an individuals' return to roots can be defined as "[...] a performative act of belonging expressed through visits to ancestral heritage locations, and a more generalized collective project of connection to the homeland". Another definition of ancestral tourism belongs to Murdy, Alexander and Bryce (2018) who defined the ancestral tourism as "any visit which might be partly or wholly motivated by a need to connect or reconnect with an individual's ancestral past".

Because ancestral tourism is an action done by individuals, we consider it is also important to approach in our paper aspects regarding ancestral tourists. McCain and Ray (2003) defined ancestral or legacy tourists as persons "who travel to engage in genealogical endeavours, to search for information or to simply feel connected to ancestors and ancestral roots".

## **Research methodology**

In order to examine the perspectives of ancestral tourism in Romania, we started a pilot exploratory research based on an interview that we took to six persons. The interviewees were tourists that have visited Romania between 2015-2018 and whose main purpose was to explore their genealogical legacy. To contact the tourists, we discussed with the representatives of a Romanian travel agency which is also specialized in organizing private tours for ancestral tourists, as well as assisting them in the process of their genealogical research.

Data were collected using a structured interview that was submitted online, by e-mail, directly to the ancestral tourists that have contacted the travel agency over the past three years. The interview had 21 open questions that required the interviewees to provide details about themselves and their bondage to Romania, their motivations of traveling to Romania, the way they have traveled, the genealogical research process they undertook, as well as the experience they have had in Romania.

The main goal of the study was to analyze the ancestral tourist's behavior, in order to investigate the ancestral tourism phenomenon and its development perspectives in Romania. To achieve this goal, our research objectives were to:

- ✓ identify the ancestral tourist's profile and to validated the hypothesis according to which elderly persons are more likely to start seeking their ancestors and explore their family legacy;
- ✓ identify the motivations upon which the genealogical researches rely, as well as to determine the factor that triggers the desire to begin a genealogical research;
- ✓ analyze the way that ancestral tourists use to travel;
- ✓ analyze the genealogical research process and to identify the means to obtain genealogical data as well as the barriers encountered in the genealogical research;
- ✓ analyze the tourists' genealogical experiences and to establish whether their expectations were achieved.

For a better understanding of the information we gathered, the most relevant statements of our interviewees are presented as quotes.

## **Results**

### ***Ancestral tourist's profile***

The profile and behavior of a tourist traveling for genealogy purposes differs from the one of a regular tourist, as the first one has both a connection with the visited place and different motivations in contrast to the regular one (Poria, Butler & Airey, 2003). The six persons we interviewed have visited Romania at least once and all stated that genealogy was the main purpose of their journey. They live in USA, Canada or Israel, but their background is quite diverse, as three of them descend from Romanian Jews that emigrated to the USA or Israel, one person from Swabs originating from Banat region, while another person from Romanians living in Transylvania. The ancestors of another person are Hungarians and Italians that settled in Valea Jiului for mining.

The age of the interviewees ranges from 40 to 80 years. In average, their age is of 56 years, therefore, the hypothesis that the elderlies are more prone to initiate a genealogical research and undertake a trip in this purpose, is confirmed.

Moreover, studies have shown that tourists who visit important places for their own personal legacy and heritage, prove a tendency to have longer stays in the country and to spend more than the conventional tourists, they have a higher income and a higher level of education (Krestetter et al., 2001 & Travel Industry Association, 1997; in Josiam & Frazier, 2008).

### ***Motivations of ancestral tourists***

In contrast to conventional tourists who observe "the others", ancestral tourists are motivated to find their own identity which is enriched and reinforced by traveling to the homeland (Love and Sheldon, 1998, in Russell, 2008; Bhandari, 2013). Also,

exploring the family history and see the birthplace of their ancestors, as well as visiting the relatives, is another important reason for traveling, as one of our interviewees said.

*"Our goal was to see the villages where our Romanian Grandparents spent their youth as well as meeting the distant relatives we were able to identify." (A., 67y, USA)*

In addition, according to Highlands and Islands Enterprise organization's report for Scotland, published in 2013, the main motivations for genealogical traveling, besides the ones mentioned above, are the desire to feel a "special connection" with the country of origin, to further research the family history and to take the parents back home or to pass on to their descendants the story of their family. Also, another motivation to travel identified in the report, was the desire to walk in the footsteps of the ancestors and to find a new significance for what home means.

In our study, we obtained similar results in the cases of several subjects. Most of them stated that their main reasons for traveling to Romania were to come back to their own or their ancestors' birthplaces, to visit their alive relatives, to discover with their own eyes the landscapes they've only heard of or to walk on their ancestors' footsteps. In addition to the reasons highlighted above, one of our subjects said that she was driven by the loss of her father and the nostalgia to reconnect with his memory and explore the places her father saw, as she wasn't able to find some information online neither about him, nor about her legacy.

*"The purpose of my travel was to visit the place where my father was born and see for myself the things he saw. When my father passed away, I felt a deep desire to reconnect to him somehow. I felt that sharing something he experienced might help me get a piece of him back. I was very interested in finding out as much information about my family and genealogy as I possibly could. I also wanted to find my father's house and where he went to school and as many Church records as possible." (D., 45y, USA)*

Being asked about what triggered the desire to begin a genealogical research, two of our interviewees mentioned that their relatives were quite mysterious regarding the reason they left Romania, which made them more eager to find out where they come from. Another factor that made our interviewees start searching their roots, was finding some letters or addresses belonging to their ancestors, findings that determined their further investigations.

### **Ancestral tourists' ways of traveling**

According to Butler et al. (2002) and Klemm (2002) (in Iorio and Corsale, 2013), the majority of ancestral or roots tourists choose to travel independently in order to have the flexibility they need to visit the places of their own interest.

To find out information about their ancestors, the six respondents of our study have visited city halls, searched in their archives, or reached the National Archives offices. They have also visited churches, synagogues, cemeteries and even contacted Romanian residents (alive relatives or elder people from the ancestors' community).

Five out of our six respondents have contacted tourism professionals to help them with the research and to accompany them in their journey.

*"I relied on a researcher to do the research for me. It would have been very difficult for me to find this info myself as I don't speak Romanian." (S., 56, Canada)*

Often, in a genealogical trip, several family members or even different generations of the same family travel together, although not all of them have roots in the country they visit.

Roots tourists have a tendency to visit several destinations during their trip, either because they have familial bonds in more than one part of the country, or simply, because they want to see as much as possible of Romania. Therefore, all Romanian regions have the opportunity to equally benefit of ancestral tourism, as for many of the ancestral tourists traveling to Romania is a good opportunity to visit as many tourist attractions as they can, since some of them have travelled a long distance to get to Romania.

### **The genealogical research**

According to the answers provided by our interviewees, the genealogical research process started before visiting their homeland, by gathering as much information as possible about the family's history. They searched on specific genealogy websites (such as [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com) and [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)) and tried to find out information from family members. Moreover, many of them contacted professionals specialized in genealogy, who have documented in advance about the respondents' ancestors and also assisted them whilst they began their journey. Professionals helped them contact residents and closely guided them for a successful research.

Unfortunately, during the research process, there have also been encountered some barriers, mainly because of the authorities' indifference and their reluctance in providing information. In spite of the difficulties, our subjects were satisfied with the information they managed to obtain and pleased to meet their distant relatives. Three of our subjects decided to continue their ancestral research once they got back home.

### **The genealogical experience**

Bryce, Murdy and Alexander (2017), stated that ancestral tourists are seeking for a participative experience rather than a passive one in order to support their research. Furthermore, previous studies revealed that tourists who are more involved in and are identifying themselves with the experience, can express higher levels of satisfaction (Russell, 2008).

When asked what is their overall opinion about the genealogical experience they have had in Romania, our respondents declared themselves very pleased and grateful to having succeeded in finding information about their ancestors and to explore their homeland.

Another important part of the genealogical experience is to meet the ancestral tourists' expectations, as these can be very different. A real challenge can be represented by the social, cultural and physical changes that can occur in the visited place. Therefore, a fully turn back in time might not be possible because of the strong hit of reality and the changed image of their homeland (Brah, 1996; Read, 1996; Levy, 2004; Markowitz, 2004 in Iorio and Corsale, 2013).

Regarding the expectations of our interviewees, all of them said that these have been met during their visit in Romania, which was fully worthed.

*"I believe that even if we had not found information and met distant relatives it would have been worth the trip. Everyone we met, regardless of where we were, was friendly. The countryside is so beautiful and I felt like my heart had come home." (A., 67y, USA)*

Another aspect discovered in our study was that our respondents felt an emotional bond to Romania.

*"I felt connected, like I was home in a sense." (J., 40y, USA)*

Beside these findings, all of our respondents said that the experience gave them a strong feeling of fulfillment and for some even a sense of belonging.

*"The experience absolutely gave me a feeling of fulfillment. I do not feel like I "belong", but I also do not feel like an alien or stranger. The longing to see for myself where my father was born, went to school, played, hiked was fulfilled, and I have gained a sense of peace that I have seen with my own eyes what he once saw and that makes my soul happy. The countryside in Transylvania seems just as it was 70 years ago. It wasn't too hard to imagine what life was like in 1949 when my father left. That's the beauty of Romania. You can get a glimpse into when life was simpler and more pure." (D., 45y, USA)*

## **Conclusions and recommendations**

After conducting our research and discussing with several tourists that wanted to discover their roots, we were able to identify the ancestral tourist's profile. We noticed that tourists who use to travel in order to discover their roots are usually elder persons, who have more leisure time and a higher income. Also, they have the tendency to spend more time visiting the country of origins as well as to use or buy several tourist services.

Another aspect that we focused on was tourists' motivation to travel. We found out that our interviewees' main purpose to make an ancestral journey was to explore their homeland and to discover more information about their ancestors. They used to travel to their homeland on their own, usually accompanied by family members and reached out to professionals only to help them with the research process and the fieldtrip organization.

The overall genealogical experience our interviewees had in Romania offered them a high level of satisfaction, as well as fulfillment, a feeling of belonging and connection to their homeland.

To develop the ancestral tourism in Romania, tourism authorities should focus on promoting this niche tourism by attracting persons interested in genealogy, who at their turn will attract more tourists interested or not in genealogy. Also, to develop ancestral tourism, it could be helpful to create a network with travel agencies and tourist professionals specialized in genealogy, as well as to develop the tourism infrastructure in more Romanian rural areas.

## **References**

1. Bhandari, K. (2013), "Imagining the Scottish nation: Tourism and homeland nationalism in Scotland", Current Issues in Tourism, Faculty of Business, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford, UK.
2. Bryce, D., Murdy, S., Alexander, M. (2017), "Diaspora, authenticity and the imagined past", Annals of Tourism Research, Vol. 66, pp. 49-60.
3. Iorio, M. & Corsale, A. (2013), "Diaspora and Tourism: Transylvanian Saxons Visiting the Homeland", Tourism Geographies, Vol. 15, No. 2, pp. 198-232.
4. Josiam, B.M. & Frazier, R. (2008), "Who am I? Where did I Come from? Where do I go to Find out? Genealogy, the Internet and Tourism", Tourismos: an International Multidisciplinary Journal of Tourism, Vol. 3, No 2, pp. 35-56.
5. McCain, G. & Ray N.M. (2003), "Legacy tourism: the search for personal meaning in heritage travel", Tourism Management, Vol. 24, pp. 713-717.
6. Murdy, S., Alexander, M. & Bryce, D. (2018), "What pulls ancestral tourists 'home'? An analysis of ancestral tourist motivations", Tourism Management, Vol. 64, pp. 13-19.
7. Poria, Y., Butler, R. & Airey, D. (2003), "The Core of Heritage Tourism", Annals of Tourism Research, Vol. 30, No. 1, pp. 238-254.
8. Russell, D.W. (2008), "Nostalgic Tourism", Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 103-116.
9. \*\*\* Ancestral Tourism in Scotland: opportunities for growth, 2013, published by Highlands and Islands Enterprise, <http://www.hie.co.uk>.

# THE INFLUENCE OF AGE ON HOW ROMANIANS CHOOSE A HOTEL

Cristina Fleşeriu<sup>1</sup>, Smaranda Cosma<sup>2</sup>, Vlad Bocăneţ<sup>3</sup>, Marius Bota<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1, 2, 4</sup>, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

<sup>3</sup>Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania

## Abstract

*In the hotel industry, it is important for companies to understand their consumers and the way they decide to purchase. The main purpose of this research is to identify if there is a relationship between the belonging to a certain generation and the number of stays in a hotel for Romanians in the last year either in Romania or abroad; what is the main purpose of staying at a hotel and if they prefer a hotel belonging to an international hotel chain or an independent Romanian one. A quantitative study was developed, supported by a structured questionnaire and information regarding the consumer habits and preferences was obtained. The study reveals significant differences between generations in number of stays and preference in the type of hotels.*

**Key words:** generations, consumer segmentation, age measures, consumer decision process, hotel preference

**JEL classification:** M31, L83.

## Introduction

It is important for the companies in the hospitality industry to understand their consumers and the decision-making process, because of the very competitive environment they operate in (Baruca & Čivre, 2012). In this regard, Niininen et al. (2006) consider that a consumer-centric approach can be incorporated in the customer relationship marketing. Companies need to know the general characteristics of their customers in order to understand their motivations, attitudes and values (Niininen et al., 2006). How and why they choose a particular hotel, what are the reasons for the purchase are some questions that are of interest to marketers (Han & Kim, 2010).

Traditionally, consumer characteristics that can influence the decision-making process are socio-demographic and geographic patterns. Socio-demographic dimension regard the reference group, family members, acquaintances, friends etc. Demographic factors include age, gender, education, lifestyle, personality and income (Saha et al., 2010). One hotel market segmentation was made by Lepisto & McCleary (1992) based on age.

This research focuses on the relationship between the generation one belongs to and the number of stays at a hotel both in Romania and abroad. Another aspect that was analyzed is the relationship between generations and the main purpose of staying at a hotel in Romania and abroad. The last aspect is the difference in preference for a hotel that is independent or part of a hotel chain.

## Literature review

A generation is defined by "*the group, cluster, or cohort, composed of individuals who are characterized by an identical background, consequently sharing some particular features*" (Beldona, Nusair, & Demicco, 2009). This study analyses the behavior of people ranging from the Baby Boomer Generation to Generation Z.

Baby Boomers (1945-1960), are strong-minded and looking to express themselves' personalities. Generation X (1961-1980) is one of more spared individuals and skeptical on their economy. Generation Y (1981-1995) is formed by consumers, who were influenced by technology and media shift, looking for meaning in their experiences (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002). Generation Z (born after 1995) is the first truly born digital native generation, otherwise known as iGen (Barclays, 2013).

*"The good news is that all generations basically want and value the same things. The bad news is that priorities, expectations, and behaviors may differ noticeably. People may want the same things, but they want them delivered in different packages, depending on when and how they grew up."* (Smith, 2008:25). Hume (2010) states that



"different generations and demographic consumer groups are exposed to: different social and economic opportunities and barriers, different types of technology activities, different social perceptions and different community norms, and different life experiences and events". Because of this, the behavior patterns and the preferences differ between generations

Baby Boomers are the generation that started traveling purely for pleasure and helped the travel for the leisure sector. Also, this generation is the one that began traveling nationally and internationally for work, facilitating the expansion of the business travel market (van Meerendonk, 2015). They may not travel as much as they did in the past but, are more active in comparison with previous retired generations (Sima, 2016). Research shows that they are easily influenced by Generation X habits (McMahon, 2005).

Generation X is the best educated generation in history. The people from this generation are more tolerant and value individuality. They tend to have realistic expectations and are family oriented (Fitzpatrick, 2005). As leisure travelers, people from this generation have to juggle finance and family, but as business travelers their spending habits are considerable. Most are in the mid-stages of their careers and moving into their peak earning years, being the main market for hotel chains around the world (Sima, 2016).

Generation Y has experienced travel, because they went with their parents on domestic and international holidays from a young age (Benckendorff, Moscardo, & Pendergast, 2010:157.) Generation Y had more opportunities to travel, in comparison with the previous generation, and this is one of the reasons why the traveling habits differ. Millennials are the most independent travel generation the hospitality industry has encountered to date. There is a difference between the Generation Y leisure traveler and business traveler. According to Rushmore (in Langfield, 2015), the millennial leisure traveler is frugal but the business traveler is indulgent. The average business traveler tends to overspend on his business trips but at the same time it is always looking for value-added amenities.

Generation Z is "*smarter than Boomers, and way more ambitious than the Millennials*" (Kingston, 2014). Young tourists from this generation are described as difficult to retain as their motivations are multiple: young tourists seem both sensitive to the protection of the environment and enjoy a great open-mindedness. Generation Z expects a great deal from the travels. Tourism is considered as being, at the same time a moment of conviviality, socialization, implication and empowerment. All these needs are reflected in: last-minute decisions, search for opportunities, use of word of mouth recommendation sources to choose their destinations, increasing use of low-cost services (Mignon, 2003).

## **Materials and methods**

The study focuses on a better understanding of how Romanians choose a hotel (national or belonging to an international chain) both in Romania and abroad. The survey was the research method used and data was collected using face to face interviews. Data was collected with the use of a questionnaire. Both structured and unstructured questions were used. The questionnaire was split in four parts. The first one contains four questions to determine the number of stays in the last 12 months, the purpose of travel and the importance of hotel ownership. The second part includes the CET scale that measures the level of the Romanian consumer ethnocentrism. The third part contains 17 questions related with social-psychological factors such as patriotism, collectivism, cultural openness and cosmopolitanism. The demographic information used for the classification of the respondents such as age, gender, education, monthly average income and marital status represent the last part of the questionnaire. As a result, a sample of 712 valid questionnaires was retained in the analysis.

Before applying the questionnaires to a representative sample for the Romanian population, the questionnaire was pretested in order to validate the CET scale on the Romanian market.

The present paper uses only two parts of the data collected in this marketing research. The main purpose is to identify the influence of age on how Romanians choose a hotel.

As research objectives, six hypotheses were defined and tested:

**H1: There is a significant difference between generations for how many times the respondents stayed at a hotel in Romania in the last year.**

**H2: There is a significant difference between generations for how many times the respondents stayed at a hotel abroad in the last year.**

**H3: There is an association between generations and the main purpose of staying at a hotel in Romania.**

**H4: There is an association between generations and the main purpose of staying at a hotel abroad.**

**H5: There is a significant difference between generations in preference for a hotel that is part of a hotel chain.**

**H6: There is a significant difference between generations in preference for a hotel that is either Romanian or international.**

## Results and discussions

The sample consisted of 712 respondents both male (44.1%) and female (55.9%) with ages ranging from 18 to 72. The sample was split into age categories corresponding to their generation. According to this division people with ages between ages of 54 and 72 year are the Baby Boomers, 38 and 53 are Generation X, 24 and 37 are the Millennials and 18 and 23 are Generation Z.

Most of the respondents have a monthly income below 3200 lei, approx. 700 Euro. Analysing the level of education, the majority (41.99%) has graduated university studies. The study reveals that the majority of the participants are educated (graduated university and post-university studies representing more than 60%). The marital status is quite evenly distributed between singles and people in a relationship with or without children. Table no. 1 presents the profile of the respondents, considering the demographic characteristics.

Table no. 1: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Generation		
Baby Boomers	127	17.84%
Generation X	164	23.03%
Millennials	217	30.48%
Generation Z	204	28.65%
Gender		
Female	398	55.90%
Male	314	44.10%
Education		
Basic studies	26	3.65%
High school	197	27.67%
Post-secondary	44	6.18%
University studies	299	41.99%
Post-university studies	146	20.51%
Income		
<1200 lei	157	22.05%
1200-2200 lei	188	26.40%
2200-3200 lei	155	21.77%
3200-4200 lei	96	13.48%
>4200 lei	116	16.29%
Marital status		
Single/ not married	263	36.94%

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
In a relationship/ married without children	178	25.00%
In a relationship/ married with children	271	38.06%

(Source: Author's calculation)

Figure no. 1 shows how many times respondents stayed at a hotel in Romania and abroad in the last 12 months. Of the respondents, 35% didn't stay in a hotel in Romania in the last year, and an even higher number (49%) abroad.

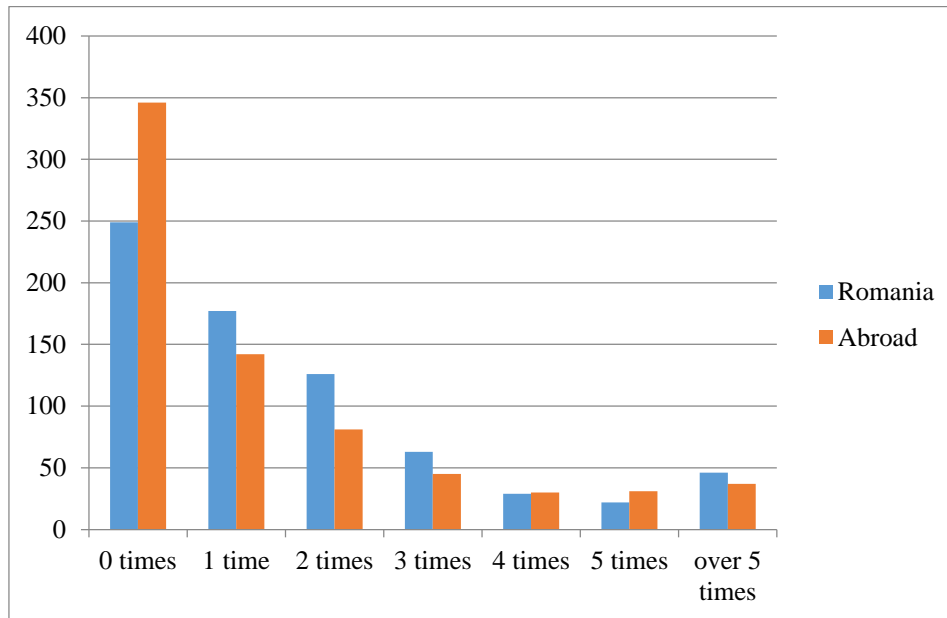


Figure no. 1: Number of times during a year spent by respondents in a hotel (Romania and abroad)

(Source: Author's calculation)

When analyzing the main reason for staying in a hotel, the majority of the respondents choose leisure both in Romania and in other countries. Only around 20% of the respondents go to a hotel for business (Figure no 2).

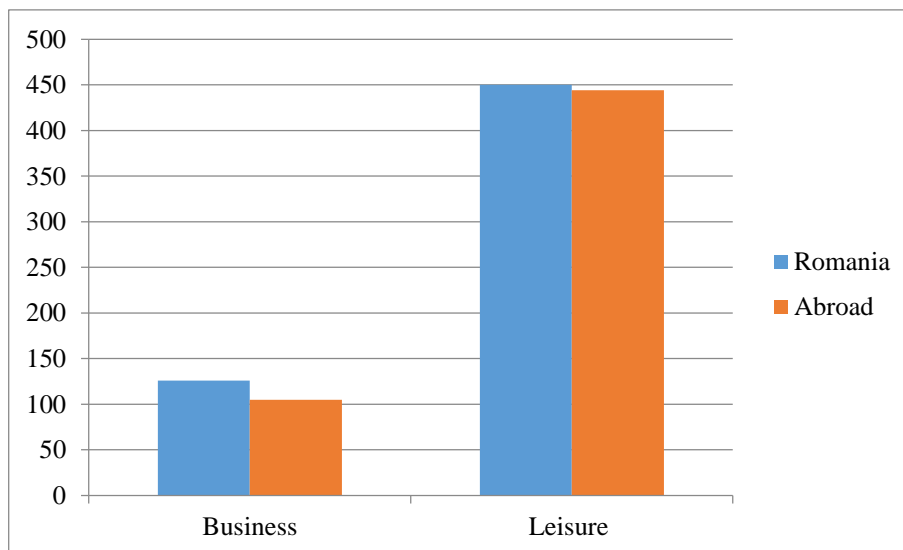


Figure no. 2: Main reasons for staying at the hotel (Romania and abroad)

(Source: Author's calculation)

For the majority of respondents it does not matter if the hotel belongs to an international chain or not (80%). When asked what kind of hotel they prefer

(international or national) the distribution is quite symmetric. Most (40%) don't have a preference for national or international hotels.

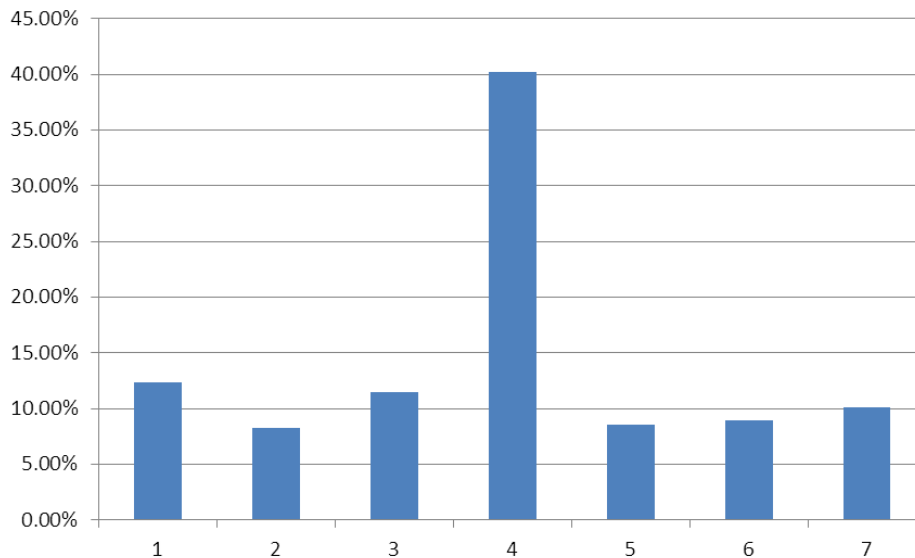


Figure no. 3: Distribution of preference between national (7) and international (1) hotels  
(Source: Author's calculation)

Six hypotheses were tested, in order to see how generations influence particular aspects of the decision process when choosing a hotel.

**H1: There is a significant difference between generations for how many times the respondents stayed at a hotel in Romania in the last year.**

A Kruskal-Wallis H test showed that there was a statistically significant difference in the number of stays between generations. Baby boomers had significantly lower ranks ( $M_{Rank}=306.56$ ) than Generation X ( $X^2(3)=84.316$ ,  $p=0.002$ ,  $M_{Rank}=390.88$ ) and Millennials ( $X^2(3)=77.418$ ,  $p=0.003$ ,  $M_{Rank}=383.98$ ) meaning they stayed a significantly lower number of times. The same is true for Generation Z that had significantly lower ranks ( $M_{Rank}=330.73$ ) than Generation X ( $X^2(3)=-53.249$ ,  $p=0.036$ ) and Millennials ( $X^2(3)=-60.147$ ,  $p=0.024$ ) indicating a lower number of stays.

**H2: There is a significant difference between generations for how many times the respondents stayed at a hotel abroad in the last year.**

A Kruskal-Wallis H test showed that there was a statistically significant difference in the number of stays between generations. Baby boomers had significantly lower ranks ( $M_{Rank}=271.51$ ) than Generation X ( $X^2(3)=106.352$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $M_{Rank}=377.86$ ), Millennials ( $X^2(3)=114.066$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $M_{Rank}=385.57$ ) and Generation Z ( $X^2(3)=89.806$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $M_{Rank}=361.31$ ) showing considerable lower number of stays.

**H3: There is an association between generations and the main purpose of staying at a hotel in Romania.**

A chi-squared test was run to test the association between the two variables. It was found that there is a significant association between generations and the main purpose of staying at a hotel in Romania ( $X^2(3)=19.748$ ,  $p<0.001$ ). The association was weak (Cramer's V = 0.185).

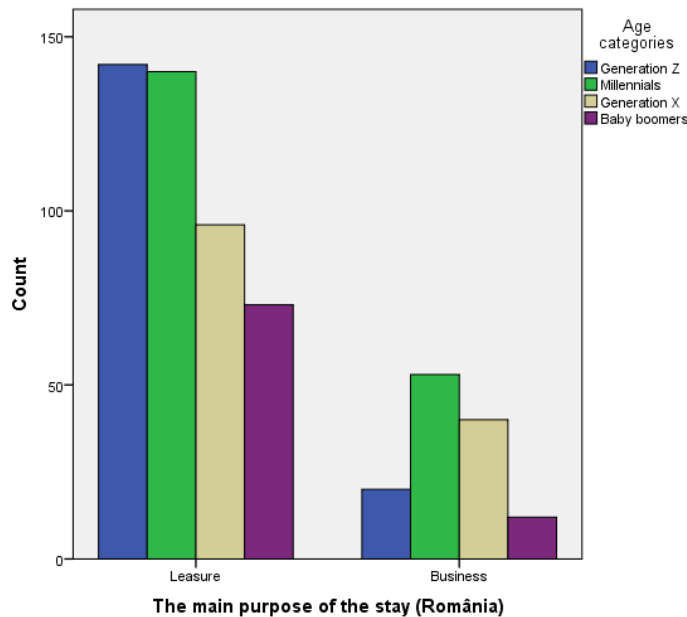


Figure no. 4: Distribution of age categories on the purpose of stay (Romania)  
(Source: Author's calculation)

**H4: There is an association between generations and the main purpose of staying at a hotel abroad.**

A chi-squared test was run to test the association between the two variables. It was found that there is a significant association between generations and the main purpose of staying at a hotel abroad ( $X^2(3)=15.324$ ,  $p=0.002$ ). The association was weak (Cramer's  $V = 0.167$ ).

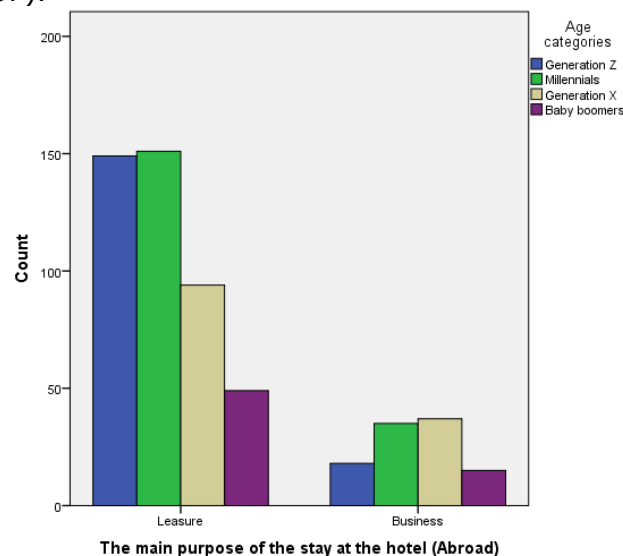


Figure no. 5: Distribution of age categories on the purpose of stay (Abroad)  
(Source: Author's calculation)

**H5: There is a significant difference between generations in preference for a hotel that is part of a hotel chain.**

A Kruskal-Wallis H test showed that there was a statistically significant difference in preference for a hotel that is part of a hotel chain between generations. Baby boomers had significantly lower ranks ( $M_{Rank}=303.40$ ) than Generation X ( $X^2(3)=89.483$ ,  $p=0.001$ ,  $M_{Rank}=392.88$ ) and Generation Z ( $X^2(3)=61.762$ ,  $p=0.039$ ,  $M_{Rank}=385.57$ ) meaning that they consider it much less important that a hotel is part of a hotel chain.

**H6: There is a significant difference between generations in preference for a hotel that is either Romanian or international.**

A Kruskal-Wallis H test showed that there was a statistically significant difference between generations in preference for a hotel that is either Romanian or international. Baby boomers had significantly higher ranks ( $M_{Rank}=434.85$ ) than Generation X ( $X^2(3)=-76.363$ ,  $p=0.007$ ,  $M_{Rank}=358.49$ ) Millennials ( $X^2(3)=-80.251$ ,  $p=0.002$ ,  $M_{Rank}=354.60$ ) and Generation Z ( $X^2(3)=-126.703$ ,  $p<0.001$ ,  $M_{Rank}=308.15$ ) showing a preference for Romanian owned hotels.

## Conclusions and recommendations

Several conclusions may be drawn based on the study results. One third of the respondents didn't stay, in the last year, at the hotel in Romania, and almost half of them abroad. The majority of the respondents stay in hotels for leisure both in Romania and in other countries. Just a fifth of them go to a hotel for business. For the majority of the respondents it does not matter if the hotel belongs to an international chain or not and almost one half of them don't have a preference for national or international hotels.

The performed analysis highlighted that belonging to a certain generation influences the decision-making process. Baby boomers stay at hotels in Romania less than Generation X and Millennials. Abroad they stay less than all the other analyzed generations (Figure no. 6). This can be explained by the fact that the majority of baby boomers are retired and their pension is low. The majority (72.4%) of the respondents have a monthly income under 3200 lei. Baby boomers consider it much less important for a hotel to be part of an international hotel chain than Generation X and Generation Z and have a higher preference for the Romanian hotels.

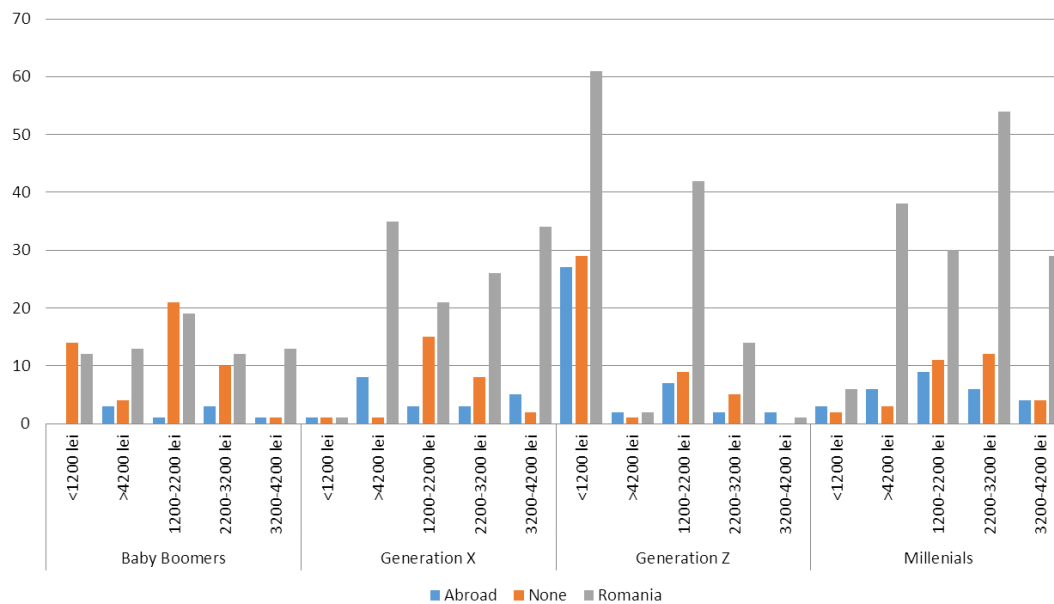


Figure no. 6: Distribution of age categories on the number of times during a year spent by respondents in a hotel  
(Source: Author's calculation)

Even if almost the entire Generation Z sample (96%) has an income that is less than 3200 lei, they still travel, parents probably paying their expenses.

It is very important for hotels, both national and international, to understand the consumer, create an accurate profile and anticipate the buying behavior.

The research is limited by the geographical area it was performed in and by the sample. The answers were collected in Cluj-Napoca, limiting the reach of this study. Further research can be done on larger samples on a more widespread geographical area that better represent the whole population. Further research can explore if there are significant differences between other demographic characteristics and the decision-making process and if there are significant differences between generations and

consumer ethnocentrism and socio-psychological factors (patriotism, collectivism, cultural openness and cosmopolitanism).

## REFERENCES

1. Barclays. (2013). A Summary of Talking About My Generation: Exploring the Benefits Engagement Challenge. Accessed at: <https://wealth.barclays.com>.
2. Baruca, P. Z., & Čivrić, Ž. (2012). How do guests choose a hotel? *Academica Turistica*, 1, 75-84.
3. Benckendorff, P., Moscardo, G., & Pendergast, D. (2010). *Tourism and Generation Y*. Online book. Wallingford: CABI Publishing, accessed at: [http://books.google.fi/books?id=LuKm8Tugg1UC&printsec=frontcover&hl=fi&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](http://books.google.fi/books?id=LuKm8Tugg1UC&printsec=frontcover&hl=fi&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false).
4. Fitzpatrick, M. (2005). Building Generation X loyalty. *Hospitality Upgrade*, accessed at: [http://www.hospitalityupgrade.com/Hospitalityupgrade.com-0093-2016Redesign/media/hospitalityupgrade.com-0093/File\\_Articles/HUFall05BuildingGenXLoyalty\\_Fitzpatrick.pdf](http://www.hospitalityupgrade.com/Hospitalityupgrade.com-0093-2016Redesign/media/hospitalityupgrade.com-0093/File_Articles/HUFall05BuildingGenXLoyalty_Fitzpatrick.pdf).
5. Han, H., & Kim, Y. (2010). An investigation of green hotel customers' decision formation: developing an extended model of the theory of planned behavior. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 29, 659-668.
6. Hume, M. (2010). Compassion without action: Examining the young consumers' consumption and attitude to sustainable consumption. *Journal of World Business*, 45(4), 385-394.
7. Lancaster, L. C., & Stillman, D. (2003). *When generations collide: Who they are, why they clash, how to solve the generational puzzle at work*. New York: Harper Business.
8. Langfield, A. (2014). Marriott bids for Gen Y business with AC Hotel. *CNBC*, accessed at: <https://www.cnbc.com/2014/05/20/marriott-bids-for-gen-y-business-with-ac-hotels.html>.
9. Lepisto, L. R., & McCleary, K. W. (1988). The effect of Multiple Measures of Age in Segmenting Hotel Markets. *Hospitality Education and Research Journal*, 12(2), 91-98.
10. McMahon, S. (2005). Going the X-tra mile. *Union-Tribune San Diego*, accessed at: <http://www.utsandiego.com>.
11. Mignon, J.-M. (2003). Le tourisme des jeunes, une valeur sûre. dans *Cahier Espaces*, No. 77.
12. Niininen, O., March, R., & Buhalis, D. (2006). Consumer Centric Tourism Marketing. In D. Buhalis & C. Costa (eds.), *Tourism Management Dynamics, Trends, Management and Tools*, 175-186. Oxford: Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann.
13. Saha, S., Dey, M., & Bhattacharyya, S. (2010). Factors affecting consumer buying behavior of shoes in Kolkata. *Journal of Management Research*, 4(9), 39-60.
14. Sima, C. (2016). Generations BB, X, Y, Z, α-the changing consumer in the hospitality industry. In Ivanova M., Ivanov S. & Magnini V.P. (ed.), *The Routledge Handbook of Hotel Chain Management*, 471-479. 1-st Edition, New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group.
15. Smith, W. (2008). *Decoding Generational Differences: Fact, fiction...or should we just get back to work?*, accessed at: [http://public.deloitte.com/media/0507/250608/us\\_DecodingGenerationalDifferences.pdf](http://public.deloitte.com/media/0507/250608/us_DecodingGenerationalDifferences.pdf)
16. Van Meerendonk P. (2015). *Revenue Management and Addressing the Generation Overlap*, accessed at: [https://ideas.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/MEDIA-Revenue\\_Management\\_and\\_Addresssing\\_the\\_Generation\\_Overlap.pdf](https://ideas.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/MEDIA-Revenue_Management_and_Addresssing_the_Generation_Overlap.pdf)

# DEVELOPING ROMANIAN CRUISE TOURISM BY INCLUDING THE PORT OF CONSTANTA AS A MAIN HUB. A MARKETING RESEARCH APPROACH

**Dodu Silvia Patricia<sup>1</sup>, Anton Emanuela<sup>2</sup>, Patrichi Ioana Cristiana<sup>3</sup>, Ionescu Stefan Alexandru<sup>4</sup>**

<sup>1,3,4</sup> **Romanian-American University, Bucharest, Romania**

<sup>2</sup> **The Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Romania**

## **Abstract**

*Over the years, the cruise tourism industry had an enormous growth in terms of passengers' number, variety of destinations, amazing new ships, all designed to meet a higher demand for cruise vacation that offer adventure but also pace, excitement, relaxation and entertainment to passengers from across the world. It is well known that, the Romanian market faces difficulties in aligning with the world dynamics due to economic and geographical barriers. Although it has a generous seafront and the economic agents have reported high demand over the years, the cruise tourism is almost absent in the Black Sea. The following marketing research was needed because of the increasing demand for cruise type vacations on the Romanian market. Currently, there are no cruise lines operating in The Black Sea to offer convenient embarkation and debarkation ports for Romanian passengers. In this article the authors aim to scientifically validate this potential market that would significantly contribute to placing Romania on the map in the cruise industry.*

**Keywords:** *cruise tourism, Black Sea, Hub, clustering, unsupervised classification*

**JEL classification:** L83

## **Introduction**

The beginnings of cruise tourism can be traced back to the end of the 19th century, when shipping companies switch their attention towards passengers and their comfort aboard their vessels, particularly on transatlantic voyages. During the 1850's-1860's, this industry starts taking a more solid form and eventually transforms into passenger transport. The modern age of cruise tourism begins in the 1960's, with the redesign of cruise ships and the introduction of exotic destinations, such as the Carribean, in the tourist circuits.

According to Collins English Dictionary a cruise is defined as "to make a trip by sea in a liner for pleasure, usually calling at a number of ports" (Dowling, 2006).

Travelling reasons, when it comes to cruise trips are mainly linked to relaxation. However, one cannot rule out the cultural and ecotouristic motivation. Through their nature, cruises are preferred not only by young people, but also by the elderly, being considered "easy trips" (Cartwright & Baird, 1999).

Rising interest within tourists has led to a diversification of so the called traditional routes (transatlantic or Mediterranean) and to the emergence of new routes like the ones to the Arctic or South East Asia. Likewise, cruise trips that are specialized in certain categories of interest such as passenger age, marital status, family status and so on, have started to appear.

The cruise industry is the fastest growing and one of the most profitable segments of the worldwide travel and tourism market. The growth of the industry can be measured in different ways and cruise passenger numbers are usually cited as a measure of demand (Bull, 1996). The dynamic growth that the cruise industry has been experiencing over a period of more than 30 years, mainly driven by demand from North America, is unparalleled in the tourism sector.

The rapid rise of cruise industry reached a record number of 24.7 million passengers in 2016, with a number 27.2 million to be reached by the end 2018 (CLIA-2018 Cruise Industry Outlook, p. 7). According to CLIA, the global statistics show that between 2011 to 2016 the demand for cruises has risen by 20.5% (CLIA-2018 Cruise Industry Outlook, p. 14), with the largest market being the United States with 11.5



million passengers. After North America, Europe is the second largest market for cruises (6.9 million), out of which 2.2 million is represented by the German market alone.

Table 1. Global ocean passengers in 2017

<b>NORTH AMERICA INCLUDING MEXICO</b>	<b>EUROPE</b>	<b>ASIA</b>	<b>AUSTRALIA/PACIFIC</b>	<b>SOUTH/CENTRAL AMERICA</b>	<b>OTHER</b>
49%	26%	15%	5.4%	3.2%	1.6%
13.018.000	6.958.000	4.060.000	1.437.000	850.000	424.00
TOTAL	26.7 MILION PASSENGERS				

Source: Cruise Line International Association – Market Reports – 2017 Year in Review

For European cruise passengers the Mediterranean remains the most popular destination, with over 4.3 million of passengers.

Table 2- European Passangers-Top Key Destinations

<b>Key Destinations</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2017</b>
Western/Central Mediterranean	2,264	2,241	-1%
Northern Europe	1,276	1,383	8%
Caribbean/Bahamas/Bermuda	855	933	9%
Eastern Mediterranean	774	687	-11%
Canary Islands	354	381	8%
Baltics	318	334	5%

Source: CLIA Europe- Europe Market Report 2017Overview, March 2018

The European cruising industry is expected to flourish in a few years because of the opening of new markets in Russian Federation and Central and Eastern Europe. The ever-increasing demand of cruises is a result of cruise companies cutting down on the price of tickets as well as making major investments in larger ships. The increase in size means the creation of onboard luxury facilities as well as other new attractions. Another trend of European cruise industry is extending the schedules of the ships to the East of the Mediterranean, in the Black Sea with the inclusion of new docking ports as a result.

### **Cruise industry in the Black Sea Region. Overview**

Although connected to the Mediterranean through the straits of Dardanelles and Bosphorus, the Black Sea is at a disadvantage on the international cruise market due to a number of reasons. These reasons include a pronounced seasonality, a temperate climate much less pleasant than the Mediterranean climate, low promotion of tourism within countries that have an opening to the Black Sea and low interest from cruise companies regarding itineraries.

Presently, the political situation in the Black Sea Basin is tense, due to the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation in 2014 which has led to tourism being affected in the city of Odessa especially. Furthermore, the war in Syria generated a high number of migrant routes on the Black Sea and on top of this, the political situation in Turkey in 2016 was a devastating blow to the entire Black Sea tourism industry. This comes as a paradox due to the fact that the Black Sea itself is not a conflict area, but a very secure one, that benefits from military security and NATO protection (on the coast of Romania and Bulgaria). The sea is known as incident free.

Table 3. Ports of Black Sea-Total Cruise Passenger Movements 2013-2017

<b>Port</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2017/2016</b>	<b>2017/2013</b>
Constanta	54614	69910	31856	6912	1891	-72,64%	-96,54%
Burgas	5673	41763	7575	5833	1925	-67,00%	-66,07%
Varna	2997	20939	3159	1109	791	-28,67%	-21,37%

Port	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2017/2016	2017/2013
Odessa	91949	8506	6563	1242	1636	31,72	-98,22%
Trabzon	9032	17118	2280	452	206	-54,42%	97,72%

Source: Cruise Activities in MedCruise Ports - 2017 STATISTICS

By analyzing the statistical data of the Total Cruise Passenger Movements Indicator and overlapping it with historical data of political and military conflicts, it can be easily observed that the decline in cruise tourism on the Black Sea is a direct result of geopolitical situations and not of a diminished interest towards the coastal destinations. Before the annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation, Odessa was one of the most sought-after ports for cruise ships, with 91949 passengers in 2013. After the invasion in 2014, the numbers plummeted over 90%. This meant that for other coastal cities outside of conflict areas such as Constanta, Burgas, Varna, 2014 was the best year to date regarding tourism. The cities saw the highest number of dockings and passengers in history which lead to a new hope for the development of this kind of tourism. Constanta is a prime example, the year 2014 seeing around 70 000 passengers and 74 ships docking. Subsequently the number dropped to 1891 passengers and 3 cruise ships as a result of conflicts in Turkey. In 2018 there were no cruise ships visiting this port, although APM SA had a schedule that included 17 routes to dock at the passenger terminal, which has later been cancelled.

The BlackSea with its 6 countries, holds an interesting touristic potential which is completely different from Mediterranean. It benefits from a highly diverse cultural patrimony, unique landmarks, competitive assets, diverse geography and heterogeneous landscapes. Istanbul-a fascinating city built on two Continents, Burgas- ancient sites, Varna a green and picturesque city, Constantza- UNESCO cultural & natural sites and |Danube Delta, Odessa -Royal & Baroque vibes. The touristic potential of the region is complemented by far less known cities such as Kerch-Eternal Cities of the World, Amasra, Rize-Picturesque natural settings, Batumi-Developing/transforming urban settings.

### **The Potential of Constanta Port as main hub of the Black Sea**

Located very close to the historic area of the city of Constanta and the Tomis Tourist Port, the new Passenger Terminal has a functioning capacity of 100.000 passenger per year, with the latest investment meant to increase the desirability of the Romanian seaside.

The Constanta Passenger Terminal is a modern one and it benefits from every state of the art solution destined for passengers to quickly pass the Romanian Border and swiftly board the ship. The passengers can board and unboard by passing through the terminal building in order to discover the itineraries put up by the cruise company.

The Port of Constanta receives both maritime cruise ships as well as river cruise ships that come through the routes of Gurile Dunarii-Constanta or the Dunare-Marea Neagra Canal.

Table 4. Number of cruise ships and passengers in Constanta port

Year	total number of ships	Out of wich		Total number of passengers
		maritime	river	
2012	56	44	12	32.200
2013	70	56	14	52.500
2014	92	74	18	70.358
2015	36	25	11	35.574
2016	14	8	6	8.629
2017	13	3	10	4.610

Source: Port of Constanta, 2018.

Constanta by itself is a tourist attraction with numerous valuable landmarks, but it is also the starting point of land trips for cruise ship passengers. Between 2013-2015, many local tourism agencies have reported daytrip contracts with cruise companies for trips to Bucharest, Tulcea, the Danube Delta, The Razim Sinoe Complex, The Histria Gura Portitei Citadel.

Since 2013, the port of Constanta has been a boarding port for tourists wanting to go on a cruise. Between 2013 and 2014, cruise lines MSC Cruises and Costa Cruises have handled boarding in the port, thus putting at the tourist disposal the possibility of boarding a cruise ship from "home". Itineraries lasting 5, 6, 7, 9, or 14 nights, that included countries like Ukraine, Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece and Italy proved to be very attractive, with sales to match; all of the cabins allocated to the Port of Constanta have been booked during the early booking period and the passenger satisfaction regarding quality of on board services was reflected next year, when there was a demand for the product once more. The success brought by the 3 years of boarding from Constanta, determined the creation of a survey among tourists, cruise clients, in order to analyze the Romanian demand for these kinds of products as well as the opportunity to transform the Port of Constanta into a main hub for cruise ship tourism on the Black Sea.

### **The view of Croaziere.net agency on the evolution of the cruise ship segment in Romania**

The tourism agency, Croaziere.net has been active for 13 years, yet the sale of cruise ship vacations really started 3 years after the company was established. The cruise industry started increasing year to year globally and the Romanian market was no exception. As a result, if in the first few years there were only a few tens of cabins sold, eventually this number turned into hundreds. At the moment, from Romania, around 8000 passengers travel on board cruise ships, with a few thousand cabins sold annually.

Table 5. The evolution of the number of passengers that bought cruise from Croaziere.net

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018 (present)
Passenger no.	3600	4500	5500	6800	8500
Percentage growth	10%	20%	20%	20%	20%

Source: Croaziere.net Internal Data

### **Survey Analysis**

We have put together a survey that includes 20 questions and handles pieces of information regarding experience, preferences, expectations, as well as the intentions of tourists regarding cruise trips. The survey was sent to the clients of Croaziere.net agency, that have shown interest to this kind of trip at least on one occasion. After two weeks we have received 57 completed surveys. Out of the 57 individuals, one has never been on a cruise trip, whilst two of the respondents had a number of 20 such vacations each. The total number of cruises taken by respondents is 374, with an average of 6.6 cruises/person and a standard deviation of 4.56 cruises.

A key question in the survey was question number 14, through which we wanted to find out if potential clients could consider interesting the possibility of boarding from the port of Constanta for cruises on the Black Sea or the Mediterranean. 95% have responded positively, for which we considered relevant eliminating the 3 negative answers from the survey. A short analysis of this small group shows that those who are not thrilled by the idea of purchasing a cruise from Constanta are entrepreneurs with income of over 10.000 EUR, have been on an average of 5 cruises and already have a booked cruise upcoming. For these individuals, the period of the booking is not relevant. In their case, the allocated budget for the purchase of a cruise exceeds the average budget by more than one standard deviation. Interestingly, for question number 9, where preferences for tourist destination need to be ranked, the idea of a cruise on the

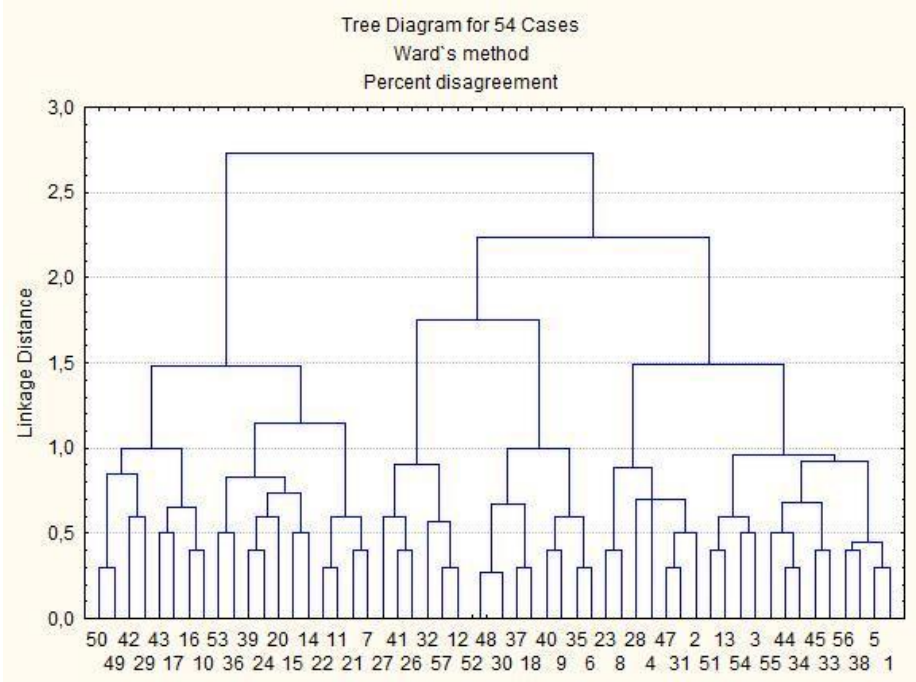
Mediterranean or in the Greek Islands rank on the bottom two places. Likewise, for question number 11, regarding European destinations, destinations which include the Mediterranean Sea and the Greek Islands are on the bottom three places, whilst destinations from Northern Europe occupy the first three places. Moreover, according to these respondents, the savings they would make by choosing to board a ship from Constanta, are very little, almost half of the average of the entire sample. These individuals do not see the advantages of a cruise departing from Constanta and would not choose neither of the variants that we proposed. The destinations that they are interested in are outside of Europe.

Once these individuals are ruled out, we can analyze the people that would not say NO to a boarding from the port of Constanta.

Initially we had a set of 59 questions. By analyzing the correlation matrix, we have eliminated from the start those variables that contained a redundant piece of information. For example, there was a strong correlation between the desires of tourists for the Black Sea and the Greek Islands on one hand and the Mediterranean Sea on the other. Subsequently, we have applied the method of analyzing the main components and eliminated those variables with little discriminant power. An extreme case would be question 14, mentioned above, where all the individuals responded equally.

Upon applying these techniques, we have retained a number of 10 variables referring to the income of the individuals, the numbers of cruises they took to date, the attitude towards the quality of service as well as the stress of intermediate transport, the preferences regarding tourist destinations. The last two variables take into consideration the preferences for two possible itineraries with departure from Constanta and the availability of purchasing a 7-day package at the price of 750 EUR.

Image 1.



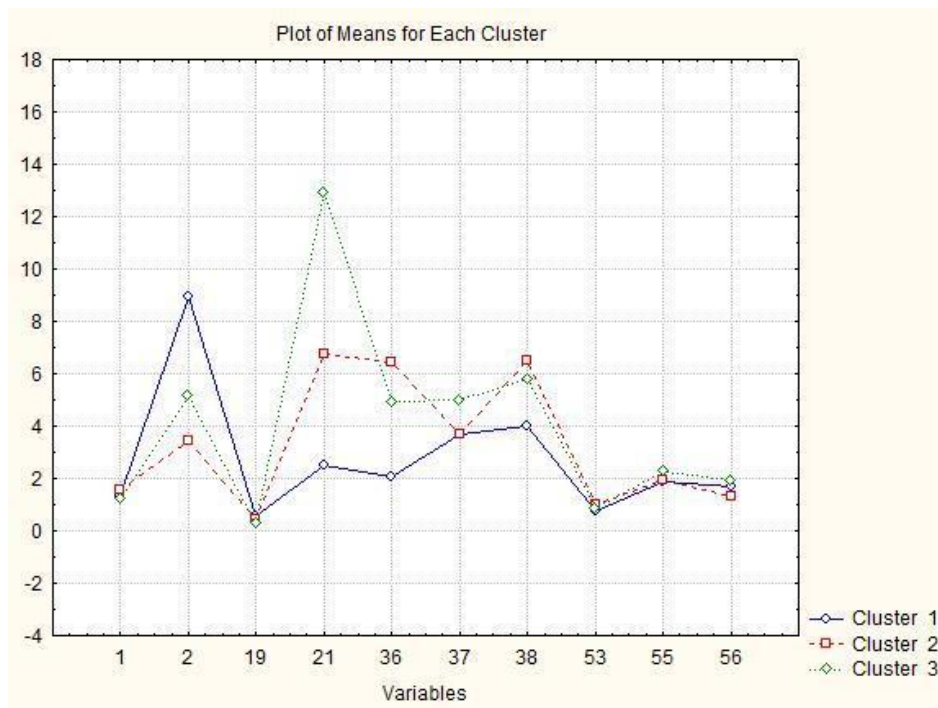
First method used was hierarchically ascending cluster analysis. We used TIBCO STATISTICA package. We have used the Ward method and the evaluation of the dissimilarity between objects, suitable in the case of non-continuous variables (Ionescu and Ruxanda, 2012). By analyzing the dendrogram of the amalgamation, we notice the existence of 3 clusters. This is basically the first clue, regarding grouping individuals. The utility of this unsupervised analysis is the exact reflection of latent information found within the data.

Compared with hierarchical algorithms, the partition algorithms have better results in ranking objects. We have utilized the k-means algorithm in order to find the optimal partition to split the 54 respondents. The k number of clusters is introduced relatively at random, but in this case, having at hand the clues after applying the Ward method, I have opted for k=3

Thus, we have obtained 3 clusters of 27, 12 and 15 members respectively. By the Ward method, the goal is to minimise the intracluster variance and maximize the intercluster variance. By analyzing the covariance matrix but also the distances between clusters as well as the distances between each object relative to the center of the clusters, we find out that the tourists' preferences for certain destinations is the main criteria for classification. We mention however that, for all the variables, F test indicated the acceptance of the alternative hypothesis, meaning all variables have discriminant power between classes.

One of the essential outputs is linked to the mean value for each cluster. Mean values represent the reference for each individual class. The representation of this table can be seen in the plot of mean values, where we can also observe the discriminatory power of the variables. (image 2)

Image 2



- We were expecting a ranking based on income. Members from the third cluster have the lowest average income, followed closely by the income of those from the first cluster. The members of the second cluster have the highest income.
- Although they have the highest income, members of cluster number 2, have the smallest number of cruises - 3.42/individual. A slightly higher value - 5.13 can be seen in members from the 3rd cluster and a maximum value of almost 9 cruises/person can be seen in members from the 1st cluster.
- All the members from the first clusters are more interested in quality of service on board and they compare these services with ones found in same category resorts. Members from the second cluster show less interest regarding this aspect, whilst members from the third cluster are the least interested in this.
- When it comes to the set of questions regarding destination preferences for cruises, the first cluster particularly enjoys the Mediterranean Sea and the Greek Islands. For the same destinations, members of the 2nd cluster have an average

preference, while the members of the 3rd cluster have ranked these destinations as last.

- If it were to choose solely between European destinations, without taking into consideration the rest of the world, the opinions are much more balanced. Even so, members of the 1st cluster have a preference for the Mediterranean (west and east), followed by members of cluster number 3 and finally cluster number 2. Regarding the Black Sea and the Greek Islands, members of cluster 1 and 2 prefer them equally, while members of cluster 3 show the least amount of preference.
- Regarding the advantages of a possible boarding from the port of Constanta, all members of cluster 2 have selected the lack of stress regarding transport to a further boarding point as well as the shorter length of this intermediate transport. At a very short distance we find the members of clusters 1 and 3.
- When required to choose, members of cluster 1 have opted for a 10-nights itinerary with a departure from Constanta, members of cluster 2 opted for 7 nights with departure from Constanta and cluster 3 have opted for neither.
- The final question took into consideration was if the individuals would purchase the 7-night package at the price of 750 EUR. As expected, members of the 2nd cluster were the most thrilled, followed by the members of the 1st cluster. Those from the last cluster inclined more not to acquire this package.

The other questions (from the survey) did not have a high power of discrimination and as a result were taken out of the consideration for this analysis.

## **Conclusions**

The result of the survey can be considered satisfying. 95% of the respondents would not say no to a boarding from Constanta. These respondents have been grouped in 3 larger classes and we managed to build their profile. Thus, we are better able to know who to address and which of the clients are more likely to accept a cruise proposed by us.

- 1) Members of the first cluster have an average income, over 1000EUR/month, have travelled on average on 9 cruises, thus being the most experienced ones. These are the clients that take a particular interest in the quality of services aboard cruise ships and the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea are among their preferences. These clients prefer longer trips and are much more likely to say yes to the 10-day itinerary proposed by us. Another interesting aspect is that the members of this cluster are the highest number, almost half of the respondents.
- 2) Members of the second cluster have the highest average income but have been on the lowest number of cruises. The Mediterranean represents an average option for them, but the Black Sea is very interesting, if they have to choose only European destinations. These members seemed to be more affected by the stress of intermediary transport towards a boarding location outside of the country. For this reason, they are particularly interested in the 7 days itinerary, that they are likely to purchase if it were offered. These members can afford this type of trip but lack the necessary time to travel as much as they would like. As expected, this cluster holds the fewest members - approximately 20%.
- 3) The 3rd cluster holds the members with the lowest income but who have still been on 5 cruises on average. They show the lowest interest in the quality of service onboard ships and are more interested in cruises outside Europe. If they were to choose though a cruise in Europe, The Black Sea and the Greek Islands would be the last ones on their list. They are not interested in proposed itineraries and are most likely not to purchase any of them.

Unfortunately, the timeframe in which the survey was online was quite short. In the future, we propose to create a bigger survey, with new questions that have been suggested to us by the result of this study as well as a higher number of respondents.

## References

1. Cartwright, R. & Baird, C. (1999), *The development and growth of the cruise industry*, Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
2. CLIA (March 2018), *Europe Market Report 2017, Overview*, available at [https://www.cruising.org/docs/default-source/market-research/europe\\_2017\\_ccfinal.pdf](https://www.cruising.org/docs/default-source/market-research/europe_2017_ccfinal.pdf)
3. Dowling, R. (Ed.). (2006), *Cruise Ship Tourism*, Oxfordshire, UK: CABI Publishing
4. Ionescu St, Ruxanda Gh (2012), *Metode si tehnici de recunoastere a formelor utilizate in analiza financiar-bancara*, Ch Bons Offices.
5. MedCruises (2017), *Cruise Activities in MedCruise ports*, Raport available at [www.medcruise.com/file/4750/download?token=wut-bYcZ](http://www.medcruise.com/file/4750/download?token=wut-bYcZ)
6. Port of Constanta (2018), *General informations and statistics*, available at [http://www.portofconstantza.com/apmc/portal/static.do?package\\_id=lr\\_con\\_pasager&x=load](http://www.portofconstantza.com/apmc/portal/static.do?package_id=lr_con_pasager&x=load)
7. Weaver, A. (2005), *Spaces of containment and revenue capture: „Super-sized“ cruise ships as mobile tourism enclaves*, *Tourism Geographies*, 7(2), 165-184.
8. Wild P., Dearing J. (2000), *Development of and prospects for cruising in Europe*, *Maritime Policy & Management*, Volume 27, 2000 - Issue 4.

# TRAVEL BOOKING. METHODS AND TOOLS PREFERED BY GENERATIONS

Mihaela-Filofteia Tutunea  
Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

## Abstract

*Starting from both the demographic evolution and the generational classification of the world population, as well as the modifications imposed by the mobile technologies and devices both in the behavior and the preferences of the individuals, a study was conducted on the preferred methods and tools used in online travel booking by the tourists, depending on their generation; knowing that tourism was among the first adopting industries of all new mobile technologies and ICT solutions, we believe the study results can provide important insights to the entities in both industries and tourists.*

**Keywords:** booking systems, online booking, travel booking

**JEL classification:** L86, L83

## Introduction and literature review

The development of mobile technologies has brought permanent change in the ITC profile of people; the increased mobility offered by these technologies and the widespread use of mobile devices have changed people's behavior both in their current lives, but also in their recreational, leisure and adventure activities such as those offered by the tourism industry.

Over time, it was easy to see that changing this user profile of mobile technologies and devices was done in ways, at levels and with totally different speeds depending on the age of users; the same trends were observed in the behavioral changes of the users of these technologies, including their tourists status.

It is known that tourism and the hospitality industry have marked the category of most adaptive industries to the changes brought by the latest mobile technologies and the ICT industry.

It is also known that the companies in these industries have permanently adapted their products and services to the age-specific categories of tourists; also, the demand for certain categories of tourism services and products is different depending on the age category of the tourists.

The last years, however, have imposed the use of another demographic category as a segment of the demand segmentation, namely the generational one, which recomposes the age groups of the people, according to common preferences and experiences.

In the study, we started from a demographic profile, identified globally for 2018, according to which the best represented age category is 25-54 years (41.12%), followed by 0-14 years (25.44%), 15 -24 years (16.16%), 65 years and over (8.68%) and 55-64 years (8.6%) (Indexmundi, 2018).

From a different perspective, the division of the population over generations shows that the most representative category, 25-54 years, covers two generations, namely Gen Y (Millenials) and Generation X (Businesinsider, 2018).

Regarding tourists' preferences, according to generations, Tripadvisor, in the Trip Barometer Travel Trends report, identifies the following: "two-thirds of travelers use online channels to make accommodation bookings; one in five Baby Boomers use offline channels to make room reservations; the online accommodation is 65% online, 17% offline, 6% mobile; flight and accommodation prices are key drivers in travel decisions; Price and reviews are the most important decision making factors when booking accommodation; accommodation facilities also play a key role for Millennials and Generation X; Millennials want to be close to dining options "(Tripadvisor, 2016).

According to AARP Research in Travel: 2018 Travel trends, several generational travel differences have been identified, namely: "in terms of travel agendas, Millenials



and Gen X prefer domestic and international travel more than boomers; from the perspective of motivation for travel, Millennials prefer more adventure travel than Boomers, trying out something new; from the expenditure perspective, Gen X anticipates travel costs less than Boomers and Millennials plan future spending; from loyalty programs point of view - Boomers are most present in loyalty programs "(AARP, 2017).

Also, it was indicated that "tourism managers should distinguish between different groups of grandparents in their promotional strategies for senior market tourism" (Shavanddasht, 2018).

It has also been highlighted an aspect of preference and behavior of the Gen Y, as tourists: "the Millennials are looking for authentic and memorable experiences, they have to sink into the lifestyle of local residents and have valuable experiences similar to those of the inhabitants. the change in which tourists are concentrating, thus invading spaces traditionally reserved for residents and thus generating "tourismfobia" (Veiga et al, 2017).

Starting from these aspects, a study on generational preferences for travel booking methods and tools has been carried out. We believe that the results obtained in the first stage of the study will be able to offer a very useful set of information for offline travel agencies, for OTAs, accommodation units, GDS platforms, etc.

### **Material and method(s)**

The study was designed to be carried out in several stages in order to obtain more complex results; thus, in the first stage, the study was initiated only for tourists from Romania; in the next phase, this will be extended to people coming from other countries; the last stage being dedicated to the tourist offer in order to achieve a primary validation between the results of the previous stages.

Thus, in the first phase, the identification of the methods and tools used by the Romanians in booking the trips, according to the generation of the tourists, was sought; the study was conducted between 15 March 2018 and 1 August 2018; primary information derived from a mobile-based questionnaire administrated on social networks; the questionnaire contained 13 questions, splited in three sections. The sampling was carried out by simple random sampling; the final sample was of 1003 respondents; the data from 971 valid questionnaires were analyzed.

We underline that in the study we considered the generational classification based on the birth year of individuals: Gen Z/iGen/Centennials (1996 to present), Millennials/ Gen Y (1977 to 1995), Generation X (1965 to 1976), Baby Boomers (1946 to 1964), Traditionalists or Silent Generation (1945 and before). (Bussinessinsider, 2018)

### **Results and discussions**

The analysis of the data collected, during the first stage of the study, allowed the identification of an important set of information.

From the first section of the questionnaire, it was possible to identify the socio-demographic profile (sex, generation, education); the second module, allowed the identification of traveler profiles (tourist/non-tourism, domestic/international, travel habits and preferences by generation); the last module, has identified the preferences in using booking systems and tools by generation.

From the analysis of the socio-demographic profile of the Romanian respondents, emerged a slightly better represented presence of men (51.07%) than the feminine, of the Gen X (37.12%), with university studies (38.02%) (Table 1).

Table 1 - Socio-demographic profile - Romania (%)

Gender	Female	48.93
	Male	51.07
Generations	Gen Z/iGen/Centennials	15.92
	Millenials/ Gen Y	21.21
	Gen X	37.12

	Baby Boomers	20.86
	Silent Generation	4.89
Education	Basic	1.159
	High school	26.67
	College	27.12
	University	38.02
	Post university	7.03

The Travel profile identified from the analysis of the data collected in the second module reveals the following: respondents are declared as travelers (98.06%), most preferred international travel (69.95%), usually traveling more with family (33.47%); The most preferred type of trips is package holidays; The source of information used for a trip is social networks, offline travel agencies and OTAs websites; the most often booked type of products/services are accommodation and flights.

Regarding generational preferences in using booking systems and tools, the data analysis noted the profile of a mobile user (57.82%) who use booking websites (36.29%) and who prefer Booking.com as an online booking system (30.68% ) (Table2).

Table 2 - General preferences in using booking systems and tools (%)

Device used in online booking	Laptop, desktop	38.11
	Mobile phone, tablet, etc	57.82
	Do not book online	4.07
Preferences in travel booking	Direct booking online	10.02
	Mobile apps for booking	28.91
	Offline booking	7.06
	OTAs websites	17.72
	Booking websites	36.29
The most used websites for booking	Booking.com	30.68
	Airbnb	27.91
	Direct booking	8.97
	Skyscanner	8.23
	Trivago.com	7.34
	Google Flights	6.06
	Hotels.com	4.33
	Expedia.com	4.13
	KAYAK	2.03
	Hipmunk	0.2
	Other	0.12
	Kiwi.com	0
Momondo	0	

## Conclusions

The results of the study, in its primary phase, also allowed besides drawing up the socio-demographic and traveler profiles, the identification of an important set of information about the generational preferences, namely:

- Gen X and Boomers - prefer package holidays, OTAs webs like source of information and their most used device for online booking are laptops;

- Gen Y and Z - prefer adventure trips, social networks are their source of information and the most used device for online booking are mobile devices;
- Silent Gen - prefer family trip and they are non-users of online booking systems;
- Accommodation services - are the most booked by Gen X and Silent Gen;
- Flights/transport - are the most booked by Gen Y and Z;
- the most preferred booking systems by all generations remain Booking and AirBnb.

We believe that the set of information resulting from the study can be a useful foundation for both tourism and developers of software solutions dedicated to this industry.

## References

1. AARP (2017) available at: [https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/research/surveys\\_statistics/life-leisure/2017/2018-travel-trends.doi.10.26419%252Fres.00179.001.pdf](https://www.aarp.org/content/dam/aarp/research/surveys_statistics/life-leisure/2017/2018-travel-trends.doi.10.26419%252Fres.00179.001.pdf), accessed in July 2018
2. Businessinsider (2018), available at: <https://www.businessinsider.com/generation-you-are-in-by-birth-year-millennial-gen-x-baby-boomer-2018-3>, accessed in July 2018
3. Indexmundi (2018), available at: [https://www.indexmundi.com/world/demographics\\_profile.html](https://www.indexmundi.com/world/demographics_profile.html), accessed in July 2018
4. Shavanddasht Mercede (2018), *Grandparent's segmentation by the tourism motivation: travelling with or without grandchildren*, Young Consumers, Vol. 19 Issue: 2, p.141-158, pp 154, <https://doi.org/10.1108/YC-07-2017-00719>
5. Trispadvisor (2016) available at: <https://www.tripadvisor.com/TripAdvisorInsights/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Global-Report-US-Travel-Trends-TripBarometer-2016.pdf>, accessed in august 2018
6. Veiga Célia, Margarida Custódio Santos, Paulo Águas, José António C. Santos, (2017), *Are millennials transforming global tourism? Challenges for destinations and companies*, Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes, Vol. 9 Issue: 6, p. 603-616, pp 612, <https://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/abs/10.1108/WHATT-09-2017-0047>

# PERSONNEL'S SERVICE QUALITY ON LUXURY HOTELS: THE TRANSITION OF CUSTOMERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS EMOTIONS

Konstantina Zerva, Carola Martí  
University of Girona, Girona, Spain

## Abstract

*The SERVQUAL scale has been widely used by investigators to shed light into the evaluation of customer experiences in the hotel sector as a control mechanism of the served quality. Considering the fact that perceptions are of an ever-changing nature, the objective of this paper is to analyse which of these five dimensions are still present in the online reviews of clients of luxury hotels, what is the evolved importance given to each of these dimensions, if any, and what are the new aspects that clients may focus on during current experience in a luxurious environment.*

**Keywords:** service quality, luxury hotels, emotions

**JEL classification:** M31, L83

## Service quality as it has been investigated

Even though "the client is always right" is an oft-quoted catch phrase highly questioned today by the business world, customer relationship and relationship marketing have nonetheless become one of the most important pillars of obtaining customer fidelity, through the creation of long-term trust with valued customers based on a mutual and satisfactory benefit exchange (Kim & Cha 2002; Peng & Wang 2006; Mishra & Li 2008). This benefit is characterized as interactive and personalized, while producing an added value in the relationship between business and client (Shani & Chalasani 1992). In a highly competitive environment, retaining satisfied customers leads to financial rewards through the increase of new clients from the positive generated word-of-mouth and the avoidance of cost strategies for the acquisition of these clients (Meng & Elliott 2008).

A key concept repeated in the relationship management literature is customer satisfaction, which has been conceptualized as a post-purchase evaluation of the pleasurable level of consumption-related fulfillment provided by a service or product after experiencing it (Woodside et al. 1989; Oliver 1997), resulting from the comparison between the product's or service's perceived performance and the customer's expectations (Kolter 2000). Few investigations (Johnson 2004; Ha & Jang 2010) have focused their conceptualization of satisfaction upon the affective reaction and the evolution of these emotions as a continuum, reaching until extremely positive feelings of delight delivered by excellent services. Customer satisfaction has the highest priority for businesses in saturated and competitive markets, while personal services such as in the hotel sector, represent one of the most important considerations of travelers when they look for accommodation (Rao & Sahu 2013). The role of the front office staff is considered more than supportive in the formation of satisfaction since it represents the center of the hotel through the personal assistance it offers (Watt 2007).

An important amount of investigation has been conducted so as to determine what forms customer satisfaction, with service quality appearing as top influence (Orel & Kara 2014; Su et al. 2016). Albeit satisfaction refers to a short-term measurement of personal and emotional reaction to a service, service quality is developed in the long-run and aims at correlating with customer expectations (Dortyol et al. 2014). In strict terms, quality refers to doing something right the first time (Parasuraman et al. 1985), according to Japanese philosophy, emphasizing on the importance of zero mistakes and timing. Services and products must satisfy customers' needs the first time these needs are expressed.

In a long scale, it has been seen that business performance is highly affected by product and service quality as received and compared to competition (Akbaba 2006), while the evaluation of services is considered far more complex than for products, due to

the nature of services (Frochot & Hughes 2000; Harris & Harrington 2000), especially in the field of the hotel industry where attributes like reliability, face-to-face interaction or fluctuating demand, difficult the measurement of quality (Akbaba 2006). A positive service quality results in the improvement of market share, re-purchase intentions, customer subjective well-being and profitability, better control over average direct costs and occupancy level (Briggs et al. 2007; Nadiri & Hussain 2005; Su et al. 2016), a significant strategic advantage recognized by luxury hotel chains (Briggs et al 2007). The definition of service quality has been a complicated task referring to the whole package and not a specific service item (Berry et al. 2002), and to meeting customers' needs, while finally it has established as a comparison result customers make between the expectation of nature of the service and the perception of what was experienced, giving emphasis to the customer perspective (Parasuraman et al. 1985; Vinagre & Neves 2008; Rao & Sahu 2013). The more managers comprehend customers' needs and desires, the better they can offer them.

In order to understand the structure of service quality, Lehtinen & Lehtinen (1991) presented two approaches; a three-dimensional related with the elements of the service production process, and a two-dimensional where customer's point of view is included. More specifically, the three-dimensional approach refers to the a) the physical quality, meaning the quality of material and facilities needed for the delivery of the physical product and support, b) the interactive quality, that is, the expressive performance during the interaction between the customer and the service organization, being the latter a person or physical equipment, and c) the corporate quality referring to the history and image of the service organization. Finally, the two-dimensional quality approach focuses on the process and output quality, where the first is based on customer's personal and subjective judgment of their level of participation in the production process in collaboration with the contact person, whereas the second one is referring to the customer's evaluation of the result of the production process.

Focusing on a specific concept of service quality dimension, that is, the interactive quality or the convivial dimension, this study chooses to further analyze one fundamental part of the service quality based on the relationship between the customers and the front office staff. For Saleh and Ryan (1991), this quality dimension is the only one that offset minor deficiencies of the physical service quality in customer's perspective, indicating a sensitive role in the evaluation of the service received. On general terms, the hospitality industry has focused on attracting service providers that are characterized by professionalism, not the structural one that refers to practicing an occupation of high status in society after rigorous education and training, but the attitudinal one that turns attention to the values, behavioral orientation and belief system that individuals conceive as correlated to their occupations. This micro-level dimension of professionalism has been divided by Lee (2014) into the specialized knowledge pursuit that a profession can have, self-management when making decisions, sense of calling, where personal life and work are a continuity, and customer orientation, where the client goes first, while emphasis has been given to their impact on service quality efficacy for frontline employees, meaning self-confidence regarding skills and capabilities so as to effectively meet customers' needs and expectations. The conclusions of that study indicated that knowledge pursuit as well as self-management in service quality have a high importance on the interactive dimension of efficacy, which is concerned with customers' perception of quality and refers to employees' adaptability of service on customers' needs.

In further investigations, interactive quality has been characterized by furthermore detailed determinants like information sharing, communication quality, long-term orientation and finally customer satisfaction (Lages et al. 2005), or like trust, desire to invest in a relationship, commitment, resolving conflict and expectation of continuity (Kumar et al. 1995).

Investigations produced in order to detect the number of service quality determinants indicates a constant debate over this subject (Parasuraman et al. 1985). It is clear that hotel services are paying attention into how to treat customers as individuals. Yet, the determinants that have been mostly used in quantitative

investigation so as to measure the nature of the offered service quality (Saleh & Ryan 1991; Akbaba 2006; Rao & Sahu 2013; Al Khattab & Aldehayyat 2011) refer to Parasuraman's et al. (1985) service quality measurement scale SERVQUAL, an attribute-based method which represents the five dimensions of tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. This scale is basically considering the gap between clients' expectations and personnel's performance. In the case of front desk service and interactive service quality, these determinants are referring to physical appearance and professionalism of the staff (tangibility), ability to resolve guests' problems (reliability), willingness in providing prompt services (responsiveness), ability to inspire trust and confidence to clients (assurance), and caring and individualized attention to clients (empathy), (Parasuraman's et al. 1985; Dabholkar et al. 1996). The basic critics against this scale is the use of the simple survey and questionnaire (Al Khattab & Aldehayyat 2011), the failure in capturing the context which influences expectations, thus making comparison difficult, while the role of expectations in providing extra information on service quality is questioned (Cronin & Taylor 1992; Brady, Brady et al. 2002).

### **Methodology and objective**

Despite these critics, the SERVQUAL scale has been widely used by investigators to shed light into the evaluation of customer experiences in the hotel sector as a control mechanism of the served quality. Considering the fact that perceptions are of an ever-changing nature, the objective of this paper is to analyse which of these five dimensions are still present in the online reviews of clients of luxury hotels, what is the evolved importance given to each of these dimensions, if any, and what are the new aspects that clients may focus on during current experience in a luxurious environment. For this reason, a netnographic analysis approach (Kozinetz 2002) was used on 801 online reviews on Tripadvisor of customers of the luxury hotel chain Ritz-Carlton from a six-month period (1st of August to 31 of January). Considering the fact that a hotel chain as a brand should offer the same service quality in all establishments based on the principle of brand reputation (Moorthy, 1985), the choice of different hotels was used as a factor of comparison. From these comments, emphasis was given to the ones mentioning the personnel's service quality (674 comments, that is, 84% of all comments) derived from five hotels (Barcelona, Abama, Viena, Berlin and Sinitra) of the hotel chain. A qualitative approach through content analysis was used in order to codify each statement, that is, each unit of analysis, be it a phrase or a single word) where a code can be attributed, reaching to 959 codified statements of the 674 comments.

### **Findings**

According to our data, from the total 801 comments six general categories of service quality perceptions were identified, being personnel, facilities, location, restaurant, decoration, and price (in order of number of statements mentioned). As noted previously, 674 comments included 959 statements regarding personnel quality, being the type of service quality where most emphasis was given, as well as the type of service that can be least controlled by the management due to the nature of the direct relationship between the client and the personnel. This emphasis is marked on the following comment: *"I have no doubt that this is the best hotel I've ever been (like the RC of USA six years ago). The rooms, the restaurant and the food were excellent but above all the contact with the personnel. Incredible. Wherever you go they are very polite and they want to help you in everything so that you can have an incredible stay."* For this reason, a deeper analysis of the content of personnel service was employed.

In an effort to locate the five dimensions – tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy – they were used as predefined codes in this stage of the codification process. 40% of the statements were referring to empathy (379), 22% to responsiveness (212), 18% to reliability (175), 15% to assurance (143) and finally 5% to tangibility (50). Empathy, which refers to the individualized and caring attention was

mostly evaluated by clients, focusing on the personalized manner they were treated under no obvious need for that attention, meaning the "something extra" that was not expected. 89% of these statements were positive. Personalized attention is described in detail, appreciated and rewarded by giving it back to them through the use of the personal names of the staff in the reviews, while proactiveness towards unnecessary needs created a memory worth mentioning, as shown in the following comments *"Even if it is a massive resort they always remembered our names and gave personalized attention. It`s more, not only they remembered our names but every time they saw us they perfectly remembered what we talked about last day, our preferences, hobbies etc. Above all, they remembered that it was our anniversary and they brought a cake at our room and balloons. I take my hat off with the staff. Honestly"* or *"It`s above all 5star hotels and goes beyond the standards I expected. Room service put a glass of water and my book to read on the table next to my bed."* However, the lack of that "something extra" was mentioned as a negative comment, like for example *"The people at the front desk were very friendly, but the concierge lacked a personal touch"*.

The second most mentioned type of personnel quality was responsiveness, meaning the willingness in providing prompt services towards clients' needs. In this dimension, which had 99% positive comments, clients perceived valuable enough to mention the staff's proactiveness or quick responding towards needs or problems that were not necessarily provoked by the hotel itself, like *"One day we were at the door of the hotel deciding whether to go look for an umbrella from the room or give the weather a chance based that it wouldn't rain. In 20 seconds, without having said nothing to no one, a worker from the reception appears giving each one an umbrella"* or *"The concierge saved us. The airline had lost our luggage. We went to explain it to the concierge and two hours later we had our luggage!"*.

The third dimension mostly mentioned was reliability, that is, the ability to resolve problems, where most negative comments appeared with a 39%. The positive part of reliability was detected in the effective solution of problems whether caused by the hotel or not, like in this case *"When I left the hotel I forgot my mobile and when I was at the cruise I called the hotel. They told me not to worry, they delivered my mobile at my cruise and it appeared at my cabin. Now that`s first class"*. Yet, the negative comments were focusing on a lack of ability to handle a problem or complaint either avoiding to properly inform clients (i.e. *"We had made our reservation back in May and now it is end August and they never informed us they are going through renovation. Good luck if you try to work or sleep during the day, they just drill and drill."*) or making the client look for the solution themselves (i.e. *"Second, we went down to the bar to get a drink before dinner, and it was overrun with wedding guests. I was unable to get anyone's attention to order, and my husband (who had luckily beat the crowd) had to track someone down to pay"*).

The fourth dimension that was mentioned was assurance, meaning the ability to inspire trust and confidence, where 87% of the statements were positive. These statements were focusing on the production of a safety net for the clients, probably because during the period analyzed the terrorist attack at Barcelona took place on the 17<sup>th</sup> of August, making comments like *"Unfortunately I was staying there when the attempt happened at the Rambla of Barcelona. From the hotel they did a good job raising the level of security and making clients feel secure"*, or on a more general level creating comfortable environment through emotions of happiness (i.e. *"He had us laughing and feeling really welcomed"*). On the contrary, lack of assurance was detected when the staff lost control of their duty and passed the problem on to the clients themselves (i.e. *"On 2nd day of our stay we realized that our room keys were not working so my husband went to reception to ask for the key, and I was waiting up next to the room.20 minutes left and my husband came back with 2 receptionist, They were not giving the keys for my husband without deposit as they say it was finished and we should leave more deposit. It was late and we were tired, they came all way to our room to open the room and take more deposit"*).

Finally, the dimension least mentioned was tangibility referring to the physical appearance and professionalism of the staff, where 90% of the statements were positive.

This dimension was described in general terms, referring to an elegant appearance or a well-dressed look along with a general skill appreciation, like *"Sensational treat from the employees, especially Rodrigo: an elegant, young and discrete sommelier who knows what he is talking about and recommends"*.

Moving forward to open codification in order to see if there is any new dimension where clients base their perception on personnel quality, the emotional dimension appeared in four of the five previous categories, meaning all but tangibility. 36% (that is, 348) of the 959 statements had an affective connotation, where 59% was detected in empathy, 24% in responsiveness, 14% in reliability and 3% in assurance. Considering that the latter was basically mentioned related to the terrorist attack, it is fair to assume that on an emotional level, assurance has low presence.

In the case of empathy, 19 codes of positive feelings were reported, where the most important ones had to do with feeling cared for, special, attended, like a royal and greeted, where personalization on both sides (personnel and clients) led to feelings shared within a friendly and family environment or in some cases, a royal family, i.e. *"Well I can tell you that our 1year old never got more attention in his life than this week, every morning John welcomed us at breakfast and our table was set (...) decoration, balloons and even a lovely gift was waiting for us on morning at breakfast!! We felt like royals!!"*. Only four negative codes were mentioned, referring to feelings of shame during bad communication due to language problems or simply not feeling special which indicates that the client has emotional expectations too.

Interestingly enough, responsiveness on an emotional level had more than double negative statements than positive ones, where the lack of willingness to provide solutions led to codes like feeling ignored, frustrated and deceived towards the lack of flexibility to reaction to the problem mentioned, for example *"They are well trained and follow the procedures which is wrong sometimes because procedures are hurting customers ☹ for example I had my baby crying on the 10 flor and they shut down the key because I should raise the deposit on the credit card. They refused to give me a card unless I bring the credit card and they didn't care that the baby is crying"*. In this case, apart from lack of empathy, following the protocol was of higher priority than the wellbeing of the client, providing no other option. Positive emotions had to do with being thankful, impressed or feeling loved when the offered solution exceeded the expectations of the booked product.

Finally, reliability, as well as responsiveness, had more negative statements than positive ones, referring to feelings of disappointment, neglect, displacement or being cheated emerged from the incapability to finally solve the existing problems. On the other hand, providing solutions led to feelings like satisfied, appreciated and gratified, where what was expected was finally delivered and their role as a client was not considered as weak. It seems that when it comes to solving problems more negative emotions appear than positive ones, indicating an important gap in personnel's behavior towards clients that leaves room for negative detailed reviews.

## **Conclusions**

This paper aims to go deeper to the perceived experience of tourists' stay in a luxury hotel as they perceive it and highlight the moments they wish to share of that experience. Considering that the SERVQUAL tool has been widely used albeit its drawbacks to measure customers' evaluation of a hotel experience, we wanted to see how they were currently interpreted by clients as well as any new dimension that was considered important. It was obvious that social interaction with personnel creates stories worth to be narrated online, avoiding general evaluations and mentioning particular cases of service quality, easy to make the reader attached to the story. The appearance of a problem or even a challenge to be solved represents a test for the staff to be part of a success story of customer appreciation or a failure story. If and how a solution is offered determines the evaluation towards the entire brand, not just the particular employee. Proactiveness, the level of personalization or exceeding expectations leads to the sharing of anecdotal stories that determine perception on service quality. Empathy and responsiveness were the dimensions mostly shared online, while a new



dimension that should be added is the generation of emotions through the social interaction. One third of all statements on service was mentioning feelings that were produced after encounter with the personnel, indicating that there are also expectations on feelings as well as exceeded expectations on feelings.

## References

1. Akbaba A. (2006): "Measuring service quality in the hotel industry: a study in a business hotel in Turkey", *Hospitality Management*, no 25, pp 170-192
2. Al Khattab S.A. & Aldehayyat J.S. (2011): "Perceptions of service quality in Jordanian Hotels", *International Journal of Business and Management*, vol 6, no 7, pp 226-233
3. Berry L., Carbone L. & Haeckel S. (2002): "Managing the total customer experience", *MIT Sloan Management Review*, vol 43, no 3, 2002, pp 85-89
4. Brady M., Cronin J. & Brand R. (2002). Performance-only measurement of service quality: a replication and extension, *Journal of Business Research*, 55: 17-31
5. Briggs, S., Sutherland, J., & Drummond, S. (2007). Are hotels serving quality? An exploratory study of service quality in the Scottish hotel sector. *Tourism Management*, 28(4), 1006-1019
6. Cronin Jr. J.J. & Taylor S.A. (1992). Measuring service quality: a reexamination and extension, *Journal of Marketing*, 58(1): 125-131
7. Dabholkar P.A., Thorpe D.I. & Rentz J.O. (1996). A measure of service quality for retail stores: scale development and validation. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, vol 24, no 3, pp. 3-16
8. Dortyol I.T., Varinli I. & Kitapci O. (2014): "How do international tourists perceive hotel quality? An exploratory study of service quality in Antalya tourism region", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, no 26(3), pp 470-495
9. Frochot I. & Hughes H. (2000): "Histoqual: the development of a historic houses assessment scale", *Tourism Management*, no 21, pp 157-167
10. Fung So, K. K., Ceridwyn, K., Sparks, B. A., & Wang, Y. (2016). The Role of Customer Engagement in Building Consumer Loyalty to Tourism Brands. *Journal of Travel Research*, 55(1), 64-78
11. Ha J. & Jang S. (2010): "Effects of service quality and food quality: the moderating role of atmospherics in an ethnic restaurant segment", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, no 29, pp 520-529
12. Harmon, R. R., & Kenneth, A. C. (1982). The Persuasive Effects of Source Credibility in Buy and Lease Situations. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 19, 255-260
13. Harris M. & Harrington H.J. (2000): "Service quality in the knowledge age - Huge opportunities for the twenty first century", *Measuring Business Excellence*, vol 4, no 4, pp 31-36
14. Johnson R. (2004): "Towards a better understanding of service excellence", *Managing Service Quality*, no 14(2/3), pp 129-133
15. Kim W.G. & Cha Y. (2002): "Antecedents and consequences of relationship quality in hotel industry", *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, no 21(4), pp 321-338
16. Kozinets R.V. (2002). "The Field Behind the Screen: Using Netnography For Marketing Research in Online Communities", *Journal of Marketing Research*, 39 (February), 61-72
17. Kumar N., Scheer L.K. & Steenkamp J.B. (1995): "The effects of supplier fairness on vulnerable resellers", *Journal of Marketing Research*, vol 32, no 1, pp 54-65
18. Kuo, C. M. (2009). The managerial implications of an analysis of tourist profiles and international hotel employee service attitude. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 28, 302-309
19. Lages C., Lages C.R. & Lages L.F. (2005): "The RELQUAL scale: a measure of relationship quality in export market ventures", *Journal of Business Research*, vol 58, no 8, pp 1040-1048
20. Lehtinen U. & Lehtinen J.R. (1991): "Two approaches to service quality", *The Service Industries Journal*, no 11(3), pp 287-303
21. Meng J. & Elliott K.M. (2008): "Predictors of relationship quality for luxury restaurants", *Journal of Retailing and Customer Services*, no 15(6), pp 509-515
22. Mishra, K.E. & Li C. (2008): "Relationship Marketing in Fortune 500 U.S. and Chinese Web Sites", *Journal of Relationship Marketing*, no 7(1), pp 29-43
23. Moorthy, K.S. (1985), "Using Game Theory to Model Competition", *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. XXII, August, pp. 262-82
24. Nadiri H. & Hussain K. (2005): "Perceptions of service quality in north Cyprus hotels", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, no 17(6), pp 469-480
25. Oliver R.I. (1997): *Satisfaction: a behavioral perspective on the consumer*, New York, Irwin/McGraw-Hill

26. Orel F.D. & Kara A. (2014): "Supermarket self-checkout service quality, customer satisfaction and loyalty: empirical evidence from an emerging market", *Journal of Retailing and Customer Services*, no 21(2), pp 118-129
27. Parasuraman A., Zeithaml V.A., & Berry L.L. (1985): "A conceptual model of service quality and its implications for future research", *Journal of Marketing*, no 49(4), pp 41-50
28. Peng, L.Y. & Wang, Q. (2006): "Impact of Relationship Marketing Tactics (RMT's) on Switchers and Stayers in a Competitive Service Industry", *Journal of Marketing Management*, no 44, pp 22-59
29. Rao S.P. & Sahu P.C. (2013): "Impact of service quality on customer satisfaction in hotel industry", *Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, no 18(5), pp 39-44
30. Saleh K. & Ryan C. (1991): "Analysing service quality in the hospitality industry using the SERVQUAL model", *The Service Industries Journal*, vol 11, no 3, pp 324-345
31. Shani, D. & Chalasani S. (1992): "Exploiting niches using relationship marketing", *Journal of Service Marketing*, no 6(4), pp 43-52
32. Su L., Swanson S.R. & Chen X. (2016): "The effects of perceived service quality on repurchase intentions and subjective well-being of Chinese tourists: the mediating role of relationship quality", *Tourism Management*, no 52, pp 82-95
33. Vinagre M.H. & Neves J. (2008): "The influence of service and patients' emotions on satisfaction", *International Journal of Health Care Quality Assurance*, no 21(1), pp 87-103
34. Watt P. (2007): *Customer service work and emotional labor in the hospitality industry*, UK: University of London
35. Woodside A.G., Frey L.L. & Daly R.T. (1989): "Linking service quality, customer satisfaction and behavioral intention", *Journal of Health Care Marketing*, no 9(4) pp5-17

# EXPLORATORY STUDY REGARDING TOURISM DESTINATION GOVERNANCE

Smaranda Cosma<sup>1</sup>, Lasse Berntzen<sup>2</sup>, Cristina Fleşeriu<sup>3</sup>, Ionuț Călin Căzan<sup>4</sup>  
<sup>1,3,4</sup> Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania  
<sup>2</sup> University of South-Eastern Norway, Notodden, Norway

## Abstract

*In 1980 Tschiederer postulated that tourist places may be developed just as an organization. After a decade, tourist destination was viewed as a competitive unit and simultaneously as a community with different stakeholders with accordingly diverse interests. Today, destination planning refers to all the activities and processes involved in developing a tourist place or region with a strategic aim that eventually leads to an increase of its competitiveness. Recent researches in the field are subsumed under the term 'destination governance'. Given the actual level of conceptual development of tourist destination governance, it is necessary to have continuity and to deepen the limited efforts undertaken until present. The main goal is to explore the dynamics of destination governance using a holistic approach. The exploratory research is used to identify alternative courses of actions, to gain insights and to develop hypotheses.*

*The destination management concept is a holistic approach that relies on partnerships and aims to help destinations compete effectively. The study of tourist destination governance offers opportunities for improvement in the effectiveness of tourist destinations, provides areas of study for tourism academics and a useful lesson for the sciences research community.*

**Keywords:** governance, tourism destination, destination governance

**JEL Classification:** L83, M31

## Introduction

Travel and tourism industry is one of the most dynamic and successful sector in the world. Tourism impact can be felt in a considerable proportion of the global society in various forms like impact on national economy, cultural or social impact, environmental impact, etc. Nowadays an increasingly systematic research approach has been adopted towards measurement of destinations' performance and competitiveness. The reasons are multiple: from economical point of view the highest motivation is revenues generated by tourism but we have to consider also multiplication effects on other activities observing social, environmental, cultural impact or crowd, jams, residence attitude. Several studies have contributions regarding the important drivers of competitiveness and performance for the tourism destinations (Cosma, 2011). Given the actual level of conceptual development of tourist destination governance, it is necessary to give continuity to and deepen the limited efforts undertaken until present.

## Material and methods

The leading concept of this marketing research consists in the impact of governance for tourist destinations and the main goal is to explore the dynamics of destination governance using a holistic approach both theoretically and practically. This paper uses only a part of the data collected in this marketing research. The main purpose of the present study is to have an overview of the destination governance concept and to create a framework regarding components of tourist destination governance. The paper uses exploratory research through secondary data analysis for identifies alternative courses of actions, gains insights and develops hypotheses. Secondary data were obtained through published and statistical studies, extensive web sites analysis, documentation and information regarding definitions, concepts about governance approaches for destinations and setting the context of tourism destination governance. This study reviews previous research on tourism destination governance, exploring the relevant literature.

## Results and discussions

In 1980 Tschiederer postulated that tourist places may be developed just as an organization. After a decade, tourism destination was viewed as a competitive unit and simultaneously as a community with different stakeholders with accordingly diverse interests (Heath and Wall, 1992; Inskip, 1991). Today, destination planning refers to all the activities and processes involved in developing a tourist place or region with a strategic aim (Buhalis, 2000; Dredge, 1999; Formica & Kothari, 2008; Getz, 1992), that eventually leads to an increase of its competitiveness (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003). Recent research in the field is subsumed under the term 'destination governance'. One of the first contributions that explicitly used the concept of governance, pointed to the differences between institutional and individual level of analysis and to the control variables that must be analyzed for an effective destination management (Raich, 2006). The destination management concept is a holistic approach to development that relies on partnerships, and aims to help destinations compete effectively.

Morgan, Pritchard and Pride highlight that a destination is not a single product, but a composite one which includes: accommodation and eating/ dining establishments, tourist attractions, arts establishments and cultural venues. The whole atmosphere of a place, the hotels in which tourists stay, the friendliness of the local people and the overall impression are essential for the creation of a successful destination brand (Morgan et al. 2002). An increasingly systematic research approach has been adopted towards measurement of destinations' performance and competitiveness concept at international level. The reasons are multiple: from economical point of view the highest motivation is revenues generated by tourism but we have to consider also multiplication effects on other activities observing social, environmental, cultural impact or crowd, jams, residence attitude.

Governance is the set of tasks such as decision making, enforcement of decisions, communication of rules and measurement of performance that allow the system to proceed the following functions: "to cope with external challenges, to prevent conflicts amongst its members...to procure resources...and to frame goals and policies to achieve them" (Rosenau and Czempiel, 1992:3).

Because of that, the core purpose of governance is the direction and regulation of complex and unpredictable social and economic processes (Braithwaite et al., 2007:5).

Regarding tourism, this one is seen as a multi-sector activity that has a lot of stakeholders with different and often divergent objectives and goals. Achieving competition, collaboration and integration among the government organizations involved in various aspects of tourism or between the government and the private sector companies, as well as between tourism policies and community interests, are the major concerns for the tourism destination governance (Laws et al., 2011).

The tourism destination governance research wants to deliver the reasons for specific situations and therefore to suggest concepts and models helpful for effective destination management and planning (Marsh and Henshall, 1987; Keogh, 1990; Jamal and Getz 1995; Sautter and Leisen, 1999; Ladkin and Bertramini, 2002; d'Angella and Go, 2009). The destination governance wants to create a link between some actors who are able to identify and articulate collective interests as well as to coordinate negotiations. In this case, the government institutions will recognize that stakeholders such as residents, tourists and tourism business are important parts of a destination and have great influences on local social and economic development (Richins, 2011).

The destination governance system may be also considered as the tool by which the destination adapts to change (Baggio et al., 2010).

The study of tourism destination governance offers opportunities for improvement in the effectiveness of tourism destinations, provides areas of study for tourism academics and a useful lesson for the sciences research community (Scott et al., 2011). Also it has important implications for the policy makers, alike, around the world to analyze countries, urban and rural areas to guide and coordinate touristic strategy designed to converge the tactics of firms' and institutions towards common goals (Go and Trunfio, 2011).

Regarding the difficulty elements of the tourist destination governance are following to underline:

- the tourist destination governance is very complex: firstly regarding the multitude of stakeholders and actors both within a given destination and external to it (stakeholders are different in objectives, skills, resources and commitments and that leads to a lack of cohesion and contested decision making into a destination) and secondly there are many agencies and organizations which have an impact on the functioning of a tourist destination (Duit and Galaz, 2008);
- at regional government level can exist some contradictions between the need of implementing public goals and how to respond to the lure of the developer's money (Ewen, 1983);
- in regional and local governance can exist a lack of legal and regulatory understanding, an inadequate technical information, time constraints, mistrust between key stakeholders and decision makers or a lack of understanding the issues by outside experts (Davis, 1980),
- the tourist destination can deal with changing tastes, interests and concerns among its visitors and fluctuations in market conditions due to crises and disasters (Campiranon et al., 2011);
- tourism has varied and rapidly evolving forms and because of that each destination system must be understood in its own context (Laws et al., 2011).

Considering the limits of the current approaches there are important some aspects:

- no concretely theoretical framework has been developed till now (Zhang and Zhu, 2014),
- there is a lack of consensus about the meaning of the terms (there is little agreement on definitions, scope and what actually constitutes governance) (Paavola et al., 2009),
- the governance concepts have the characteristics of being both fuzzy and evolving (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996),
- the theoretical foundations for tourist destination governance present a rather blurry picture (Beritelli, 2011),
- there is a lack of predictability using the academic governance models developed and also a lack of agreement about which concepts should be included in those models (Dredge, 2006),
- the literature lacks examples illustrating the operational reality of tourist destination governance models (Beritelli et al, 2007),
- studies that have applied the institutional approach to the analysis of destination governance are very limited (Zhang, 2011).

## **Conclusion**

This study reviews previous research on tourism destination governance, exploring the relevant literature. Even if literatures on this topic are emerging in recent years, there is little agreement on definitions, components and contexts of governance. Regarding the difficulty elements of the tourism destination governance the study reveals that the concept of tourism destination governance is very complex: firstly regarding the multitude of stakeholders and actors both within a given destination and external to it (stakeholders are different in objectives, skills, resources and commitments and that leads to a lack of cohesion and contested decision making into a destination) and secondly there are many agencies and organizations which have an impact on the functioning of a tourism destination (Duit and Galaz, 2008).

Further evidences of the suitability and effectiveness of this concept framework are still needed.

## References

1. Baggio, R., Scott, N. and Cooper, C. (2010), *Improving tourism destination governance: a complexity science approach*, *Tourism Review*, Vol. 65, No. 4, pp. 51-60.
2. Braithwaite, J., Coglianese, C. and Levi-Faur, D. (2007), *Can regulation and governance make a difference?*, *Regulation and Governance*, Vol. 1, Issue 1, pp. 1-7.
3. Cosma S., *Measurement approaches for urban destinations performance*, Conference Proceedings Advances in Hospitality and Tourism Marketing and Management, 19-24 June 2011, Bogazici University, Istanbul, Turkey, pag. 213-218.
4. d'Angella, F. and Go, F. (2009), *Tale of two cities' collaborative tourism marketing: towards a theory of destination stakeholder assessment*, *Tourism Management*, Vol. 30 No. 3, pp. 429-440.
5. Duit, A. and Galaz, V. (2008) *Governance and complexity – emerging issues for governance theory*, *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration and Institutions*, Vol. 21 No. 3, pp. 311-335.
6. Jamal, T. and Getz, D. (1995), *Collaboration theory and community tourism planning*, *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 22 No. 1, pp. 186-204.
7. Keogh, B. (1990), *Public participation in community tourism planning*, *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 17 No. 2, pp. 449-65.
8. Ladkin, A. and Bertramini, A. (2002), *Collaborative tourism planning: a case study of Cusco, Peru*, *Current Issues in Tourism*, Vol. 5 No. 2, pp. 71-93.
9. Laws, E., Agrusa, J., Scott, N. and Richins, H. (2011), *Tourist Destination Governance: Practice, Theory and Issues*, in *Tourist Destination Governance Practice, Theory and Issues*, Editors: Eric Laws, Jerome Agrusa, Harold Richins, Scott Noel, CAB International, London.
10. Marsh, N. and Henshall, B. (1987), *Planning better tourism: the strategic importance of tourist-residence expectations and interactions*, *Tourism Recreation Research*, Vol. 12, pp. 47-54.
11. Richins, H. (2011), *Issues and Pressures on Achieving Effective Community Destination Governance: A Typology*, in *Tourist Destination Governance Practice, Theory and Issues*, Editors: Eric Laws, Jerome Agrusa, Harold Richins, Scott Noel, CAB International, London.
12. Rosenau, J. and Czempiel, E. (1992), *Governance without Government: Order and Change in World Politics*, Cambridge University Press, New York.
13. Sautter, E. and Leisen, B. (1999), *Managing stakeholders*, *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 26 No. 2, pp. 312-28.
14. Zhang, H. and Zhu, M. (2014), *Tourism Destination Governance: A Review and Research Agenda*, *International Journal of e-Education, e-Business, e-Management and e-Learning*, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp. 125-128.

# COMPETITIVENESS IN TOURISM: A THEORETICAL OUTLOOK

**Ioana Maria Tripon, PhD student  
Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania**

## **Abstract**

*Tourism is recognised as one of the leading sectors of development and a major source of incomes, jobs and wealth creation. Competitiveness is a key element of the tourism industry. The ability to compete in a rapidly growing world tourism market is a prime concern. Understanding competitiveness and performance in tourism and measuring it is challenging. Although a large amount of literature about tourism destination competitiveness has been produced, including measurement models applied, it is a topic that still offers an important range of debate.*

*This paper aims at presenting the progress of research on tourism competitiveness term and tries to provide a general framework that could be expanded to further study. Since the 1990s, research efforts have been conducted towards developing a theoretical and conceptual basis for competitiveness assessment. Many researchers have applied the competitiveness theory as a critical concept to explain tourism development, destination management and tourism strategies.*

*The paper concludes that, in spite of the various attempts to explain the competitiveness in tourism, the literature is still confronted with the ambiguity of the concept and the complexity of its elements, which are difficult to measure.*

**Key words:** *Tourism, Destination, Competitiveness, Destination Awareness*

**JEL classification:** M31

## **Introduction**

In the last decades, travel and tourism and the related network have proven to be significant factors of economic growth, contributing 10.2% to global GDP in 2016, an increase for the sixth consecutive year and accounting for 1 in 10 jobs in the world. Research shows that for every 30 new tourists that go to a destination, a new job is created. (WEF, 2017)

Destination competitiveness is one of the main areas of interest and research, a key concept of the tourist industry, over which researchers and practitioners have not yet reached a consensus on how it should be defined. The term competitiveness is used on a large scale, both in the professional and academic environment. Today, the notion of competitiveness is strong and widespread, with origins in the writings of Michael Porter (1980, 1985, 1990).

The notion of destination competitiveness should be consistent with the concept of competitiveness in economics. It is widely accepted that economic growth and competitiveness involve a complex interactive process of social, political and institutional development (Dwyer and Kim, 2003). Scott and Lodge (1985) viewed competitiveness as "a country's ability to create, produce, distribute and/or service products in international trade while earning rising returns on its resources". They also consider that this ability is "more and more a matter of strategies, and less and less a product of natural endowments" (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003). For Newall (1992), competitiveness "is about producing more and better-quality goods and services that are marketed successfully to consumers". Dwyer and Kim (2003) present competitiveness as a multi-faceted concept associated with three major groups of thought, that are:

- a) Comparative advantage and/or price competitiveness perspective,
- b) A strategy and management perspective,
- c) A historical and socio-cultural perspective.

The World Competitiveness Yearbook (IMD, 2000) examines competitiveness in terms of four fundamental forces that "are often the result of tradition, history or value systems and are so deeply rooted in the 'modus operandi' of a country that, in most cases, they are not clearly stated or defined." The four dimensions used are attractiveness versus aggressiveness, proximity versus globality, assets versus systems, and individual risk taking versus social cohesiveness (Ritchie and Crouch, 2003).

Many researchers have applied the competitiveness theory as a critical concept to explain tourism development, destination management and tourism strategies. The literature on the competitiveness of tourism destinations has focused on the sustainability of the place while maintaining a favourable market position towards other destinations. According to OECD "tourism competitiveness for a destination is about the ability of the place to optimise its attractiveness for residents and non-residents, to deliver quality, innovative, and attractive (e.g. providing good value for money) tourism services to consumers and to gain market shares on the domestic and global market places, while ensuring that the available resources supporting tourism are used efficiently and in a sustainable way" (OECD, 2013).

The main purpose of this study is to review the progress of research on tourism competitiveness term and to outline the multiple aspects that influence it. There are several issues that need to be addressed in understanding and measuring the competitiveness of tourism destinations. An audit of the literature (empirical studies, literature review articles, case studies, books, conceptual papers and so on) reveal the importance and evolution of the tourism competitiveness concept.

#### The evolution of competitiveness in tourism

Over the years, the researchers have tried to explain the concept of competitiveness in relation to the tourism destination. Studies on the development and management of tourist destinations have multiplied lately, with the aim of providing viewpoints and guidelines to some of the questions and challenges that destinations encounter. Since the '90s, research efforts have been aimed at developing a theoretical and conceptual basis for understanding competitiveness. However, the literature still faces the unclearness of the concept and the puzzling of its elements, which are difficult to measure.

The discussion dates back to the first studies that came out in the mid-1970s by Goodrich (1977, 1978), Mayo and Jarvis (1981) and goes until nowadays, with an increase in the number of studies published on the subject of competitiveness of the destination and its elements around the years 1990s. Although a large volume of research about tourism competitiveness has been produced over the last two decades, the literature review reveals that there is no complete definition of competitiveness that is commonly agreed and has full and perfect content. An evaluation of the literature indicates that much has been written about the competitiveness between different tourist destinations, either at regional, national or international level. According to Bordas (1994), competitiveness is established between destinations and tourism organisations rather than between countries, because of the different aspects and characteristics of destinations in a country. This depends entirely on how much a destination is more popular than its country. However, according to this approach, each geographical part of a country may be in individual competition with other similar foreign regions on the basis of facilities, cultural and natural heritage and history. (Kozak and Baloglu, 2011)

However, a full analysis of the competitiveness of a destination did not receive widespread recognition in the tourism literature (Pearce, 1997). An early definition of the competitiveness of the destination is given by Chon and Meyer (1995) as a reformulation of the concept of competitiveness in the economy (taken from Global Competition: The New Reality. Report on the President's Commission on Industrial Competitiveness, 1985), as follows: "the competitiveness of the destination is the degree to which it can, under free and fair market conditions, produce services that meet the taste of international markets, while simultaneously expanding the real income of its employees (citizens)". This assertion shows that both quantitative and qualitative indicators are essential in defining the term of destination competitiveness. (Kozak and Baloglu, 2011).

Competitiveness in the tourism industry has moved from international competitiveness and between companies to competitiveness among destinations due to the impact of globalisation. Unlike as for a certain manufactured product, competition between tourism destinations has a different structure. The competitiveness can be



influenced by customer expectations, motivation, past experiences, location and accessibility (Kozak and Baloglu, 2011).

Linked to the notion of destination competitiveness are numerous variables. These include objectively measured variables such as visitor numbers, market share, tourist expenditure, employment, value added by the tourism industry, as well as subjectively measured variables such as "richness of culture and heritage, quality of the tourism experience, etc. (Dwyer and Kim, 2003)

The destination competitiveness research considers two main approaches: conceptual and empirical. The literature reveals a variation in defining, understanding and measuring competitiveness. The first tourism competitiveness studies, between 1977 until 2000, focused their research mainly on tourists' perceptions (regarding facilities, attractions, accessibility, prices, etc). Beginning with researchers Enright and Newton in 2004 and Lopez, Navarro and Domingues (2004), they evaluated the destination competitiveness based on the performance, analysing several economic factors and indicators. Currently, there is limited information regarding the connection between the tourism performance and the destination competitiveness.

Over the years, competitiveness studies were carried out by several researchers (e.g. Goodrich,1977; Haahti and Yavas, 1983; Edwards,1993; Driscoll, Lawson and Niven, 1994; Chon and Meyer, 1995; Pearce, 1997; Dwyer, Forsyth and Rao, 2000; Kim, 2000; Buhalis, 2000; Dwyer and Kim, 2001; Yoon, 2002; Ritchie and Crouch, 2003; Enright and Newton, 2004; Bahar and Kozak, 2007; Kozak, Baloglu and Bahar, 2010), but the most comprehensive study so far is that of Ritchie and Crouch (2003) who applied the competitiveness of the services industry to the context of tourism destinations based on countries, industries, products and companies. In this respect, the possibilities of a destination that ensures a high standard of living for its citizens is the competitiveness of that destination.

To better illustrate the variety of tourism destination competitiveness approaches, few of them are presented, in chronological order, in Table 1:

**Table 1. Tourism competitiveness approaches**

<b>Author</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Pearce (1997)	'Destination development techniques and methods that can systematically analyse and compare the different attributes of competing destinations within a planning context.'
Hassan (2000)	'The destination's ability to create and integrate value-added products that sustain its resources while maintaining its market position relative to competitors.'
d'Hautesserre (2000)	'The ability of a destination to maintain its market position and share and/ or to improve upon them through time.'
Go and Govers (2000)	'Competitiveness is an arising strategic value and the destination competitiveness represents the success in integrated quality management.'
Dwyer, Forsyth and Rao (2000a)	'Tourism competitiveness is a general concept that encompasses price differentials coupled with exchange rate movements, productivity levels of various components of the tourist industry and qualitative factors affecting the attractiveness or otherwise of a destination.'
Yoon (2002)	'Competitiveness represents innovation and continuous change.'
Dwyer and Kim (2003)	'Destination competitiveness is linked to the ability of a destination to deliver goods and services that perform better than other destinations on those aspects of the tourism experience considered to be important by tourists.'

Source: Own elaboration based on Kozak & Baloglu (2011) and Dwyer & Kim (2003)

Some studies have tried to estimate the competitive position of tourism destinations from the perspective of using *quantitative measures* (i.e. Papatheodorou,

2002; Mangion, Durbarry and Sinclair, 2005). This group of researchers analysed the secondary data, such as prices, number of tourist arrivals, duration of stay and revenues. The second group of studies examined the tourism competitiveness by using *qualitative measures* (e.g. socio-economic and socio-demographic profiles of tourists, level of satisfaction or complaints, quality of staff working in tourism, the quality of tourism facilities and services) and applying direct comparison (i.e. Driscoll, Lawson and Niven, 1994; Yoon, 2002; Enright and Newton 2004, 2005). It is also necessary to mention the existence of studies using both quantitative and qualitative assessments (Campos-Soria, Garcia and Garcia 2005).

The definitions offered in the literature provide both a micro and a macro connotation of competitiveness. Crouch and Ritchie (1999) believe that micro and macro (global) environment are the general factors that influence the competitiveness of a destination. The advantage of this model is its superiority in considering the role of destination management and entrepreneurs. (Kozak and Baloglu, 2011)

## Conclusions

The review of the literature on tourism destination competitiveness revealed that none of the definitions that have been asserted is entirely satisfactory, as they do not provide a comprehensive approach of the various aspects that the notion of competitiveness encompasses. Within this research stream, the authors explored the possibility of applying concepts and theories about the management of organisations to the study of destinations. Understanding and measuring the competitiveness in tourism raises a great interest, but the available information shows that there is still a need to explore the concept from the different perspectives relevant to the specific contexts.

Some researchers focused on the methodology while others tried to expand the competitiveness theory using different attributes and research criteria. However, a major issue involves the integration of objective and subjective features of competitiveness. An important aspect for further research is to explore the possibility of incorporating qualitative factors into the construction of competitiveness models. There seems to be a common opinion that economic prosperity and tourism performance are important issues for further research on the competitiveness of tourism destinations.

Based on the studies of the researchers it can be concluded that the competitiveness of tourism destinations is a multi-faceted, evolving concept influenced by many factors.

## References

1. Baloglu, S., & McCleary, K. (1999), "A Model of Destination Image Formation", *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol.26 No 4, pp.868-897.
2. Buhalis, D. (2000), "Marketing the competitive destination in the future", *Tourism Management*, Vol.21 No.1, pp. 97-116.
3. Chon, K., & Mayer, K.J. (1995), "Destination competitiveness models in tourism and their application to Las Vegas", *Journal of Tourism Systems and Quality Management*, Vol.1 No. 2/ 3/ 4, pp.227- 246.
4. Cooper, C., Fletcher, J., Wanhill, S., Gilbert, D., & Shepherd, R. (2005), "Tourism: Principles and Practice", Harlo, UK: Pearson Education.
5. Crouch, G.I., & Ritchie, J. R. B. (1999), "Tourism, competitiveness and societal prosperity", *Journal of Business Research*, Vol.44, pp.137- 152.
6. d'Hautesserre, A-M. (2000), "Lessons in managerial destination competitiveness in the case of Foxwoods casino resort", *Tourism Management*, Vol. 21 No.1, pp.23-32.
7. Dwyer, L., & Kim, C. (2003), "Destination Competitiveness: Determinants and Indicators", *Current Issues in Tourism: Research Gate*. Vol.6, No 5, pp.369-414
8. Dwyer, L., Forsyth, P., & Rao, P. (2000), "The price competitiveness of travel and tourism: A comparison of 19 destinations", *Tourism Management*, Vol.21 No.1, pp.9-22.

9. Enright, M. J., & Newton, J. (2004), "Tourism destination competitiveness: A quantitative approach", *Tourism Management*, Vol.25 No.6, pp. 777– 788.
10. Firat, A., Dholakia, N., & Venkatesh, A. (1995), "Marketing in a Postmodern World", *European Journal of Marketing*, Vol. 29 No.1, pp. 40-56.
11. Fyall, A., Wang, Y. & Garrod, B. (2012), "Destination Collaboration: A Critical Review of Theoretical Approaches to a Multi-Dimensional Phenomenon", *Journal of Destination Marketing and Management*, Vol. 1, pp.10-26.
12. Go, F. M., & Govers, R. (2000), "Integrated quality management for tourist destinations: A European perspective on achieving competitiveness", *Tourism Management*, Vol 21 No. 1, pp. 79– 88.
13. Goodrich, J. N. (1977), "Differences in perceived similarity of tourism regions: A spatial analysis", *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol.16, pp. 10– 13.
14. Goodrich, J. N. (1978), "The relationship between preferences for and perceptions of vacation destinations", *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol.17 No.2, pp. 8– 13.
15. Gunn, C. (1988), *Tourism Planning: Basics, Concepts, Cases*, Taylor & Francis, Washington.
16. Hall, C., & Page, S. (2006), *The Geography of Tourism & Recreation. Environment, Place and Space*, Routledge, London.
17. Hanafiah, M. H., Hemdi, M. A., & Ahmad, I. (2016), "Tourism destination competitiveness: Towards a performance-based approach", *Tourism Economics*, Vol. 22 No.3, pp.629-636.
18. Hassan, S. (2000), "Determinants of market competitiveness in an environmentally sustainable tourism industry", *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol.38 No. 3, pp. 239– 245.
19. Hazebroucq, J.-M. (2007), "Destinations innovantes et développement du tourisme", *Marché et organisations*, Vol.1 No.3, pp.117-153
20. Hong, W.-C. (2008), "Competitiveness in the Tourism Sector. A Comprehensive Approach from Economic and Management Points", *Contributions to Economics*, Physica-Verlag Heidelberg.
21. Hu, Y., Ritchie, J.R. (1993), "Measuring Destination Attractiveness: A Contextual Approach", *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol.32 No.2, pp. 25-34.
22. IMD (2000) – International Institute for Management Development – *The World Competitiveness Yearbook: Executive Summary*, Lausanne, Switzerland
23. Klouj, R. (2012). *L'impact de la qualité expérientielle perçue d'une destination touristique sur la satisfaction et la fidélité des touristes*. [www.memoireonline.com](http://www.memoireonline.com) (Kullada, 2006)
24. Kotler, P., Bowen, J., & Makens, J. (1999), *Marketing for Hospitality and Tourism*, NJ: Prentice Hall.
25. Kozak, M., & Baloglu, S. (2011), *Managing and Marketing Tourist Destinations - Strategies to Gain a Competitive Edge*, Routledge Advances in Tourism, Taylor and Francis, Kindle Edition.
26. Laws, E. (1995), *Tourism Destination Management: Issues, Analysis, and Policies*, Routledge, New York
27. Lew, A.A. (1987), "A framework of Tourist Attraction Research", *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol.14, pp.553-575
28. Medlick, S. & Middleton, V. (1973), "Product Formulation in Tourism", *Tourism and Marketing*, Vol. 13
29. Middleton, V., & Clarke, J. (2001), *Marketing in Travel and Tourism*, Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford.
30. Morgan, N., Pritchard, A., Pride, R. (2002), *Destination Branding*, Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford.
31. Morrison, A. M. (2013), *Marketing and Managing Tourism Destinations*, Routledge.
32. Muphy, P., Pritchard, M., & Smith, B. (2000), "The Destination Product and Its Impact on Traveller Perceptions", *Tourism Management*, Vol. 21, pp. 43-52.
33. Newall, J.E. (1992), "The challenge of competitiveness", *Business Quarterly*, Vol. 56, pp. 94-100

34. OECD, Dupeyras, A., & MacCallum, N. (2013), Indicators for Measuring Competitiveness in Tourism: A Guidance Document, OECD Tourism Papers.
35. Pearce, D. G. (1997), "Competitive destination analysis in Southeast Asia", *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol. 4, pp.16– 24.
36. Pike, S. (2008), *Destination Marketing: An Integrated Marketing Communication Approach*, Elsevier.
37. Pike, S., & Page, S. (2014), *Destination Marketing Organizations and Destination Marketing: A Narrative Analysis of the Literature*, *Tourism Management*, Vol.41, pp. 202-227.
38. Porter, M.E. (1985), *Competitive Advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance*, Free Press, New York.
39. Pritchard, A., & Morgan, N. (2001), "Culture, Identity and Tourism Representation", *Tourism Management*, Vol 22 No. 2, pp.167-179.
40. Ritchie, J. B., & Crouch, G. I. (2003), *The Competitive Destination: A Sustainable Tourism Perspective*, CABI Publishing, Cambridge
41. Saraniemi, S., & Kylanen, M. (2010), "Problematizing the Concept of Tourism Destination: An Analysis of Different Theoretical Approaches", *Journal of Travel Research*, XX(X) 1-11
42. Seaton, A. & Bennett, M.M. (1996), "Marketing Tourism Products. Concepts, Issues, Cases", London
43. Smith, S.L.J. (1994), "The Tourism Product", *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol.21 No.3, pp.582-595
44. Steven, P. (2016), *Destination Marketing: Essentials*, Routledge.
45. Wang Y, & Pizam A. (2011), *Destination Marketing and Management. Theories and Applications*, CABI, Oxfordshire.
46. WEF (World Economic Forum) (2017), *The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2017*, Geneva.
47. WTO (United Nation World Tourism Organization) (2016), <http://www2.unwto.org>

# ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TOURISM AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Mihai Cristian Enachi, Claudia - Mihaela Enachi  
Ștefan cel Mare University, Suceava, Romania

## Abstract

*The environment is an essential part of any development process and encompasses the links and interdependencies between people and natural resources. As a result, changes in the environment are not only due to natural events but also to the practical manifestation of development models, practices and lifestyles. Concurrently, any change in the physical environment has important socio-economic consequences that influence the quality of life. The effects of environmental pollution, manifested through the emergence of serious health problems and ecological disturbance, recognized at international level by the Stockholm Conference, have led to the emergence of a broad "environmental movement" both in developed countries and in developing countries. This response included the active participation of the public and private sectors. Tourism, more than any other field of activity, is dependent on the environment, being its "raw material", and the field of tourism development, being its framework support, the bearer of its resources. Tourism is carried out in the environment and through environment, its quality can favor or deny tourist activities. The tourism potential is an integral part of the environment, its existence and its development depend on its quality, so it can be considered a possible quality index for its environment, in other words, a "barometer" of its quality. At the same time, through the "exigencies" it claims, tourism can be a practical solution for unaltered environmental preservation.*

**Key words:** Tourism development, sustainable development, environmental management, environmental tourism, tourism and environment.

**JEL classification:** Q, Q01, Q26, Z32.

## Introduction

Tourism is an environmentally dependent activity. At the broadest level, the natural environments and heritages belong to people of each country and even some of them belong to all people of world. So, they all have the right to understand, appreciate and conserve its national and international values. At the time of globalization, the protection, conservation, interpretation, and presentation of different natural and cultural environments of any particular region or country is a significant challenge for people in all parts of world. The purpose of this paper, firstly, is to increase the knowledge about some general concepts about environment and tourism, sustainable development and tourism, ecotourism, etc. secondly, to create some theoretical frameworks with some overall and structural approaches that can be broadly used in practical sustainable managing of tourism; then, refer to some challenges and recommendations regarding tourism and environment. On the whole, its main purpose is to explain tourism and environment correlation. The design of this paper is, at first, based on desk research on tourism and environment including an overview of researches, studies, books, and other relevant publications. Secondly, it comes through a conceptual and general framework for environment conservation and sustainable tourism based on the information and experiences that authors had gathered via study and visit of different parts of the world. It is clear that tourism industry and all its dependent and independent issues are young, particularly with sustainable point of view; yet, it is necessary to study and learn more about this wonderful growing industry (Dr Abdoreza Faraji rad and Somayyeh Aghajani, 2010).

## Literature review

Literature in tourism field shows that the components of a sustainable tourism strategy have been set, the requirements of this activity - presented in a synthetic way - are:

- respect and care for the way of life of human communities;
- increasing the living standards of human habitats;

- conservation of the Earth's ecosystem, its biodiversity;
- reducing the use of depleting resources and maintaining the planet's support capacity;
- changing individual attitudes in favor of sustainable development;
- creating opportunities for communities to maintain their own environment, parallel to the implementation of the national framework for development and integrative conservation.

Along with the awareness, acceptance and implementation of this strategy, there is a great dilemma and problem waiting for the solution: costs. At the moment, but especially in the long term - the financial costs for sustaining sustainable tourism, including ecotourism, seems to be high. Looking ahead and analyzing realistically, however, we will see that later the costs for ecological recovery are much higher, and the negative effects on the environment can be largely irreversible. Specialty literature shows that economic and social objectives are two categories that are not of an alternative nature but which, on the contrary, need to be harmonized. The incentives offered by the government for tourism development are instruments used to achieve the objectives set by sustainable tourism policy in the field of tourism. It is important to ensure that strategic objectives do not conflict with one another and that incentives offered to investors are compatible with such objectives (Jacob, K., 2013).

## **Material and methods**

The main methodology used consists in a theoretical approach on some of the main problems identified in the correlation between sustainability and environment that can easily be transformed in economic growth through sustainable tourism. Most studies assess the economic impact of tourism activities in terms of number of arrivals, tourist income, average duration of accommodation and other economic indicators. Unlike many studies that treat only the physical and human environment (Miller et al., 2010) presents a series of indicators covering many aspects of sustainability: environmental issues, employment, financial leakage, customer-related issues (satisfaction, consumer behavior, social responsibility of companies in tourism, etc.). Depending on the level of correlation between variables, one can act in the direction of development by developing strategies for increasing the number of tourist's arrivals, facilities for extending the length of stay.

Consider that most studies on sustainable development of tourism are descriptive, based on qualitative and subjective data in their conclusions, thus lacking a rigorous methodology (Ko, 2005). After identifying this gap in the literature, the above mentioned authors develop a conceptual framework for the sustainable tourism assessment based on eight dimensions: political, economic, socio-cultural, production aspects, environmental impact, ecosystem quality, biodiversity and environmental policies. Each dimension is evaluated on the basis of several quantitative and qualitative indicators that are scaled and grouped to measure the durability of a tourist destination (Kilipiris, F. and Zardava, S., 2012).

Environmental management represents the method by which human activities affecting the environment are organized in order to maximize social welfare and to prevent and mitigate possible environmental effects by treating generative causes. Environmental issues cannot be viewed in isolation, but must be addressed in conjunction with development, taking into account the essential importance of maintaining an appropriate balance between economic development, demographic growth, rational use of natural resources, environmental protection and preservation. Society has identified valid reasons for answering the question of "why the environment should be protected". The concept of sustainable development can answer the question "what should be done to protect the environment." It is not possible to develop a policy in the absence of values. The system of values underlying decisions has a great influence on how decisions are made, on the factors that are taken into account, and on the way in which political alternatives are assessed. Individuals involved in formulating environmental policy must ensure that personal values do not interfere with national goals (HwanSuk and Sirakaya, 2006).

## Results and discussions

The protection and preservation of tourism potential is shaped as a distinct activity with specific problems requiring the collaboration of specialists or from various fields. This action can be satisfactorily efficient only in the context of ensuring an adequate legal and administrative framework, requiring administrative organization, economic resources, legal support, efficient and sustained citizenship education.

The measures that are imposed on the protection of tourism potential and the prevention of its degradation mainly aim at the scientific and rational exploitation of tourism resources so that their exploitation rate does not exceed their rate of recycling and regeneration. The intensity of the direct or indirect relations of the tourism with the environmental factors does not exceed the limits of their support capacity analyzing the relation between the tourism activity and the polluting economic activities in order to prevent the degradation caused by the factors in other sectors of activity by reporting the competent institutions about the sources of pollution and harmful actions on tourism resources (Saarinen J., 2006). In-depth knowledge of the problems of maintaining the equilibrium of the ecosystems on a global-territorial level, through a thorough analysis and better rational management of the country's or even more restricted land resources (counties, areas), so that the touristic valorization to be solved in the context of capitalizing on all natural resources and the protection of the environment.

This correlation is achieved theoretically in the territorial planning studies which thus become the main instrument in the hands of the decision-makers and the basic document in the scientific, rational and efficient territorial planning. One of the important measures to protect and preserve the tourism potential is: adequate and superior planning and organization of areas, trails or tourist objectives.

The development of mountain tourism requires the proper organization of mountain areas by knowing all the landscapes and ski areas, other resources that will provide the basis for designing the future tourist facilities (paths, markings, installation of stairs or cables in difficult parts, arrangement of sight-seeing spots, winter sports facilities, forest conservation, forest replanting, etc.).

The protection of the environment and tourism heritage is influenced to a large extent by the ecological awareness of the population and by the feeling of love and respect for the homeland's nature, the historical places and the monuments of art and architecture created over time. This can be achieved through a sustained educational action on the environment and the tourism potential, which must be done at the level of the whole nation, by instilling an attitude of respect and responsibility towards natural resources in order to protect them. Ecological education for the protection of nature and tourist potential must be made permanent for all ages, but it is important to start from childhood. Ecological education can take place through conferences, exhibitions, radio and TV, press, projections, excursions, tourism and nature associations, etc. The whole educational work in environmental protection and tourism potential is interdisciplinary, as a continuous process and an integral part of education in general. It covers the main issues of protection in a global but regionally correlated perspective and examines the issues of environmental development and growth in the context of environmental protection, insisting on local, regional, national cooperation in addressing all aspects of pollution (Damon M.A and Sterner T., 2012).

Analyzing all aspects of the environment as a tourist potential, it can be established that its protection and preservation is realized within an overall view of the country's economic development, conception located at the same level as the general development problems of the economy.

Internationally, countries with old tourist traditions adopt national tourism planning based on the aspect of protecting their own tourism resources. In order to develop sustainable tourism, three main objectives were taken into account (Popescu D., 2005):

- economic - essential in identifying, capitalizing and increasing the exploitation of tourism resources;

- social - special through the permanence of the population, increasing the employment rate, supporting the practice of traditional crafts and attracting the population into the practice of tourism;
- ecological - important for avoiding degradation, environmental pollution and ensuring a balanced and long-term exploitation of tourism resources.

Tourism development plans based on long-term global tourism forecasts, in line with foreign market trends and concrete plans conducted on medium term (four to five years) or short (three-year) made on regions, areas or forms of tourism are based on European standards and norms on the exploitation of tourism resources, development and modernization of tourism structures and services.

The development of forecasts and tourism development plans is the main point of support for the sustainable tourism strategy, which implies, among others (Glasbergen P., 1998):

- preservation of natural and anthropic tourism resources for the purpose of continuous and future use;
- raising the living standards of local communities;
- better knowledge and awareness of the idea of environmental preservation, both by the local population and visitors.

Analyzing all the aspects of the environment as a tourist potential, it can be established that the protection and preservation of the environment is realized within an overall view of the country's economic development, conception located at the same level of importance as the problems of general development of the economy.

## **Conclusions**

Sustainable tourism is based on a common partnership action between the actors called upon to make the key decisions on achieving this goal. Joint action plans for the sustainable development of tourism in protected natural areas imply knowledge and solving of the following issues (Albert C., 2013):

- the clear establishment, from the outset, of the protection objectives for each national park, with the participation of specialists and all those interested in their tourism valorization;
- inventory of all natural and cultural features that can form the basis of tourism potential and analysis of all the obtained information;
- ensuring working conditions in partnership and multidisciplinary teams, with better collaboration with the local population, with regional and local organizations interested in tourism;
- identifying all the values and finding all the opportunities that can be the basis of sustainable tourism in protected natural areas;
- the appreciation of the support capacity of the different components of the protected natural areas, in order to ensure the quality at the level of the international standards;
- construction and analysis of the domestic and international market and tourist requirements for the diversification and development of tourism activities;
- providing specialized consultancy to support tour operators or businesses interested in developing activities that are compatible with national and local environmental protection policy;
- analysis of the exploitation of the resources and taking into account the protection requirements;

Currently, tourism practiced in national parks and biosphere reserves in developed European countries does not meet the attributes of sustainable tourism. The presentation of the underlying principles, the development and tourism development projects of the protected natural areas has an important role for the tourist facilities of the national parks in Romania, especially in order to avoid the negative sides present in other countries, related to their economic exploitation (Glăvan V., 2000).



## References

1. Albert C., (2013), „Participatory Scenarios in Developing and Implementing Long-term Policies: Potential Benefits and Attributes of Influence”, in Bernd Siebenhüner, Marlen Arnold, Klaus Eisenack, Klaus H. Jacob (Ed.), Long-Term Governance for Social-Ecological Change, Routledge, pp.200-218.
2. Siebenhüner B., Arnold M., Eisenack K., Jacob K., (2013) “Long-Term Governance for Social-Ecological Change- setting the scene”, in Bernd Siebenhüner, Marlen Arnold, Klaus Eisenack, Klaus H. Jacob (Ed.), Long-Term Governance for Social-Ecological Change, Routledge, pp. 191-198.
3. Damon M.A and Sterner T., (2012), „Policy Instruments for Sustainable Development at Rio +20”, Journal of Environment and Development, Vol. 21 No. 12, pp. 143-151.
4. Dr Abdoreza Faraji rad and Somayyeh Aghajani, (2010),“ The Relationship between Tourism and Environment”, in Iranian Journal of Tourism & Hospitality Islamic Azad University,Garmsar Branch, Vol 1 No 1, pp.37-48.
5. Glasbergen P., (1998) „The Question of Environmental Governance”, in Glasbergen P. (Ed.), Co-operative Environmental Governance, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Netherlands, pp. 1-18.
6. Glăvan V., (2000) „Turismul și protecția mediului – probleme prioritare ale României viitoare”, Turismul în contextul dezvoltării durabile, A.S.E. București, pp. 7-17.
7. HwanSuk C.C. and Sirakaya E., (2006), “Sustainability indicators for managing community tourism”, Tourism Management, Vol.27 No.6, pp. 1274-1289.
8. Kilipiris F. and Zardava S., (2012), “Developing sustainable tourism in a changing environment: issues for the tourism enterprises (travel agencies and hospitality enterprises)”, Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, Vol. 44, pp. 44-52.
9. Ko T.G., (2005), “Development of a tourism sustainability assessment procedure: a conceptual approach” Tourism Management, Vol.26 No.3, pp. 431-445.
10. Miller et al., (2010), “Resilience and Vulnerability: Complementary or Conflicting Concepts?” in Ecology and Society, vol. 15, no. 3, art. 11.
11. Popescu D., (2005), “Turism, arhitectură și dezvoltare durabilă”, Amfiteatru Economic, Vol. 7 No.18, pp. 98-103.
12. Saarinen J., (2006) “Traditions of sustainability in tourism studies”, Annals of Tourism Research, Vol.33 No.4, pp. 1121-1140.

# ENTREPRENEURS' MOTIVATION IN TOURISM SECTOR. A LITERATURE REVIEW

**Ionuț-Călin Căzan, PhD Student**  
**Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania**

## **Abstract**

*The aim of this paper is to underline the entrepreneurs' motivation in tourism sector, and, as well, to offer a better understanding of the entrepreneurs' interests. Moreover, this research wants to find out, based on past researches, why entrepreneurs decide to be involved in this kind of activities and what makes them to continue. Entrepreneurs have traditionally been perceived as innovators or exploiters of profitable opportunities, emphasizing their 'heroic' nature as business pioneers driven by their own strong profit-making motives (Shaw, 2014). Motivation has been seen as a catalyst that moves people toward goals (Hoyer & MacInnis, 1997). Without this motivation or catalyst, a business will neither begin nor succeed (Robertson, Collins, Medeira, & Slater, 2003)*

**Keywords:** entrepreneurs, motivation, tourism

**JEL Classification:** L26, L83, M31

## **Introduction**

Entrepreneurs have traditionally been perceived as innovators or exploiters of profitable opportunities, emphasizing their 'heroic' nature as business pioneers driven by their own strong profit-making motives (Shaw, 2014). However, socially led perspectives have modified this perception and argued that there is a range of entrepreneurial types. This range includes the 'classical' or 'artisan' entrepreneur, who is interested in achieving satisfaction and independence, and the 'managerial type', who emphasizes the recognition of management skills (Shaw, 2014).

Motivation has been seen as a catalyst that moves people toward goals (Hoyer & MacInnis, 1997). Without this motivation or catalyst, a business will neither begin nor succeed (Robertson, Collins, Medeira, & Slater, 2003). Motivation for engaging in an entrepreneurial venture has been studied in many ways, including the work of Amit and Muller (1995) where the focus of the study was a "push" "pull" perspective. The authors noted that entrepreneurial motivation can predict success, specifically in terms of income. More specifically "pull" entrepreneurs, or those who are pulled to a new venture by potential success and opportunity are found to have significantly higher incomes than "push" entrepreneurs, or those who are pushed out of their current position due to circumstances not related to entrepreneurial desire (Amit & Muller, 1995).

## **Material and method(s)**

This main purpose of the study is to identify and analyze the progress of research on entrepreneurs' motivation in tourism sector by conducting a methodological review on more than thirty research based articles (empirical studies), literature reviews articles, case studies, books, conceptual papers and so on outlining the importance of the motivation in entrepreneurs' life in tourism sector.

## **Results and discussions**

Being an entrepreneur, one who is self-employed and who starts, organizes, manages, and assumes responsibility for a business, offers a personal challenge that many individuals prefer over being an employee working for someone else. Entrepreneurs accept the personal financial risks that go with owning a business but also benefit directly from the potential success of the business. Being an entrepreneur is often viewed as an aversive career choice where one is faced with everyday life and work

situations that are fraught with increased uncertainty, impediments, failures, and frustrations associated with the process of new firm creation (Campbell, 1992).

The relevance of entrepreneurship in tourism has been recognised, particularly in the last two decades, as an important topic in tourism studies (Morrison et al. 2010; Thomas et al. 2011). Entrepreneurship research may also be valuable to understand the new usages of rural settings and resources, the dynamics created by different stakeholders and the ongoing development of rural locations.

Expectancy Theory has instituted a common line in relating the various process-oriented explanations of entrepreneurial motivation (Vroom, 1964). Vroom (1964) theorised that an individual will make the best choice through the behaviour that will lead to the most anticipated outcome.

Susanto (2000) suggests some motivation that can encourage a person to become an entrepreneur is the desire to feel free work, self-efficacy achieved and tolerance of risk. The point here is Freedom in work is a model of work where one does little work but gets great results. Going to work without being tied to rules or formal working hours or doing business rarely but once a profit, let alone fortunately enough to be enjoyed for months or enough for so many weeks ahead. While self-achievement achieved is the achievement of expected work goals, which include satisfaction in work and comfort work and tolerance of risk, is how much ability and creativity a person in solving the size of a risk taken to obtain the expected income (Lautenschläger & Haase, 2011). The greater a person is to his or her ability, the greater his belief in the ability to get results from his decisions and the greater his conviction to try what others see at risk (Gibson et al., 1991; Heskett & Kotter, 1992; Guiltinan, Paul & Madden, 1997; Aras et al., 2017).

Motivations to create the business are centered on quality of life and local environmental variables (Bosworth and Farrell 2011; Cunha 2016), and comprise, frequently, the desire to contribute to a more sustainable environment (Bolluk and Mottiar 2014; Bosworth and Farrell 2011; Cunha 2016). A passion for the countryside and the rural way of life and the possibility to work autonomously, along with the aspiration to enjoy a certain lifestyle, are common motives to lifestyle entrepreneurs in rural tourism (Cunha et al. 2016; Komppula 2004). The motivation, in this context, is frequently associated to quality of life and to the purpose of improving it (Marcketti et al. 2006), and also with ecology and sustainability values (ecopreneurs) or with the desire to "inform and educate" tourists about agriculture, the countryside and its preservation (agritourism) (Bolluk and Mottiar 2014; McGehee and Kim 2004).

Many entrepreneurial motivations have been proposed (Birley and Westhead, 1994; Carter et al., 2003; Cassar, 2007; Shane et al., 1991; Wu et al., 2007) including:

- economic gain;
- desire for achievement, independence and control;
- personal development;
- improved social status;
- opportunity to innovate and create new products;
- emulation of role models, and
- contribution to community welfare.

Non-economic motivations are often most powerful (Block and Koellinger, 2009). Start-up motivations are influenced by environmental factors, often simplified as 'opportunity' and 'necessity' entrepreneurship (Cassar, 2007; Taormina and Lao, 2007). 'Opportunity' refers to market opportunities and expectations of material gain (Segal et al., 2005); 'necessity' to a lack of employment opportunities (MacDonald, 1996; Rouse, 2004). The literature on entrepreneurial motivations is, however, deficient in several respects. First, some start-up studies focus on a single motivation (Wu et al., 2007) or identify a list of motivations through factor analysis (Carter et al., 2003; Shane et al. 1991; Sheinberg and MacMillan, 1988), examining motivation types and their antecedents in isolation. As individuals have multiple motivations for action (Deci and Ryan, 1985; Segal et al., 2005), it is simplistic to conceptualize motivations as singular or discrete, and important to explore how motivations combine into distinctive profiles.

Maslow (1943) proposed a hierarchy of five needs for human being, including physiological need, safety need, need for love, need for esteem, and need for self-actualization. The need hierarchy of Maslow embodies how individuals are motivated to behave in some particular ways to satisfy their needs. According to self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan 2000), human motivation is under the influence of an individual's innate psychological needs for viability, well-being, autonomy, relatedness and competence. The concept of needs specifies the content of motivation and provides a substantive basis for the activation, energization and direction of human behavior (Carsrud and Brännback 2011; Deci and Ryan 2000). By integrating self-determination theory (Deci and Ryan, 2000) and hierarchy of human needs (Maslow, 1943), it is reasonable to infer that the motivations of entrepreneurs are rooted in the desire to fulfill their innate human needs through attaining the positive outcomes of their entrepreneurial career. The existing entrepreneurship research has extensively explored the needs which may stimulate entrepreneurial motivation (Lau, Shaffer, and Au 2007; Parasuraman et al. 1996), and four types of entrepreneurial needs are predominantly identified, namely need for basic finance, need for work-life equilibrium, need for social reputation, and need for career achievement (Gorgievski, Ascalon, and Stephan 2011; Lau, Shaffer, and Au 2007; Paige and Littrell 2002). According to the definition in the literature (Lau, Shaffer, and Au 2007), financial need indicates the extent to which entrepreneurs gratify their monetary income and financial status (satisfying physiological need); work-life equilibrium manifests the compatibility of work and personal/family life (fulfilling the need for love and belonging); social reputation embodies the positive social appraisal and prestige resulting from venture creation (satisfying the need for esteem); and career achievement indicates entrepreneurs' personal appraisal of their career attainment (fulfilling the need for self-actualization). These entrepreneurial career success factors reflect the entrepreneurs' prospective outcomes for new venture creation, explaining why entrepreneurs have the motivation for initiating and sustaining a new business.

Entrepreneurs have traditionally been perceived as innovators or exploiters of profitable opportunities, emphasizing their 'heroic' nature as business pioneers driven by their own strong profit-making motives (Shaw, 2014). However, socially led perspectives have modified this perception and argued that there is a range of entrepreneurial types.

This range includes the 'classical' or 'artisan' entrepreneur, who is interested in achieving satisfaction and independence, and the 'managerial type', who emphasizes the recognition of management skills (Shaw, 2014).

Entrepreneurial literature has focused on the motivations of entrepreneurs; however, it has garnered little attention in the tourism literature, revealing a gap in the literature (Getz & Carlsen, 2000). This gap is interesting considering the importance tourism entrepreneurs represent to their communities. For example, Koh and Hatten (2002) focused on the tourism entrepreneur in their study and noted their value in a community; through their entrepreneurial venture they further the community's economic and social well-being by creating jobs and tax revenues, while invigorating other sectors of the community's economy. Ultimately the authors stated that tourism development is the result of the tourism entrepreneur. This key element in tourism development needs to be better understood so that entrepreneurial ventures in tourism may continue to develop and receive necessary support from community-based stakeholders. (Crawford, 2017)

Szivas (2001) reported three motivations for entering the tourism industry as an entrepreneur, establishing one's own business, the belief that the tourism industry is pleasant and appropriate, and that the tourism industry provides an opportunity for an enhanced standard of living. Getz and Petersen (2005) also focused on motives for entrepreneurship in the tourism industry, specifically with two entrepreneurial orientations, growth/profit and lifestyle/autonomy, as defined by motives for startup, the future, and attitudes. Lifestyle entrepreneurs made up the majority of the sample and were motivated by self-employment and control. The lifestyle entrepreneur, has been described as risk adverse, interested in being their own boss (J. Katz, 1995), concerned with familial security (Getz & Petersen, 2005), wanting enhancement to their current

lifestyle, and being located (currently or moving) in a rural setting (Getz & Carlsen, 2000). In contrast, the growth/profit entrepreneurs were described as the minority of small business owners in the hospitality industry and motivated by growth while being open to risk (Getz & Petersen, 2005; Li, Miao, Zhao, & Lehto, 2013).

Tourism studies have thoroughly explored the artisan type, which can be deconstructed into a range of entrepreneurial cultures, including lifestyle and family embeddedness. From this perspective, attitudes towards conducting business are reoriented to fit the personal lifestyle types of owners, and growth motivation may not exist (Shaw, 2014).

## Conclusion

This research has analyzed the factors involved in entrepreneurs' motivation. Through the literature, there are several principal motivator factors involved in entrepreneurs' life such as: economic gain; desire for achievement, independence and control; personal development; improved social status; opportunity to innovate and create new products; emulation of role models, and contribution to community welfare. Moreover, entering the tourism industry as an entrepreneur, establishing one's own business, the belief that the tourism industry is pleasant and appropriate, and that the tourism industry provides an opportunity for an enhanced standard of living (Szivas, 2001), are as well, three more specific factors for entrepreneurship in tourism sector.

## References

1. Amit, R., & Muller, E. (1995). "Push" and "Pull" entrepreneurship. *Journal of Small Business and Entrepreneurship*, 12(4), 64-80.
2. Birley S and Westhead P (1994) A taxonomy of business start-up reasons and their impact on firm growth and size. *Journal of Business Venturing* 9(1): 7-31.
3. Block J and Koellinger P (2009) I can't get no satisfaction: Necessity entrepreneurship and procedural utility. *International Review of Social Sciences* 62(2): 191-209.
4. Boluk, K. A., & Mottiar, Z. (2014). Motivations of social entrepreneurs: Blurring the social contribution and profits dichotomy. *Social Enterprise Journal*, 10(1), 53-68.
5. Bosworth, G., & Farrell, H. (2011). Tourism entrepreneurs in Northumberland. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 38(4), 1474-1494.
6. Carsrud, A, and M Brännback. 2011. "Entrepreneurial Motivations: What Do We Still Need to Know?" *Journal of Small Business Management* 49 (1): 9-26.
7. Carter NM, Gartner WB, Shaver KG and Gatewood EJ (2003) The career reasons of nascent entrepreneurs. *Journal of Business Venturing* 18(1): 13-39.
8. Cassar G (2007) Money, money, money? A longitudinal investigation of entrepreneur career reasons, growth preferences and achieved growth. *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development* 19(1): 89-107.
9. Cunha, C. (2016). Empreendedorismo "estilo de vida": o caso dos pequenos negócios TER. PhD Thesis, University of Aveiro.
10. Cunha, C., Kastenholz, E., & Carneiro, M. J. (2016). Chapter 11. Lifestyle entrepreneurs in rural tourism: how does lifestyle drive get along with business orientation? In E. Kastenholz, M. J. Carneiro, C. Eusébio, & E. Figueiredo (Eds.), *Meeting challenges for rural tourism through co-creation of sustainable tourist experiences* (pp. 243-262). Cambridge: Cambridge Scholar Publishing.
11. Deci, E. L, and R. M Ryan. 2000. "The "What" and "Why" of Goal Pursuits: Human Needs and the Self-Determination of Behavior." *Psychological Inquiry* 11 (4): 227-268.
12. Getz, D., Carlsen, J., 2000. Characteristics and goals of family and owner-operated businesses in the rural tourism and hospitality sectors. *Tour. Manag.* 21, 547-560.
13. Getz, D., Petersen, T., 2005. Growth and profit-oriented entrepreneurship among family business owners in the tourism and hospitality industry. *Int. J. Hosp. Manag.* 24, 219-242.

14. Gorgievski, M. J, M. E Ascalon, and U Stephan. 2011. "Small Business Owners' Success Criteria, a Values Approach to Personal Differences." *Journal of Small Business Management* 49 (2): 207–232.
15. Hoyer, W. D., & MacInnis, D. J. (1997). *Consumer behavior*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
16. Katz, J. (1995). What track are you on? *Inc.*, 17, 27-28.
17. Koh, K., & Hatten, T. (2002). The tourism entrepreneur: The overlooked player in tourism development studies. *International Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Administration*, 3, 21-48.
18. Komppula, R. (2004). Success and growth in rural tourism micro-business in Finland: Financial or life-style objectives? In R. Thomas (Org.). *Small firms in tourism international perspectives* (pp.115–138). Oxford: Elsevier.
19. Lau, V. P, M. A Shafer, and K Au. 2007. "Entrepreneurial Career Success from a Chinese Perspective: Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Validation." *Journal of International Business Studies* 38 (1): 126–146.
20. Li, Y., Miao, L., Zhao, X., & Lehto, X. (2013). When family rooms become guest lounges: Work-family balance of B&B innkeepers. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 34, 138-149.
21. MacDonald R (1996) Welfare Dependency, the enterprise culture and self-employment survival. *Work, Employment and Society* 10(3): 431–447.
22. Marcketti, S. B., Niehm, L. S., & Fuloria, R. (2006). An exploratory study of lifestyle entrepreneurship and its relationship to life quality. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 34(3), 241–259.
23. Maslow, A. H 1943. "A Theory of Human Motivation." *Psychological Review* 50 (4): 370.
24. McGehee, N. G., & Kim, K. (2004). Motivation for agri-tourism entrepreneurship. *Journal of Travel Research*, 43, 161–170.
25. Morrison, A., Carlsen, J., & Weber, P. (2010). Small tourism business research change and evolution. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 12, 739–749.
26. Paige, R. C, and M. A Littrell. 2002. "Crat Retailers' Criteria for Success and Associated Business Strategies." *Journal of Small Business Management* 40 (4): 314–331.
27. Robertson, M., Collins, A., Medeira, N., & Slater, J. (2003). Barriers to start-up and their effect on aspirant entrepreneurs. *Education and Training*, 45, 308-316.
28. Rouse J (2004) Enterprise, identity and structure: A longitudinal analysis of youth enterprise experiences. PhD thesis, Kingston University.
29. Shane S, Kolvereid L and Westhead P (1991) Exploratory examination of the reasons leading to new firm formation across country and gender. *Journal of Business Venturing* 6(6): 431–446.
30. Shaw, G. (2014). Entrepreneurial cultures and small business enterprises in tourism. In A. A. Lew, C. M. Hall, & A. M. Williams (Eds.), *The Wiley Blackwell companion to tourism* (pp. 120–131). Oxford, UK: Wiley Online Library, John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.
31. Szivas, E. (2001). Entrance into tourism entrepreneurship: A UK study. *Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 3, 163-172.
32. Taormina RJ and Lao SKM (2007) Measuring Chinese entrepreneurial motivation. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behaviour and Research* 13(4): 200–221.
33. Thomas, R., Shaw, G., & Page, S. J. (2011). Understanding small firms in tourism: A perspective on research trends and challenges. *Tourism Management*, 32, 963–976.
34. Vroom, V. H. (1964). *Work and motivation*. New York, NY: Wiley.
35. Wu S, Matthews L and Dagher GK (2007) Need for achievement, business goals and entrepreneurial persistence. *Management Research News* 30(12): 928–941.

# **INNOVATION AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN TOURISM. VOLUNTOURISM AND ORGANIC FARMING EXPERIENCES IN ROMANIA. CASE STUDY**

**Răzvan ONU<sup>1</sup>, PhD Student, Gabriela MARTIN<sup>2</sup>**  
**<sup>1</sup>Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania**  
**<sup>2</sup>Onu&Asociații SRL**

## **Abstract**

*This paper describes a solution offered for innovation in tourism, as an entrepreneurship initiative, for an innovative tourism project, located in Cluj County, Romania. The process was started by creating a market research to build a relationship between clients, as organic farming, and tourists, who need tourism experiences, like voluntourism and cultural exchanges. As entrepreneurs, in tourism industry, we are focused on clients, trying to customize our products/services as much as possible to their requirements. There is a real need for working force as volunteering, from organic farms owners, and tourism destinations, with tourism experiences as well, from clients. A wanted solution from all is to build one package - as voluntourism, and to outsource this service to a tourism agency. The content marketing can be a solution to increase profitability both to organic farming and tourism agencies. We tried to identify, and reach out to influencers in our space, to help build awareness about community contribution from volunteers and the innovative tourism product.*

**Keywords:** Content marketing, innovative rural tourism, entrepreneurship in tourism, tourism experience, voluntourism.

**JEL classification:** M3

## **Introduction**

This paper intends to describe the possible answers to two main questions about ways to create tourism experiences in Romania, mainly in Cluj County:

How can we create experiences through voluntourism?

How can the tourism packages, for adventure tourism, respond to the community demand?

We will outline the main aspects of defining tourism products, services and experiences to capture the essence of turning tourism products into memorable, profitable and loyal experiences for customers and other stakeholders. Since it is well known that, to be sustainable, an economic activity must be profitable. All those who are stakeholders in properly managed tourism benefit from it.

## **Literature review**

Entrepreneurs, in general, and entrepreneurs in tourism industry, as well, are focused on clients, trying to customize their products/services as much as possible to their requirements.

A qualitative analysis conducted in three regions – Cluj County (Romania), Campo de Borja (Spain) and Western Macedonia (Greece) has funded that entrepreneurs that are innovative are driven in business by passion for what there are doing, concern to develop/customize their products, cultural intelligence, social responsibility, content marketing and awareness of the networking importance. In the same conference paper is stated that most entrepreneurs, in Romanian rural tourism, face challenges as strong competition and low financial resources, reason why they must find new methods or to improve the current ones. Lately, the networking in rural tourism plays an important role. The innovative entrepreneurs are aware about this trend and try to develop new forms of cooperation (Negruşa, A., Toader, V., Rus, R., Sofică, A., 2015).

Rural tourism is a sector where the innovation is increasingly present. There are new entrepreneurs who are developing the indigenous resources of the rural areas into innovative tourism products in a sustainable manner. To promote a tourist activity, as today most information is accessed the fastest online, it is necessary to adapt to the

needs and demands of the market (Rotar, G., Campeanu-Sonea, E., Ilieș, M., Ilieș, G., 2006).

Romania has potential to become a touristic destination throughout the year, if all the opportunities offered by sites of natural and cultural heritage are understood and maximized. Tourists are attracted to rural areas by their distinctive social and cultural heritage landscape qualities (Gavrilă-Paven, I., Bârsan, M.C., Dogaru, L.D., , 2015).

The tourism should be in trend with the tourist's needs and wishes, determining a growth within this sector, this being dictated by all the improvement in the products and in the services that were offered (Cosma, S., Păun, D., Bota, M., Fleșeriu, C., 2014).

According to the WTTC report (2017), the total contribution of tourism and travel to the Romanian GDP, including the broader investment effects, supply chain and the impact of induced incomes, amounted to 9.7 billion \$, accounting for 5.2% of GDP (WTTC, 2017).

The travelers' main three reasons to visit Cluj-Napoca are focused on recreation and self-interest, but also on attending festivals and concerts, from the point of positioning the city as a tourist destination (Oprea, M., Toader, V. , Negrușă, A., Cosma, S., Lazin, M., Bolog, C., Rus, R., 2016).

## **Material and methods**

To analyze the farmers', need in volunteering matter in Cluj County, near Cluj-Napoca, we conducted a qualitative analysis starting from 6 good practices in rural tourism at organic farms in Cluj County (Romania). The criteria used in the process of good practices selection was the units' orientation to implement, new content marketing methods, such volunteering from tourists and provide them cultural and gastronomic experiences.

The research methods were the survey, the interview and the secondary data analysis.

We used a questionnaire to collect primary data for our purpose. The questionnaire had 11 questions, organized in two sections, each focused on collecting a specific type of information: firstly, we gathered information about farmers' motivation to accept Romanian/ Foreigners volunteers through voluntourism experiences at their farms, and secondly, data about their desire to offer cultural exchanges and traditional food to volunteers, during their visit.

We used structured questions and open questions. The questionnaire was implemented during the timespan July 2018- September 2018 via e-mail.

Also, we succeed to implement the questionnaire as a semi structured interview with the owner of the organic farm *Colina Farms*, who is already running a program for volunteers combined with hiking and biking in Băbuțiu village, near Cluj-Napoca.

We gathered 5 valid questionnaires from six farm owners from Cluj County.

## **Results and discussions**

Farmers from Cluj County, who are interested to be part of the networking in rural tourism as destination for voluntourism, are promoting organic farming, traditional products, cultural traditions, customs, folklore and the local gastronomy of the region.

Starting from these elements, the OTA tourism agency is adapting the content marketing to transmit to the tourists, to provide them a specific, unique tourism experiences, and not singular tourism elements.

The innovative entrepreneurs must be socially responsible and to really invest in the local community to provide content marketing for advantages of all stakeholders.

The potential market analysis is described in the table 1. We wish to transform into an innovative way, the current business market, and to create a network for organic farms involved in the voluntourism area. Farmers can be enough preoccupied with managing process and their clients and workers; they have reasons to wish to outsource the volunteering branch. Professionals specialized in tourism can offer them an



alternative to hire people for Spring and Summer, the most wanted time of the year to volunteer.

An objective like increasing the competitiveness in the field of incoming tourism through innovative tourism packages for volunteer/ tourists can be developed with voluntourism in disadvantaged areas and depopulated communities from Apuseni Mountains, as a possible future perspective.

Another objective is to increase the promotion of cultural, educational, traditional values of self-esteem through thematic workshops: *Dracula, Hoia Forest*, black/white photography, manufacture of traditional footwear, medieval fights, motorcycle circuits, city tour using bicycles from the Rent-a-Bike Cluj network and scooters from Vespa Rental services Cluj.

Table 1. OTA – SWOT Market Analysis

POTENTIAL MARKET OBJECTIVES	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To identify the opportunities where strengths can be applied – internal factors of the tourism agency – to penetrate the current tourism business market which is overwhelmed by all-inclusive packages.</li> <li>2. To identify the weaknesses followed by the transformation of weaknesses to turn into strengths – uniqueness elements that differentiate us from our competitors.</li> </ol>	
INTERNAL FACTORS	
<b>STRENGTHS (+)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Specialized management personnel with high management accreditation in tourism</li> <li>- Staff with certification as local and mountain guide</li> <li>- Staff with vast experience like traveler and volunteer (voluntourist)</li> <li>- Regional cuisine and regional specialties</li> <li>- The development of multiple cultural events, national and international congresses, international sports events, festivals, concerts, exhibitions, folk and medieval traditions</li> <li>- The existence of an original ethnographic and folklore treasure</li> <li>- Existence of many protected areas (parks, reservations) included in the Nature 2000 European Network</li> <li>- Diversified accommodation network</li> <li>- Personal experience as client/organizer in the services and packages offered as tourism products of the agency</li> </ul>	<b>WEAKNESSES (-)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Insufficient experience in running a business</li> <li>- Lack of a vast network of tourist information adventure and volunteer tourism</li> <li>- The novelty of volunteer products on the Romanian tourism market</li> <li>- Novelty and insufficient testing of thematic workshops packages on the market (<i>Dracula, Hoia Forest, black &amp; white photography, manufacture of traditional footwear, medieval fights, motorcycle circuits, city tour using bicycles from the Rent-a-Bike Cluj network and scooters from Vespa Rental services Cluj</i>).</li> </ul>

EXTERNAL FACTORS	
<p><b>OPPORTUNITIES (+)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expanding the coverage with free Wi-Fi in the city of Cluj-Napoca</li> <li>- Existence of an international low-cost airport for Wizz Air and Blue Air for domestic and European flights</li> <li>- Permanent stands in the city central area selling folk art, postcards, traditional products</li> <li>- Public transport network and bicycle tracks with dedicated traffic lane</li> <li>- Increasing the number of tourists that motivate different forms of cultural tourism, voluntourism and adventure</li> <li>- Very good perspectives to exploit mountain areas throughout the year by hiking, riding, climbing, extreme sports, skiing, paragliding etc.</li> <li>- Increased international interest for cultural, spa, ecotourism, agricultural tourism, voluntourism, and adventure tourism</li> <li>- Increased international trend for achieving experiences through voluntourism</li> </ul>	<p><b>THREATS (-)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The poor public image due the current conflicting political situation</li> <li>- Uncertain weather conditions, unpredictable by season</li> <li>- Urbanization of the rural population involving loss of authenticity and local specificity</li> <li>- Deterioration of rural architectural patrimony by depopulation of rural communities</li> <li>- Continue the process of migrating skilled labor force</li> <li>- Strong competition at the tourist destinations – external tourist destinations at similar prices and superior conditions</li> <li>- Utility infrastructure (water, sewer, selective waste management) insufficiently developed in the rural area</li> </ul>

OBJECTIVES ASSESSMENT	
<b>I.</b>	INCREASING THE PROMOTION OF CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL, TRADITIONAL VALUES and SELF-ESTEEM THROUGH THEMATIC WORKSHOPS: Dracula, Hoia Forest, black/white photography, manufacture of traditional footwear, medieval fights, motorcycle circuits, city tour using bicycles from the Rent-a-Bike Cluj network and scooters from Vespa Rental services Cluj.
<b>II.</b>	INCREASING THE COMPETITIVENESS IN THE FIELD OF INCOMING TOURISM, ON THE VALUE OF THE MATERIAL AND/OR IMMATERIAL PATRIMONY OF TRANSYLVANIA (Apuseni Mountains) through innovative tourism packages Voluntourism with target group of foreign tourists to volunteer/tourism ie Voluntourism in disadvantaged areas and depopulated communities.

Like a Tourism agency, we build the functional relationship between clients. In table 2, which represents a use case, the followed steps are described to become a volunteer, after attending the OTA website. The volunteer cannot take part to more than maximum of 3 workshops (as a trainer or a trainee). Main steps are marked in red.

Table 2. Use Case Volunteering

<b>Volunteering application on the web site OTA</b>		
1	ID	OTA_V_01
2	Name	Volunteering Conditions of participations
3	Description	As an Applicant I can apply to subscribe the OTA website in order to make Voluntourism in Cluj County, Romania
4	Actors	applicants, the system
5	Preconditions	work competences, Volunteering contract, specific trainings/tasks
6	Trigger	An applicant wants to volunteer on Cluj County
7	Main/Basic/Happy Flow	1. Login on O&A website 2. Create an account as Volunteer or Trainer 3. Fill the application form 4. Submit the application Validation - Application acceptance - System displays a message when the acceptance was made Constraint – The number of Applicants exceeded for one workshop. -The System displays an informative message " The workshop is full. No more spots available for the moment. Please return later/next week/next month" - System display an informative message " The volunteer cannot take part to more than maximum of 3 workshops"
8	Alternative/Extensions Steps	the Volunteer is accepted and attends a workshop
9	Postconditions	the applicant returns another week/month
10	Use Case diagram /Relationships	(Figure 1) The Volunteer can see the acceptance confirmation message for a specific workshop and he/she can find his/her name in the list of participants. The Volunteer can see an error message when he/she tries to access more than 3 workshops.
11	Acceptance Criteria	

Like a Tourism agency, we make the relationship bridge between clients, a possible volunteer, and an organic farm, to be functional, following the steps as in the figure 1. The process is validated like in the use case described in the figure 2.



Figure 1. Use Case diagram /Relationships

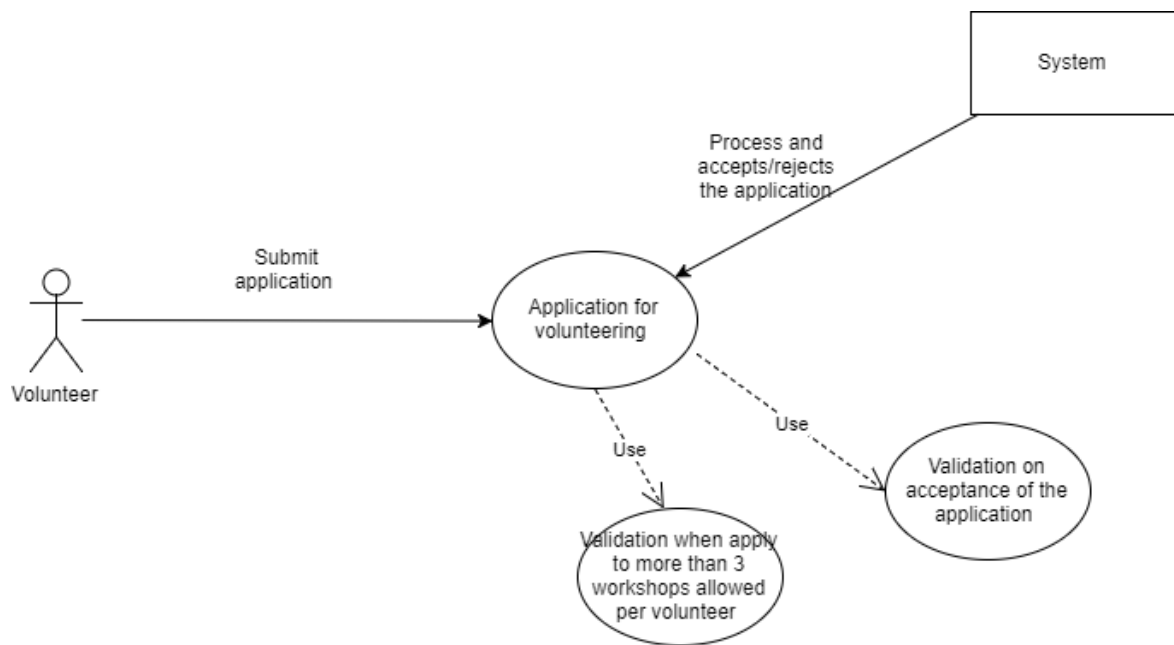


Figure 2. Use Case Volunteering

The OTA business Overview is synthetic represented in the figure 3.

**Information about the Company**

**Legal form:** LTD Company

**Name:** **OTA Tourism Agency**

**Duration:** Duration of operation of the company is undetermined

**Headquarters:** Cluj-Napoca, Cluj County, Romania

The company can set up secondary headquarters – subsidiaries, branches, agencies, representations, or other similar units without legal personality – based on the decision of the associates, in compliance with the legal provisions in the matter.

The company can change its headquarters by observing the legal provisions and the decision of the associates.

**Company’s Activity Object**

The main field of activity is *Tourism Agency Activities & Tour Operators*, Group **CAEN 791.**

The main object of activity is: *Tourism Agency activities*, Class **CAEN 7911.**

Secondary Objects of activity are included in the Constitutive Act.

**Challenges**

- **Creating a Voluntourism destination /Innovative tourism resort in a touristic area, relatively easy accessible, not far from highway and airport on Cluj County, Romania.**
- **Volunteers with diversity of competences/skills and useful experiences.**

**Solutions**

- Searching local specialists/ craftsmen as trainers and coaches for Volunteers.
- Identification and using natural resources for hiking and other recreational activities on surrounding areas (mountain biking, farming, collection of berries/forest fruits)
- Searching local artists as people resource in cultural exchanges to be held.
- Involving in community social life, through volunteering, at old people homes from villages, as a support
- Research to identify possible business relationships with competitors in the neighborhood
- Periodical workshops for tourism planning as a research base in tourism marketing.
- Organizing groups of 10 people as volunteers for maximum group dynamic and efficiency.
- Procedures and regulations to elaborate and implement for each sort of activity.

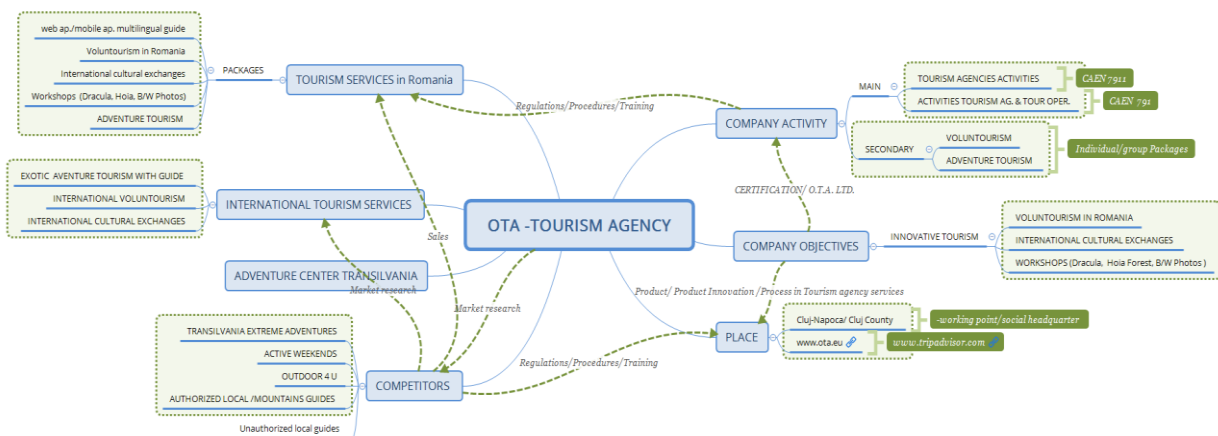


Figure 3: OTA Tourism Agency Business Analysis Mind Map

**Conclusions**

In Cluj County, and in Romania as well, the whole process of transition to the market economy has made tourism very sensitive to the economy and social environment. That can cause a stimulation in case of demand, and in the offer of Romanian tourist products, as well.

There is a real need for working force from organic farms, and tourism destinations, with tourism experiences as well, from clients. A wanted solution from all stakeholders is to build one package - as voluntourism, and to outsource this service to a tourism agency.

Passion is not enough to make a sustainable business, but in the Cluj County area there is plenty potential to be build and fulfilled a thrive business with hard work and perseverance.

We think that is the proper time to make Cluj-Napoca a place for voluntourism destination on the world map.

## References

1. Cosma, S., Păun, D., Bota, M., Fleşeriu, C. (2014). Innovation – A Useful Tool in the Rural Tourism in Romania. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, Volume 148*, pp. 507-515.
2. Gavrilă-Paven, I., Bârsan, M.C., Dogaru, L.D., . (2015). Advantages and Limits for Tourism Development in Rural Area (Case Study Ampoi and Mureş Valleys) . *Procedia Economics and Finance, Volume 32*, pp. 1050-1059.
3. Negruşa, A., Toader, V., Rus, R., Sofică, A. (2015). Characteristics of Innovative Entrepreneurs in Rural Tourism. *Proceeding volume International Conference Science in Technology SCinTE 2015*. Athens, Greece.
4. Oprea, M., Toader, V. , Negruşa, A., Cosma, S., Lazin, M., Bolog, C., Rus, R. (2016). *ANALYSIS OF TOURISTS' BEHAVIOR IN CLUJ-NAPOCA, ROMANIA*. Retrieved from ResearchGate: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321489715\\_ANALYSIS\\_OF\\_TOURISTS'\\_BEHAVIOR\\_IN\\_CLUJ-NAPOCA\\_ROMANIA](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321489715_ANALYSIS_OF_TOURISTS'_BEHAVIOR_IN_CLUJ-NAPOCA_ROMANIA) [accessed Sep 2018].
5. Rotar, G., Campeanu-Sonea, E., Ilieş, M., Ilieş, G. (2006). *Comunicare in Turism*. Cluj-Napoca: Presa Universitară Clujeană.
6. WTTC. (2017). *Travel and Tourism Economic Impact Romania 2017*. Retrieved from Travel and Tourism Economic Impact Romania 2017, <https://www.wttc.org/-/media/files/reports/economic-impact-research/countries-2017/romania2017.pdf>, Accessed March 5, 2018

## EUROPEAN FUNDS FOR RURAL TOURISM IN CLUJ COUNTY

**Dorin Ioan Bota**  
**Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania**

Rural tourism has been and is considered a basic element of the Romanian economy, with a huge potential, alternative to the labor force, and its development can help mitigate global imbalances between the various rural areas. Rural tourism, can generate a significant increase in the incomes of the population through the use of traditional, cultural, ecological and agricultural dimensions of the rural space. The main components of the Romanian rural tourism is Agri-tourism, ecotourism, and leisure tourism. In recent years rural tourism has benefited from European funding, through the NATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT 2007-2013, and 2014-2020.

Measure 313 "Encouraging tourist activities" was the main engine through which were supported rural tourism activities during the period 2007-2013. At national level, until the year 2015 there were several project applications during which 3703 projects with a public value of 569 million euros were submitted. Of the 3,703 projects were selected 2,586 projects, with a total investment volume of 358 million Euro.

In the period 2014-2020 through the new romanian NPRD (National Programme for Rural Development) non-refundable European funds for tourism are awarded in particular to investments in Agri-tourism. There are two submeasures financed by these investments, submeasure 6.2-*Support for starting business with non-agricultural activities in rural areas* and submeasure 6.4-*Support for investments in the creation and development of non-agricultural activities*.

The 6.2 submeasure is aimed at diversifying the rural economy by increasing the number of micro-enterprises and small enterprises in the non-agricultural sector, developing services and creating jobs in rural areas as well as encouraging maintenance and development of traditional craft Activities.

The beneficiaries of Submeasure 6.2 may be:

- Farmers or members of an agricultural household, who diversify their activity by setting up a non-agricultural activity in the rural area for the first Time. Unauthorized individuals are not eligible;
- Micro-enterprises and small businesses in the rural area, which propose non-agricultural activities which they have not done before the date of application for support;
- Micro-enterprises and new small enterprises, established in the year of depositing the financing application or a maximum of 3 fiscal years, which did not work until the time it was deposited (start-ups);

One of the main criteria for selection of projects financed from European funds by Submeasure 6.2 is the "principle of stimulating tourism activities to prioritise the agri-tourism activities carried out in areas with high potential, tourist/ecotourism destinations/protected Natural areas, which have been established in accordance with the emergency Order No. 142/2008 on the approval of the National Landscaping Plan ". The amount of support is 50,000 euros/project, with the possibility of increasing the support to the value of 70,000 euros/project in the case of production activities, medical, veterinary and agri-tourism services.

Sub-measure 6.4-*Support for investments in the creation and development of non-agricultural activities* assist micro-enterprises and small businesses investment in rural areas that create or develop non-agricultural activities in rural areas. The aim of the support given by this sub-measure is to boost business in rural areas, thereby increasing the number of non-agricultural activities in rural areas, as well as creating jobs, increasing income of rural population and reducing the differences between rural and urban.

Among the types of investments eligible are handicraft activities and other non-traditional agricultural activities (pottery, embroidery, manual processing of iron, wool,

wood, skin, etc.) as well as for infrastructure investments in the agro-touristic units or intended for leisure activities.

The beneficiaries of the measure 6.4 may be micro-enterprises and small non-agricultural businesses existing or newly established in the countryside and farmers or members of agricultural households. Eligible costs are construction, enlargement, equipping and modernisation of buildings as well as the purchase and installation costs, machinery, installations and equipment.

Public support is non-refundable for a maximum of 200,000 euros/beneficiary. The intensity of public support is 70% non-refundable. The intensity of the non-refundable public support can be 90%, for applicants carrying out production activities, medical, sanitary and veterinary services, as well as farmers who want to develop non-agricultural activities. Types of activities that can be financed by sub-measure 6.4: production activities, craft activities, tourist activities (E.G. agro-tourist accommodation services, leisure and food tourism services), supply of Social Services.

Cluj county, with an area of approximately 6.700 square kilometres, is located in the Western part of the country, being in the contact area of three natural units: Apuseni Mountains, Somesan Plateau and Transilvania Plain. The county is bordered to the north with Maramures county, to the north – east with Bistrita-Nasaud county, to the east with Mures county, to the south with Alba county, to the west with Bihor county and to the north – west with Salaj county.

Cluj county has a high touristic potential, reflected in a wide range of recreation activities: backpacking, mountain – climbing, winter and summer sports, camps for children and youth, balneary treatment, etc. Inside the County we can find multiple tourist attractions such as: Salina Turda (the Salt Mine from Turda), Muntele Baisorii-resort for winter sports, Muntii Trascau- nice place for climbing, the area of Gilau – Tarnita lakes, which provides extraordinary conditions for water sports, the area of Belis – Fantanele lake, wanted for the superb landscape of the lake and the surrounding mountains.

Avram Iancu International Airport in Cluj, had a significant increase of the passenger traffic as a result of the development and modernization program, currently being the second international airport in the country, connecting Cluj with Austria, Belgium, Switzerland, France, Germany, Israel, United Kingdom, The Netherlands, Spain, Sweden.

One of the major problems of Cluj County is lack of accommodation and recreational facilities. Although there are numerous tourist attractions lack accommodation creates a barrier in the way of tourist who wants to visit these places. Especially in the countryside, the young farmers do not own the money necessary for setting up a business in the agri-tourism. All these problems are about to be solved, by encouraging young people in rural areas of the County, to access European funds intended for tourism.

This process has started since 2008, when the "Financing Agency for Rural Investments" had the first session of projects designed for tourism and continues in the present. Thus in the period of 2007-2015 in the County of Cluj were selected for funding a total of 154 projects for the construction of facilities of agro-tourist accommodation and 48 projects for recreational activities (swimming pools, sports grounds, equipment for water sports, etc.) At the same time were financed a total of 35 of tourist information centers for the municipalities of the County. All these investments have brought over 400 engender new jobs and significant revenue to support rural budgets. Total incoming funds for tourist activities in Cluj County from European funds was over 44 million euros.

Besides all these numbers, it should be noted that over 90% of the projects financed in the period 2007-2015 are initiated by young people under 40 years of age, for them being the first experience as entrepreneurs in another task than farming.

Considering the success of past years, the appetite for investment in agro-tourism or recreational activities in rural areas is growing, such as during 2016-2018 "Financing Agency for Rural Investments- Cluj office", manages over 200 projects of this type.



At this point, all selected projects during 2016-2018 are in implementation, but what is encouraging is the fact that most of those accessing European funds are young and very young people.

It can be said that at the end of this decade by contribution of EU funds, a large part of the problems facing tourism in Cluj will be resolved. Last but not least we believe that changing generations in rural tourism in Cluj County as well as at the level of Romania, will bring a new image, much better than the one in the past and also will produce the expected jump for this area.

# INTERNATIONAL VISITORS, AN UNEXPLORED OPPORTUNITY FOR THE STAGE ARTS MARKET DEVELOPMENT IN CLUJ-NAPOCA

Daniela Andreea Caraba, PhD Student  
Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania

## Abstract

*The stage arts industry has been facing several challenges since the end of the XX century. In order to survive many artistic institutions decided to adopt a more customer oriented, marketing vision. The STP strategy is one of the most common approach.*

*On a local level, in Cluj-Napoca, the high increasing rate of foreign tourists, students and employees provides a valuable opportunity .*

*The paper explains the matter and follows if and how the main local stage arts institutions relate to the possibility using online research and observation.*

*The paper concludes that the opportunity is not yet identified and valued except for one particular institution, The Hungarian State Theatre who also happens to have the best notoriety and reputation among local and international artistic communities.*

*An expanded research applicability could include several urban tourism fields more or less integrated with the arts.*

**Key words:** STP, international tourists, market segments, stage arts industry, customer orientation

**JEL classification:** M31

## Introduction

On a universal scale, since the end of the XX century and the beginning of the new millennium, there have been constant discussions and concerns regarding the performing arts industry. Many cultural artistic organizations around the world have been facing a crisis on a variety of forms.

Most common issues regard the financial deficit or bankruptcy of several state institutions due to declining attendance, aging audiences and the growing competition from less expensive and more convenient forms of entertainment. (Bernstein, 2014)

"In a study of the participation rates of the arts, The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) found that during the period 1982-2008, classical music audiences declined by 29 percent and opera audiences by 30 percent. From 1998 to 2008, attendance at nonmusical plays declined massive 33 percent. In a study for the five-year period 2008-2012, the NEA observed that attendance declined 9 percent at musicals and 12 percent at nonmusical plays. During those five years, classical music attendance declined 5.4 percent." (Cohen, 2013)

Romania makes no exception to the situation according to the Cultural Consumption Barometer research 2012.

"The steady hierarchy of the preferences in the last five years shows that there is a public loyal to certain cultural events, but the high consumption of internet audio-video pirate downloads, the abandonment of sports practice and the low degree of children's enrolment in extracurricular or performance activities show the existence of problems related to the cultural supply and infrastructure, as well as the lack of access to information." (Cultural Consumption Barometer, 2012)

The most discussed and recommended solutions facing the performing arts industry crisis include:

- A better integration of non formal and informal education with the arts in order to inform, educate and cultivate the new generation's taste for stage arts products ensuring a constant flux of cultural consumers as they mature;
- Expanding the offer in order to respond better to the needs and preferences of younger and new audiences;
- Forming partnerships with strong companies in the area in order to increase donations, sponsorships and support;

- A better and more professional marketing approach and research integrated with the general management focusing on Segmenting Targeting and Positioning strategy in order to attract and maintain new market segments.

On a local level, Cluj-Napoca is facing a constant and dynamic development in many fields. One particular advantage that might constitute a particular opportunity for the cultural market is the high number of foreign citizens visiting, studying or working in Cluj that has been constantly growing in the last 10 years.

This paper offers a preview of this opportunity and identifies if and how the local artistic institutions decide to use it.

## Literature review

The artistic marketing domain is a young and recent field still under development. Most of the scientific literature provides the advantage to be of actuality and strong related to the current situation. There is still room for more precise particular scientific research.

The paper is based on references regarding general marketing publications and some of the latest researches on artistic marketing. Common concepts and principles constitute a basis that is applied on a local level following concepts like segmentation, marketing mix, marketing research methods, STP strategy.

F. Kerrigan, P. Fraser, M. Ozbilgin, (2004), *Arts Marketing*, Darag O'Reilly, Fiona Kerrigan, (2010), *Marketing the Arts. A fresh approach*, Joanne Scheff Bernstein, (2014), *Marketing insights for engaging performing arts audiences* and Alvin Toffler, (1973), *The culture consumers* and Cohen P. (2013), *A New Survey Finds a Drop in Arts Attendance* discuss the main challenges and universal solutions for the stage arts industry.

Philip Kotler, (2009), *Marketing Management*, Vorzsak A. et all (2006), *Marketingul Serviciilor*, Smaranda Cosma, Marius Bota, (2004), *Bazele marketingului*, A. Zamfir, *Marketing*, (1974), Explain and structure general marketing concepts.

Smaranda Cosma, (2008), *Cercetari de marketing* is a practical guide on market research including both theoretical concepts and practical examples of application.

Maslow A. H. (1943), *Hierarchy of Needs: A Theory of Human Motivation*, is still a base theory worth mentioning and observed in the artistic field.

## Materials and method(s)

A short online research has proved to be an unexpected sufficient method for the research in order to answer the main question:

How do the local stage arts institutions respond to the increasing opportunity of an international consumers market segment?

I have followed the main artistic institutions in the city, stated on the City Halls inventory into 2 categories: theatre and opera, ballet, philharmonics. The theatre domain includes National Theatre "Lucian Blaga" Cluj-Napoca, State Hungarian Theatre and Puppet Theatre "PUCK" and opera, ballet, philharmonics refers to the Romanian National Opera Cluj-Napoca, Hungarian State Opera Cluj-Napoca and Transylvanian State Philharmonic.

I have accessed the official websites of each of above state institution and attended at least one performance in order to observe how they respond to the international market segment.

Moreover, the few online feedback I found also shows that the involvement and activity in this direction is slow regardless the fact that there is an active increasing request.

## Results and discussion

According to the number of tourists that have visited Cluj has grown by 35,3% in 2017 compared to 2016. There were 134 100 foreign tourists, one fifth of the total

number of tourists that have visited Cluj. More exactly, in 2017 Cluj has been visited by 630 500 persons both Romanians and foreigners.

The great majority of foreign visitors come from Hungary - 20400, followed by Germany - 16 700 and Italy - 12 700 but also France, England, Tunis, Switzerland, Nederland, Russia Republic of Moldavia etc

Most of the foreign tourists remain in the city for longer periods depending on the visiting reason. Work related reasons include a shorter period of time from a few days to weeks and months while studying reasons require 1 to 6 years stay that may end with a permanent relocation in the area and local investments. During this time, each foreign temporary visitor may invite and accommodate family members and visiting friends acting as a promoter and touristic request provider.

As a result, targeting this particular segment can constitute a great advantage for every industry, nevertheless the stage arts and cultural domain.

But how do the major stage arts institutions in Cluj-Napoca respond to the opportunity? Do they communicate in English in order for non Romanian speakers to be able to have access to their offers? Are their products accessible?

The first aspect that I followed was if the language barrier has been eliminated by at least the presence of an English section on the website and if English subtitles are provided during performances. Some artistic products like ballet and concerts do not require speaking while for the theatre products, an international language or translation is essential. In the case of opera, the majority of the pieces are by definition interpreted in the language of composition except for national creations and operettas. However, an English subtitle should still be included in order to consider all participant's knowledge level and needs.

Below I have listed observations for each main local stage arts institution based on the City Hall's official list.

#### **Theatre:**

National Theatre "Lucian Blaga" Cluj-Napoca [www.teatrulnationalcluj.ro](http://www.teatrulnationalcluj.ro)

- Includes a minimal English section
- Plays are in Romanian with no English subtitles

State Hungarian Theatre [www.huntheater.ro](http://www.huntheater.ro)

- Includes complete English section and also French section besides Romanian and Hungarian ones
- Plays are in Hungarian with English and Romanian subtitles

Puppet Theatre "PUCK" [www.teatrulpuck.ro](http://www.teatrulpuck.ro)

- Includes only a preview English section with empty windows except a section with the director's word and a section promoting the crew
- Plays are in Romanian with no English subtitles

#### **Opera, Ballet, Philharmonics:**

Romanian National Opera Cluj-Napoca [www.operacluj.ro](http://www.operacluj.ro)

- No English section
- Performances are in Romanian or composed language with Romanian subtitles. No English subtitles

Hungarian State Opera Cluj-Napoca [www.magyaropera.ro](http://www.magyaropera.ro)

- No English section
- Performances in Hungarian and composed language with Romanian and Hungarian subtitles. No english subtitles.

Transylvainan State Philharmonic <http://filarmonicatransilvania.ro/en/>

- Includes a minimal English section
- No need for subtitles

The research shows that the local artistic institutions have started to consider the foreign attenders market segment and most intend to develop an English section on their website. However, there is no information or expressed intention regarding an adaptation of the artistic product by including at least English subtitles during performances.

The Hungarian State Theatre in the only institution that has so far included the foreign attender's segment. It has a well structured and complete website, including the

following sections: English, French, Romanian and Hungarian. All performances are played in Hungarian with Romanian, Hungarian and English subtitles.

The few testimonials found online confirm a present interest in local performances limited by the language barriers. The below attendee expresses the surprise to have found one institution that provided accessible performances and promises future return.



Travel\_with\_Panaes  
Limassol, Cyprus  
137 likes 54

Reviewed May 24, 2016 via mobile

### Suprised to watch Strindberg's 'The Pelican ' with english subtitles!

When my friend proposed to me to spend a night at the Hungarian theatre I was a bit sceptic but I decided to give a go after a second thought! It finally proved to be a good decision as the play I watched was interesting and well performed by the theatre team. Watching Hungarian actors and reading english subtitles on the wall was not that bad and I enjoyed every moment of the captivating story. The day I visited was Strindberg's ' The Pelican ' but as I have noticed the theatre is prolific in staging various performances throughout the year. If in Cluj again I'll check them again!  
[Show less](#)

Considering Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs theory that has first structured the human needs into five categories: physiological, safety, social, esteem and self actualisation needs (fig. Nr. 1) in case of a foreign visitor, attending stage arts performances is a fast and creative means to satisfy the third level: social needs.

A foreigner or tourist would first of all face the lack of relations and activities when visiting or relocating to a new area. Attending artistic performances on a regular basis would include the individual in the local artistic community offering a consistent starting point in building a social life in the new environment.

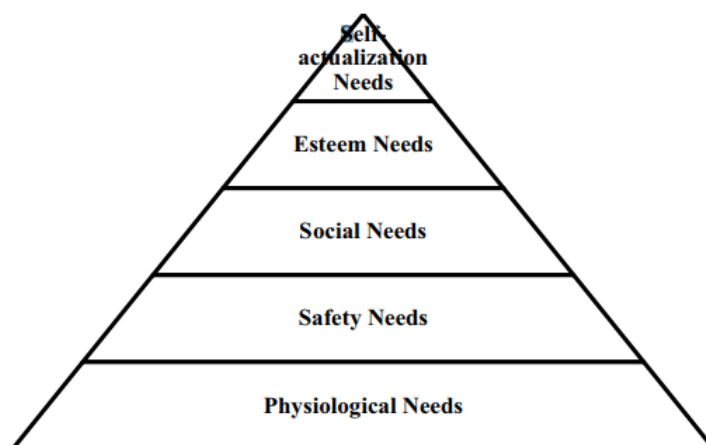


Fig. nr. 1. Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs  
Source: Processed after (Maslow 1987: 16-22)

Moreover, foreign visitors deciding to attend a local performance are more likely to be loyal customers that have already developed an attendance habit in their native country. The effort to attract and keep such consumers requires a minimal investment that can be seen as a transfer from one cultural institution to another. Therefore, forming partnerships with foreign representative artistic institutions could fructify the opportunity on a large scale.

Another direction to expand the same objective is to include the artistic offer into a cultural or urban tourism tour working altogether with tourist agencies, hostels, hotels and city tour programs.

## Conclusions

The increased rate of foreign visitors provides a valuable opportunity for the stage art market in Cluj-Napoca.

The local stage arts institutions have not yet identified this possibility or are unable to fructify it except for the Hungarian State Theatre, the most notorious and valued among local and international artistic communities.

There is an active request for stage arts attendance from foreign visitors who would also be provided an opportunity to build a social life in the new environment.

A strategy targeting this market segment would require a minimum effort since the subjects that would express interest have already developed a habit to attend stage arts performances in their home countries. The minimum requirements are to include a complete English website and to provide English subtitles during performances.

There are two suggestions in how to explore this opportunity even further: forming partnerships with representative foreign artistic institutions and integrating the offer into cultural urban touristic campaigns.

## References

1. Bernstein J. S. (2014), *Marketing insights for engaging performing arts audiences*, Palgrave Macmillan
2. Cohen P. (2013), *A New Survey Finds a Drop in Arts Attendance*, New York Times, September 26.
3. Cosma S. (2008) *Cercetari de marketing*, Alma Mater, Cluj-Napoca
4. Cosma S., Bota M. (2004), *Bazele marketingului*, Alma Mater, Cluj-Napoca
5. Cultural Consumption Barometer research available at: <http://www.culturadata.ro/the-2012-cultural-consumption-barometer-culture-and-new-technologies-between-sedentariness-and-cultural-activism/> (accessed on September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018)
6. Kerrigan F., Fraser P., Ozbilgin M. (2004), *Arts Marketing*, Oxford
7. Kotler P. (2009), *Marketing Management*, Pearson Education Limited, Essex, England.
8. Maslow A. H. (1943), *Hierarchy of Needs: A Theory of Human Motivation*, *Psychological Review*, 50, 370-396
9. O'Reilly D., Kerrigan F. (2010), *Marketing the Arts. A fresh approach*, Routledge, NY
10. Toffler A. (1973), *The culture consumers*, Random House, Incorporated
11. Vorzsak A., Paina N.D., Pop M.D., Pop C.M., Szegol I. (2006), *Marketingul Serviciilor*, Ed. Alma Mater, Cluj-Napoca.

# RELIGIOUS TOURISM AS WAY OF PERSONAL FULFILLMENT

**Horățiu Vasile BORZA, Marius BOTA**  
**Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania**

## **Abstract**

*As one of the humans' life main pillar, Religiosity still keeps a vivid interest for those involved in the phenomenon. As predictor and component of the Quality of Life construct, religious aspects remain one of the research subjects nowadays, despite the signals that the conflict between Secularity and Religiosity is an acute one. The main purpose of this research was to investigate the religious tourism in orthodox community from Turda, Cluj County. The objectives were to identify the satisfaction level of the consumers, the involvement of young people in this activities and the existence of specific strategies focused on young consumers. A depth interview was conducted with four major religious tourism organizers. The results were analyzed using Microsoft Excel application. The conclusions reveal that religious tourism is a highly satisfactory activity for all consumers; the segmentation is far from being a constant practice and the participation of young people is still far from reaching its full potential.*

**Key words:** Religiosity, Religious Tourism, Young People, Personal Development, Quality of Life

**JEL classification:** I3, L83, Z12, Z31

## **Introduction**

Religiosity represents one of the most appreciated realities in humans' life. Due to the fact it occurs in all the eras, races and civilizations, we may say it is a fundamental driver of humanity. The correlation between Religiosity and the quality of life was studied in various researches. The results show that Religiosity / Spirituality is associated with a good / better quality of peoples' life. In both healthy (Abdel-Khalek, 2006) and ill (Abu et al., 2018) persons, strong correlations were highlighted, regardless the religion or confession. It is a fact that we assist to a involution of the phenomena worldwide, with significant decrease of the number of people that believe in God, or consider Religion as a very important matter, or are absolutely certain that God exist (Blom et al., 2007), and still inside the European Union, the topic is not an ignored one. In Horizon 2020, the most important research and innovation program of EU, we may find it under CULT-COOP-05-2017 – Religious diversity in Europe – past, present and future – Research and Innovation action. Religious Tourism imposes itself as a research subject due to the fact it allows us to easily quantify aspects of Religiosity. In the same time it is a factor of economic growth and sustainable development at local or regional level, allowing people of different cultural backgrounds to admire and enjoy together the religious or spiritual heritage.

## **Literature review**

An initial discussion is mandatory to highlight the difference between two concepts used in the specialty literature. The Pilgrimage is a journey, usually a longer one toward a sacred place, basically motivated by spiritual or religious reasons. Cities as Jerusalem, Mecca, Lhasa, Rome, Lourdes, Dharamshala, or Medina are traditional pilgrimage destinations. A wider concept is the Religious Tourism one. It includes both pilgrimages and cultural driven trips to sites unanimous recognized as must see objectives. Beside a religious purpose, religious tourism may propose the consumption of the values at a cultural level. Recent studies demonstrated that some religious areas / buildings are perceived rather as cultural destinations than religious one (Poltronieri et al., 2014). Architecture, visual or audio arts, traditions and history are the main triggers attracting also non-religious people into religious sites. This might be the explanation for the opposite trends of the decline of institutional religiosity versus the recent increase of religious tourism consumption (Casanova, 2006).

According to World Tourism Organization, the economic dimension of faith-based vacations and hospitality worldwide market, register yearly \$18 billion and 330 million

travelers, with an estimated number of 600 million religious voyages (Griffin and Raj, 2017). These figures reveal that religious tourism is one of the main sectors of tourism industry.

Regarding the European phenomena, it seems 33% of the tourists are between 18-29 years old; only 12% of them are 30-55 and half of them are over 55 years old. The average length of the trip is from 7 to 10 days (<https://www.cbi.eu/market-information/tourism/religious-tourism/>). The most visited European sites are Lourdes with more than 8 million visitors/year, The Vatican City more than 5 million visitors/year and Fatima with more than 4 million visitors/year (Griffin and Raj, 2017). Different profiles were drawn for tourists from West and East of Europe. While for the west ones, religiosity is rather about reaching a general sense of religiosity / spirituality in daily life, than about attending formal forms, for the east ones the institutional aspects / church related behaviors prevail. Due to this, the forms of religious tourism in Western Europe include meditative hiking / walking; religious painting, mandala coloring or contemplative activities, while in Eastern Europe prevail the monastery visits and collective prayers.

Far from being an outdated subject for young people, the religious tourism might create the context for personal enrichment. The direct contact with the religious realities or at least with the cultural echoes of them represents a way of fulfilling the personal development and this is an extremely appreciated aspect of a religious life (Borza and Cosma, 2018). The generational impact of religious tourism relies on the specific needs and vision of young consumers and it forces the market-oriented providers to adapt their offer as destinations, communication and way of organizing the voyages.

## **Materials and methods**

The aim of this research was to investigate the phenomena of religious tourism in the orthodox community of Turda, Cluj County. As objectives, we tried to identify the satisfaction level of the consumers, the involvement of young people in these activities and the existence of specific strategies focused on young consumers. As a research method, the exploratory research was used.

A depth interview, being a direct approach from qualitative research, was conducted with four major religious tourism organizers, affiliated to Orthodox churches. We collected data for the first nine months of this year (January - September, 2018), regarding the destinations of the voyages (national vs. international), the number of voyages, the number of voyagers, the gender structure of the groups (female vs. male), the age criteria (under 21 years old), and the profile of the consumers (first-timers vs. repetitive ones).

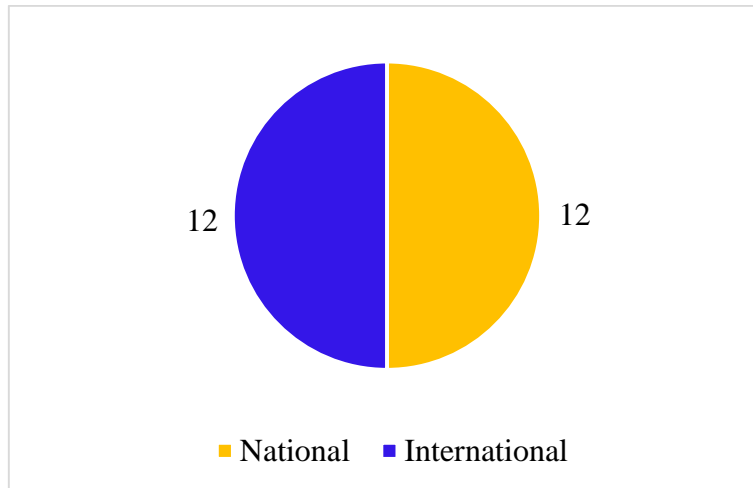
The results were analyzed using Microsoft Office Excel. Taking into consideration the fact that the identity of the consumers and the organizers remained anonymous, the idea of an approval from the Ethics Committee of Babes-Bolyai University was not considered mandatory.

## **Results and discussions**

From the four evaluated tourism organizers, one was only involved in national religious voyages; one had solely international activities, while the other two had a mixed profile, organizing both national and international voyages.

Regarding the number of religious voyages that were organized (Figure 1.), a number of 24 was mentioned. The results show that half of them were towards national destinations, and the other half were focused on international destinations (Israel, Republic of Moldavia, Ukraine, and Poland).

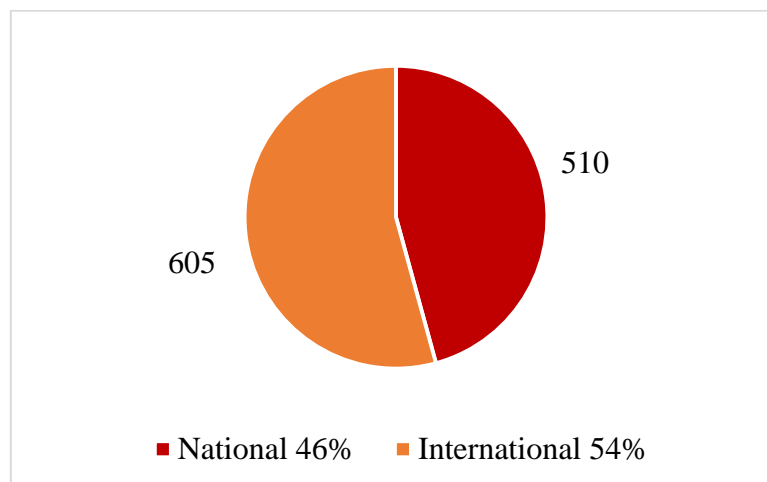




**Figure 1. Number of religious voyages (National vs. International)**

Source: authors' calculation

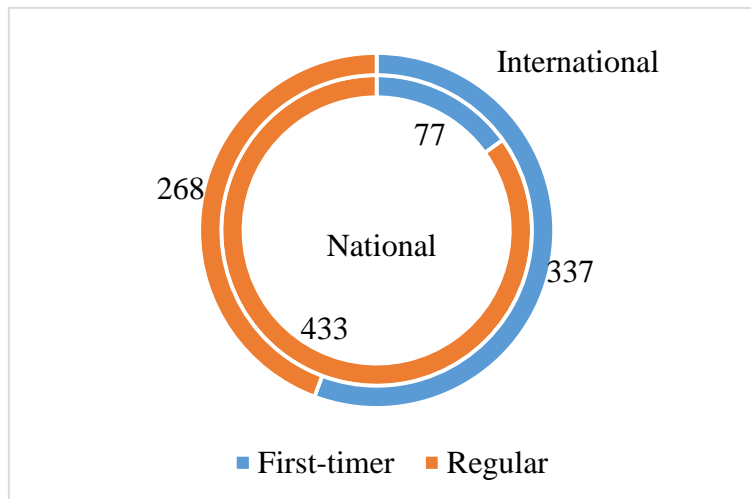
The number of participants (Figure 2.) was higher for international destinations (605 participants) than for national ones (510 participants). One possible reason is that international trips require better organizing skills, a more laborious planning and work, including reservations for plane tickets, visa issues, legal border crossing for minor citizens, currency, and other such issues. Another aspect that must be mentioned is that in Romania, a national religious destination is usually at a short distance (tens of kilometers, rarely hundreds), therefore those who desire such an experience mostly use their personal car, as it is the easiest way.



**Figure 2. Number of participants**

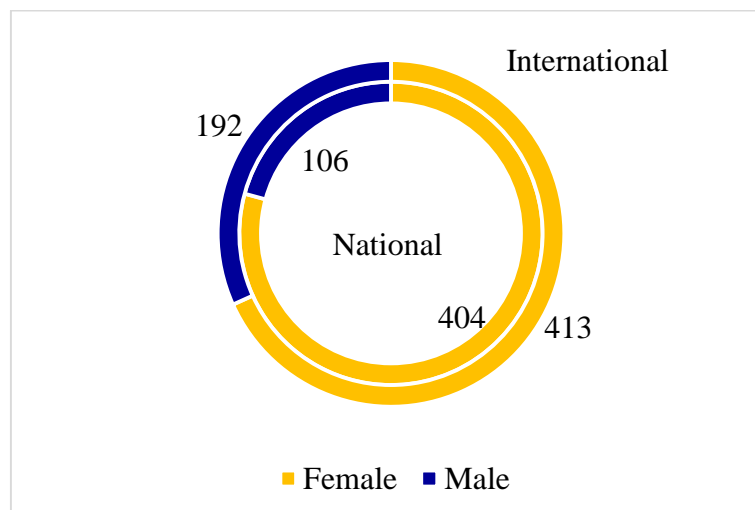
Source: authors' calculation

Regarding the profile of consumers, from the Figure 3, it can be observed that the majority of them are regular consumers. Considering the national voyages, 85% of the participants are at their second trip or more, and only 15% of them are first-timers. The percentage of the regular consumers is surprisingly high at international voyages too (44%). A possible explanation is that foreign destinations are in different countries, and some of the participants visited twice Israel.



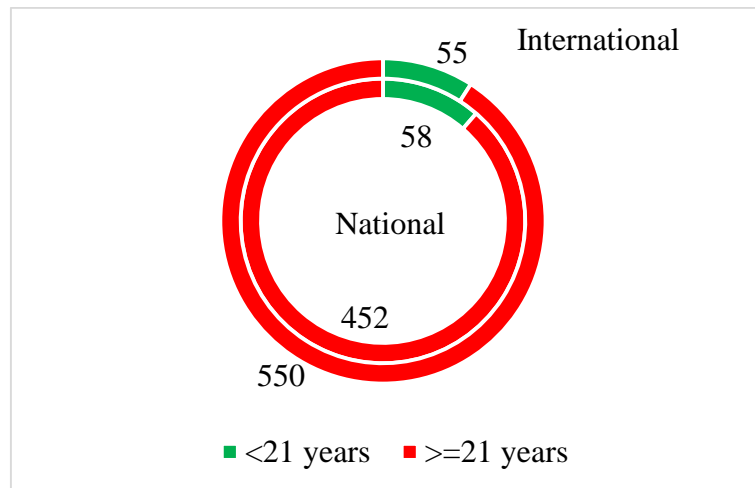
**Figure 3. Profile of consumers (first-timers vs. regular)**  
Source: authors' calculation

Regarding the gender distribution (Figure 4.), the results show that, the main consumers are females (817). They represent 79% of the total group at national level and 68% at international one. This is in accordance with the general religious phenomena and with the fact that the majority of church services attendants are females.



**Figure 4. Gender of participants**  
Source: authors' calculation

Taking into consideration the age of participants (Figure 5.), the results show that only 11% in national voyages and 9% in international ones are under 21 years old. While for foreign destinations some objective explanations may be found (price, legal issues regarding the visas or border crossing for under 18 years old citizens, the potential danger of traveling in a different state), the small dimension of the young people group in national religious voyages is a surprise. One possible explanation might be the fact that none of the organizers applied communication strategies adapted to young people (on-line, Facebook, etc.). Furthermore, none of the groups was an exclusive young people group, and none of the destinations was selected as a young people target destination.



**Figure 5. Age of participants (under 21)**

Source: authors' calculation

## Conclusions

Young people perceive Religiosity as a way of personal development. Religious tourism might be one of the most convenient, cheapest, easiest and efficient practices to reach personal fulfillment. This study revealed that consumers are highly satisfied and willing to rejoin such groups. However, the presence of young consumers is a reduced one, significantly below the European average.

In order to increase the religious tourism consumption in young generation, a new segmentation strategy should be applied. The destinations should be chosen by taking into consideration the specific needs and wishes of young consumers. In order to promote the potential products should be used on-line reality/media and the idea of organizing groups exclusively for young people would allow them to socialize and behave in more natural ways.

## References

1. Abdel-Khalek, A. M. (2006), "Happiness, health, and religiosity: Significant relations." *Mental Health, Religion & Culture*, Vol. 9 No 1, pp. 85-97.
2. Abu, H.O., Ulbricht, C., Ding, E. et al. (2018), "Association of religiosity and spirituality with quality of life in patients with cardiovascular disease: a systematic review", *Qual Life Res*, available at:  
- <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11136-018-1906-4> (accessed on September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018)
3. Blom, T., Nilsson, M. and Santos Solla, X. (2007), "Pilgrimage or Sacred Tourism? A Modern Phenomenon with Historical Roots, with Examples from Fatima and Santiago de Compostela", *Revista Turismo & Desenvolvimento*, No.9, pp. 71-86.
4. Borza, H. Cosma, S. (in press - 2018) "Religiosity – a Marketing Perspective", *The USV Annals of Economics and Public Administration*
5. Casanova J (2006) "Religion, European secular identities, and European integration." In: Byrnes TA and Katzenstein PJ (eds), *Religion in an expanding Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 65-92
6. Griffin, K. and Raj, R. Dr. (2017) "The Importance of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage: reflecting on definitions, motives and data," *International Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage*: Vol. 5: Iss. 3, Article 2, available at:  
- <https://arrow.dit.ie/ijrtp/vol5/iss3/2> (accessed on September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018)
7. Nicolaides, A. (2016) "Marian Tourism: Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic pilgrimage", *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure* Vol. 5 (4), available at

- [http://www.ajhtl.com/uploads/7/1/6/3/7163688/article\\_6\\_vol\\_5\\_\\_4\\_.pdf](http://www.ajhtl.com/uploads/7/1/6/3/7163688/article_6_vol_5__4_.pdf) (accessed on August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2018)
- 8. Poltronieri G, Codina N, and Pestana JV (2014) Conformidad e identidad en el turismo cultural de Barcelona: El caso de la Basilica de la Sagrada Família [Conformance and identity in cultural tourism in Barcelona: the case of the Sagrada Família Basilica]. In: Gomez E (ed.), proceedings of the XII Congress of Environmental Psychology. Barcelona, Catalonia: University of Barcelona (UB): 88-91
- 9. Radisavljević Ćiparizović, D. (2015) "Pilgrimage in the 21ST Century: Case Studies Three Sanctuaries in Serbia", *Religija i tolerancija*, Vol. XIII, No. 24, pp. 331-348.
- 10. Teodorescu, C. et al. (2017) "The Religious - Cultural Tourism Profile of the Counties in the Region of Oltenia – Romania", available at
  - <http://www.quaestus.ro/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/Camelia-TEODORESCU-Laurentiu-Stefan-SZEMKOVICES.pdf> (accessed on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018)
- 11. Terzidou, M. et al. (2017), "Religiousness as tourist performances: A case study of Greek Orthodox pilgrimage", *Annals of Tourism Research* No. 66, pp. 116–129.
- 12. Tomljenović, R., Dukić, L. (2017), "Religious Tourism – From a Tourism Product to an Agent of Societal Transformation", available at
  - <https://bib.irb.hr/datoteka/902067.1-8.pdf> (accessed on August 16<sup>th</sup>, 2018)
- 13. <http://www.pewforum.org/2015/05/12/americas-changing-religious-landscape/> (accessed on September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2018)
- 14. <http://www.tourismandmore.com/tidbits/the-importance-of-the-religious-tourism-market/> (accessed on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018)
- 15. <https://www.positive.news/lifestyle/travel/prisoners-pilgrims-teenagers-walk-life/> (accessed on September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018)
- 16. <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/commentandblogs/2017/06/20/want-to-get-young-people-involved-in-the-church-take-them-on-a-pilgrimage/> (accessed on September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018)
- 17. [https://books.google.ro/books?id=Koe7zfgOFu4C&pg=PA5&hl=ro&source=gbs\\_toc\\_r&cad=3#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.ro/books?id=Koe7zfgOFu4C&pg=PA5&hl=ro&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=3#v=onepage&q&f=false) (accessed on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018)
- 18. <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistical-atlas/gis/viewer/?year=&chapter=10&ch=C02,ITS,C10&mids=BKGCNT,C10M01&o=1,1&center=50.03696,19.9883,3&> (accessed on September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018)
- 19. <https://www.romania-insider.com/religious-romania-churches-and-monasteries-that-attract-the-largest-crowds-of-pilgrims-every-year/> (accessed on September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018)
- 20. <http://mfa.gov.il/MFA/PressRoom/2014/Pages/Christian-tourism-to-Israel-2013.aspx> (accessed on September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018)
- 21. [https://books.google.ro/books?id=w4i8BAAQBAJ&pg=PA15&hl=ro&source=gbs\\_toc\\_r&cad=3#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.ro/books?id=w4i8BAAQBAJ&pg=PA15&hl=ro&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=3#v=onepage&q&f=false) (accessed on September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2018)
- 22. <https://www.jpost.com/Christian-News/Record-breaking-20-percent-increase-in-Christmas-pilgrims-to-Israel-expected-518584> (accessed on September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018)
- 23. <https://www.cbi.eu/market-information/tourism/religious-tourism/> (accessed on September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018)
- 24. <https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/portal/desktop/en/opportunities/h2020/to-pics/cult-coop-05-2017.html> (accessed on August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018)

# **PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS DIGITALIZATION. AN EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRY CASE STUDY**

**Ionuț-Călin Căzan, PhD Student  
Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania**

## **Abstract**

*The aim of this article is to present the way public institutions and authorities are implementing digitalization, how it was developed lately and what is its impact over the entrepreneurial initiatives, in an Eastern European country, in Romania. Digitalization is one of the hottest topics nowadays, due to the large number of businesses which migrate from a traditional business model to a digital one, but also because of the opportunities the Internet offers to both public and private entities to reinvent themselves. When businesses are going online, they need as well the local government and public authorities to be there to offer a facile means of communication and cooperation. Moreover, an important part of digitalization is represented by social media networks, thus the communication strategy and the way of interaction between authorities, local government, investors and citizens are strongly important factors in digitalization implementation. Furthermore, this process is increasing operations efficiency, transparency, interaction, and, as well, the citizens and investors satisfaction. Implementing a digital ecosystem could lead to bureaucracy reduction, develop a collective decision-making mechanism and build trust among entrepreneur, investors and government. Social media channels are able to reduce political exclusion, engage more young people, and drive innovation through crowd-sourcing and make governments understanding people's needs and actions. Digitalization and social media presence is not anymore just an option, but they are actually becoming a trend in the world, having impact on citizens' life, entrepreneurs and businesses, as well, on public institutions or governments.*

**Key words:** digitalization, public institutions, e-government, social media

**JEL Classification:** M31

## **Introduction**

Social media is becoming part of more and more users day by day, due to the facile access to technology and the lowest cost of the Internet. Facebook is one of the most popular social networks, with more than 2.13 billion monthly active users, from all over the world.

Social media is considered a new way of interaction between people, and, as well, a new mean of communication. It is also challenging existing customer service, marketing and promotional processes throughout the tourism sector. (Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014)

Fotis, Rossides, and Buhalis(2010) suggested that that the presence of social media seems to have caused an increasing mistrust for traditional marketing tactics, as well as diminishing the effect of traditional mass media. Although social media is not a panacea, it is an effective marketing channel able to be wisely used in integrated communications and marketing of tourism services (Sotiriadis & van Zyl, 2013).

The aim of this article is to present the way public institutions and authorities are implementing digitalization, how it was developed lately and what is its impact over the entrepreneurial initiatives, in an Eastern European country, in Romania.

## **Literature review**

The use of Internet and other information communication technologies is leading to a new era for the global economy. Social media continues to grow and increasingly influence many social and economic aspects of the tourism and hospitality industry. Social media is fundamentally changing the way travelers and tourists search, find, read and trust, as well as collaboratively produce information about tourism suppliers and tourism destinations. Social media is also challenging existing customer service, marketing and promotional processes throughout the tourism sector, and providing new ways for tourism organizations to reengineer and implement their business models and operations, such as new services development, marketing, networking and knowledge management (Zeng & Gerritsen, 2014).

Social media can be defined as “a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content” (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010). User-generated Content (UGC) comprises a variety of different types of content (e.g. text, pictures, audio, and video) that is published in some context, arises from a certain amount of creative effort, and is created outside professional routines and practices (OECD 2007).

There has been a debate whether or not UGC can be trusted. While most researches confirmed its trustworthiness, several studies were skeptical, proposing caveats such as: that trusting such electronic word of mouth relies on source–receiver relationships, channel variety and presentation of contents, opportunities for information solicitation, message retention capabilities, and content provider motivations for disclosure (Tham, 2013).

From the perspective of technology, some issues associated with the innovation potential of social media platforms have been raised. As for any other media, language is obviously a constraint on direct information sharing between social media users. In an English-dominated world, tourists and tourism practitioners from non-English language countries are at a disadvantage in the use of social media in either international travel planning or international marketing (Hsu, 2012). Multiple language platforms or websites for tourism participants might be beneficial for both supply and demand. On the other hand, current product search engines fail to effectively leverage information created across diverse social media platforms. This requires research on how to design and innovate in IT or website design, to adapt data management to evolving social media development and to share information across different media sources (Ghose et al., 2012).

Measuring the effectiveness or success of organizations’ social media activities is of increasing importance to make sure that scarce resources are allocated in the most productive way. In fact the successful management of any marketing communication instrument requires the measurement of meaningful key performance indicators (KPIs)—what you cannot measure, you cannot manage. In contrast to more traditional media, social media resemble living, interrelated and interactive organisms, which are out of the control of organizations (Peters et al. 2013).

In Romania, there are a total of 41 counties, along with the municipality of Bucharest, constitute the official administrative divisions of Romania. They represent the country's NUTS-3 (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics – Level 3) statistical subdivisions within the European Union and each of them serves as the local level of government within its borders. Most counties are named after a major river, while some are named after notable cities within them, such as the county seat. The “prefect” and his administration have executive prerogatives within the county limits, while limited legislative powers are assigned to a County Council elected every four years during local elections. County Council has attributions such as the elaboration of socio-economic development strategy, public services, and establishing taxes and duties. (Counties of Romania – Wikipedia, 2018)

Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Romania (CCIR) is a non-governmental, public-interest organisation meant to promote Romanian trade and industries, both at home and abroad, and to represent the interests of Romanian traders before the domestic authorities and in their relations with specialized foreign organisations. Its major goal-mission is “A Thriving Business Community”. (ENSR, 2018)

CCIR is the strongest business environment organization in Romania bringing together the whole network of 42 county Chambers of Commerce and industry, as well as other bilateral chambers of commerce, some branch professional associations and companies. (ENSR, 2018)

CCIR has the expertise, experience, national and international connections to be able to offer a wide range of services for business performance: organizing economic missions, training programs, seminars or debates, providing valuable information from its data-bases, general economic information, economic and statistics studies. (ENSR, 2018)

## Methodology and results

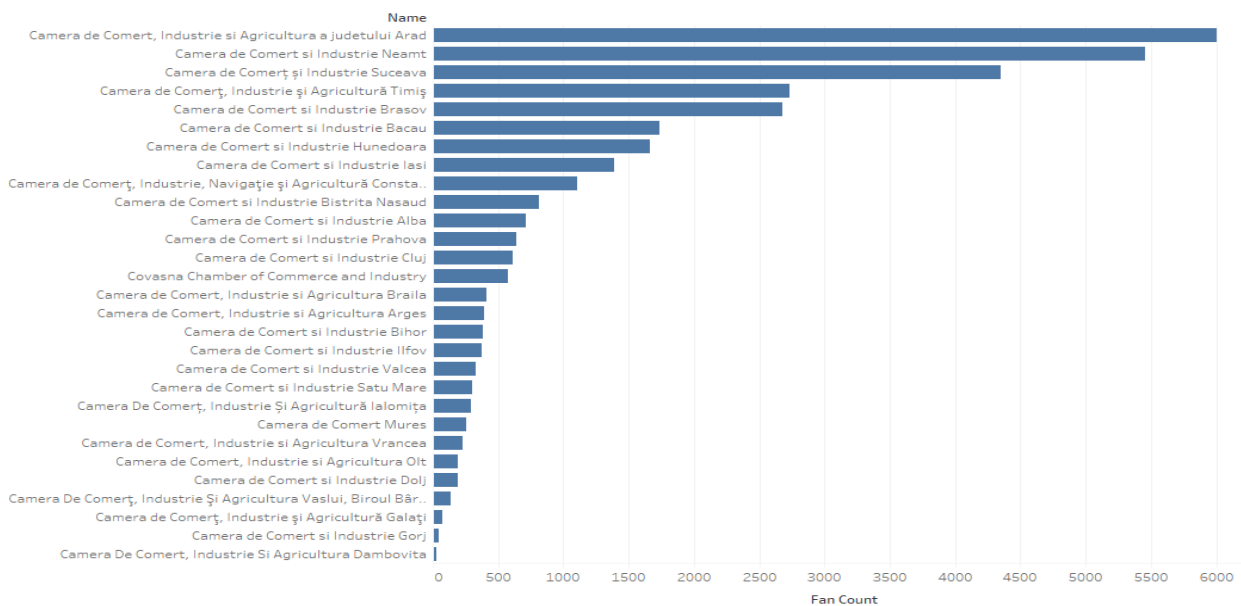
The research focused on the mining of Facebook posts of Romania County Councils and Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Romania. In total 35000 posts were centralized and analyzed within software applications. Content analysis represented a successful way of understanding the actual trends promoted on social media by the two of the most important institutions and organizations. This paper is constructed on a quantitative approach, the data set being analyzed based on terms frequency and Jaccard coefficient. The data was mined from Facebook using Facepager application, was stored in an Excel file and was processed with KH Coder, being generated a co-occurrence network and a multidimensional scaling(MDS).

The co-occurrence network is a common technique in quantitative content analysis field, this being a very common technique for analyzing media messages (Danowski, J. A., 1993).

KH Coder uses Jaccard coefficient to calculate strength of co-occurrence and the top 60 strongest co-occurrences are drawn as network edges. Jaccard similarity coefficient is suitable sufficiently to be employed in the word similarity measurement. In efficiency measurement, the program performance can deal appropriately with high stability when failure and mistake spelling occurred. (Niwattanakul et al., 2013)

Multidimensional scaling is a means of visualizing the level of similarity of individual cases of a dataset. (Multidimensional Scaling - Wikipedia, 2018)

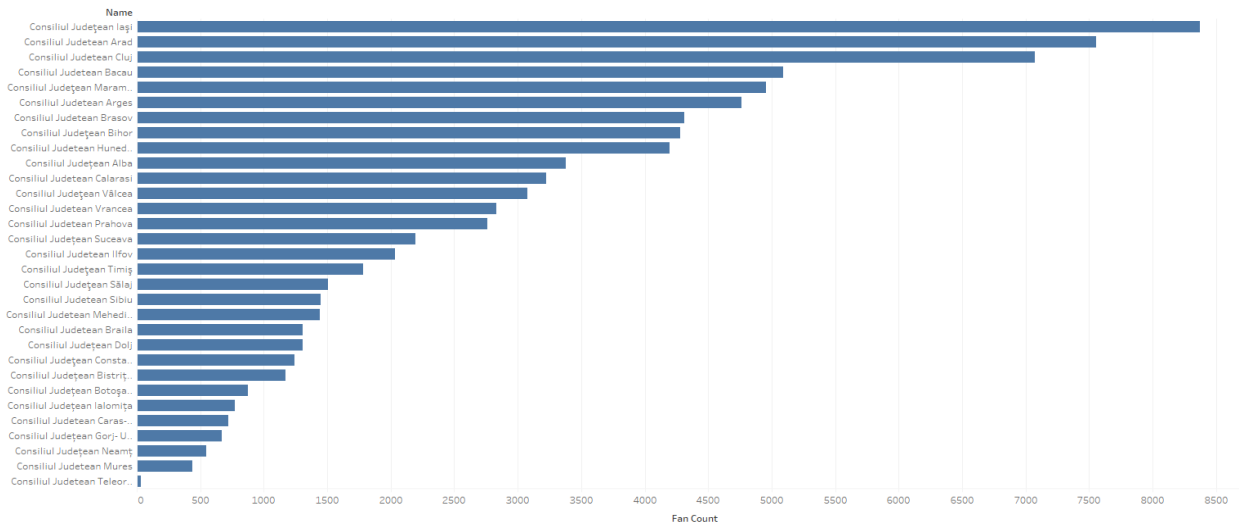
Sheet 1



Sum of Fan Count for each Name.

Fig. 1. Number of followers for Chamber of Commerce Pages

### CJfollowers

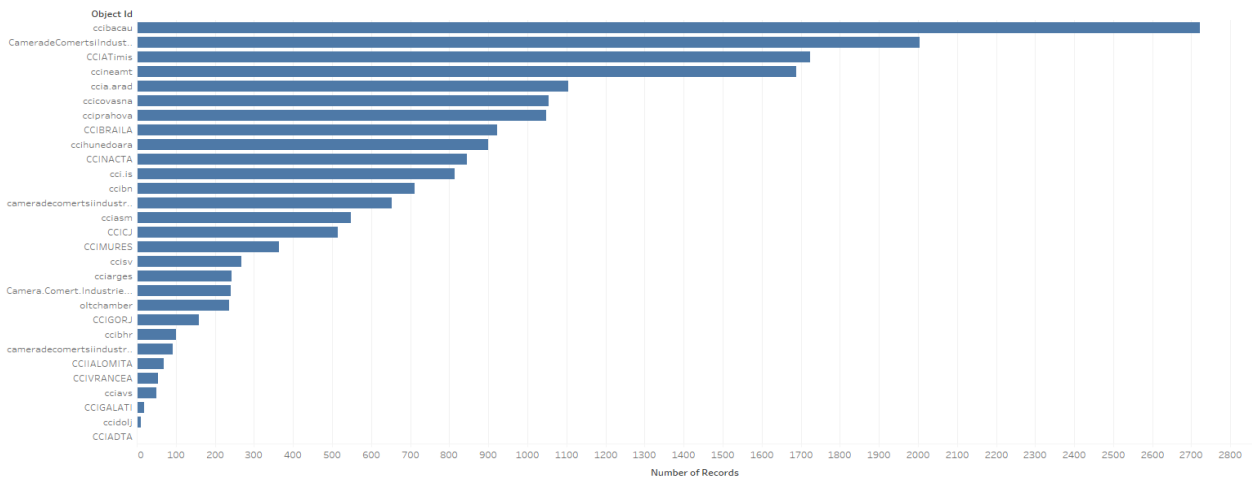


Sum of Fan Count for each Name.

Fig. 2. Number of followers for County Councils Pages

The chart from Fig.1 and Fig.2 represent the number of followers for both institutions, County Councils and Chamber of Commerce Facebook pages. This number is relevant because these institutions are targeting local communities, so they could reach a high fan base, which could vary as well from county to county, but in this situation there is no correlation between their number of followers and the size of county in terms of citizen or numbers of companies.

### Posts/institution

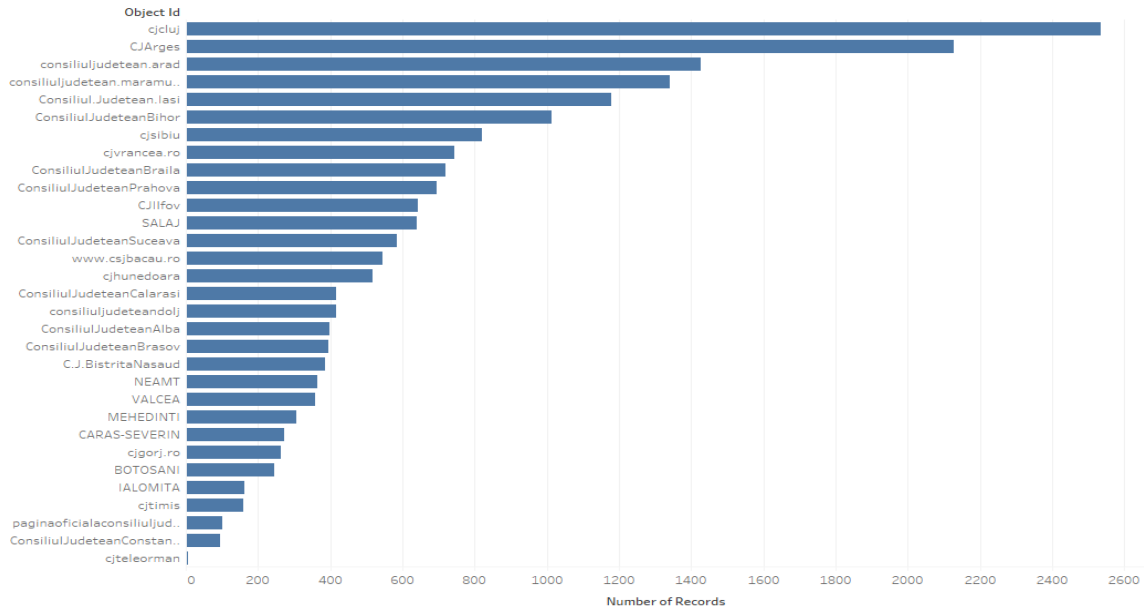


Sum of Number of Records for each Object Id.

Fig. 3. Number of posts for Chamber of Commerce Pages



### Posts/institution

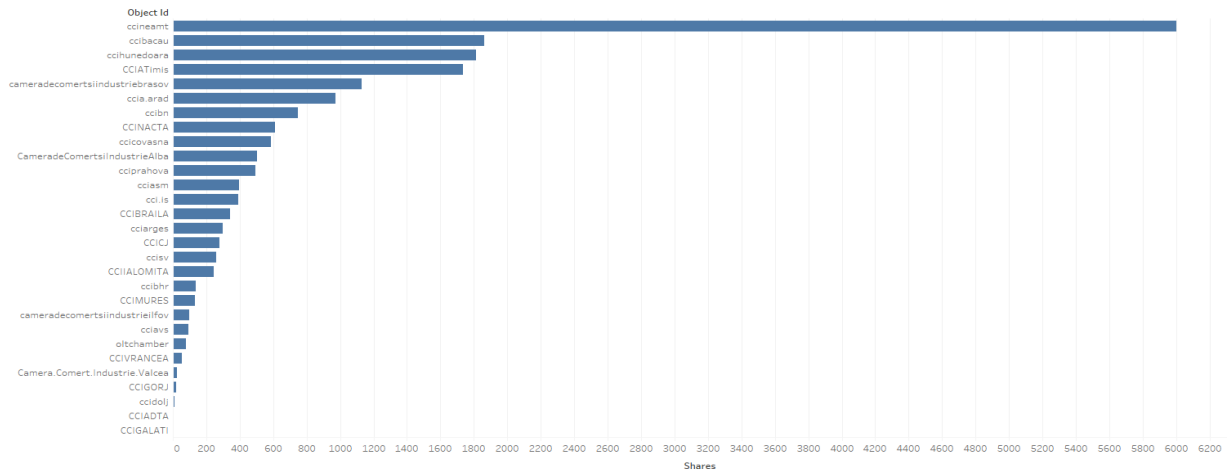


Sum of Number of Records for each Object Id.

Fig. 4. Number of posts for County Councils Pages

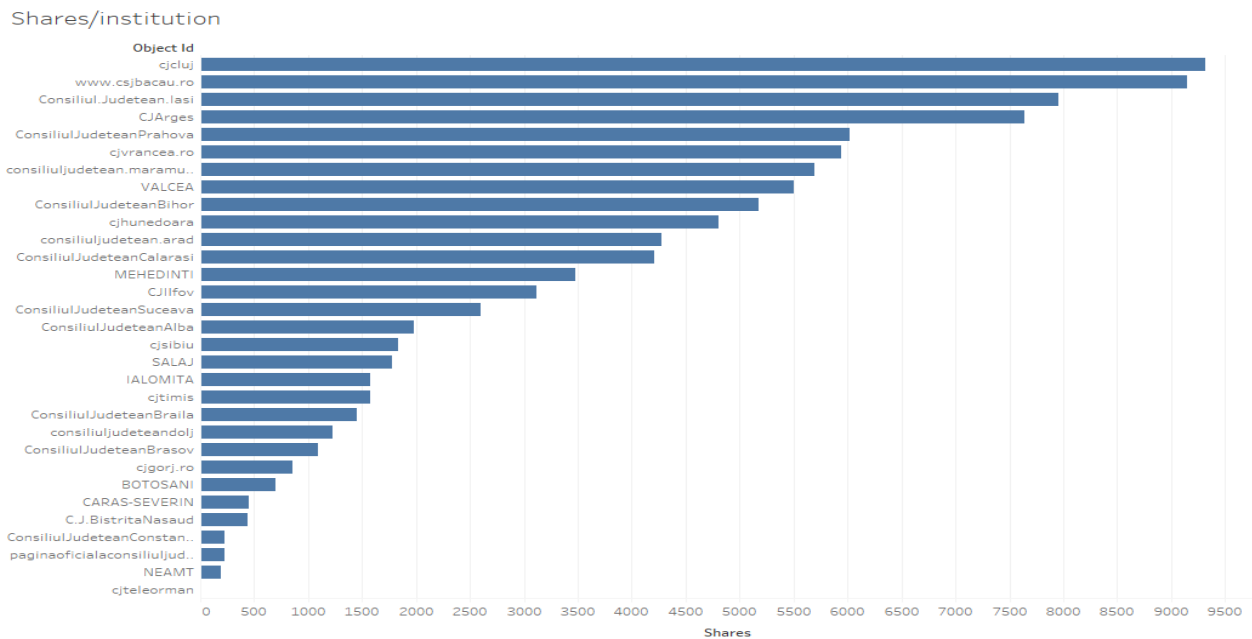
The chart from Fig.3 and Fig.4 represent the number of posts for both institutions, County Councils and Chamber of Commerce Facebook pages. This number is relevant because it represents the information which is delivered by these institutions to their user base and here are also discrepancies from an institution to the other and from county to county.

### Shares/institution



Sum of Shares for each Object Id.

Fig. 5. Number of shares for Chamber of Commerce Pages



Sum of Shares for each Object Id.

Fig. 6. Number of shares for County Councils Pages

The chart from Fig.5 and Fig.6 represent the number of shares for both institutions, County Councils and Chamber of Commerce Facebook pages. This number is relevant because it represents the engagement of their user base with these pages and here are big differences between counties but as well between these institutions.

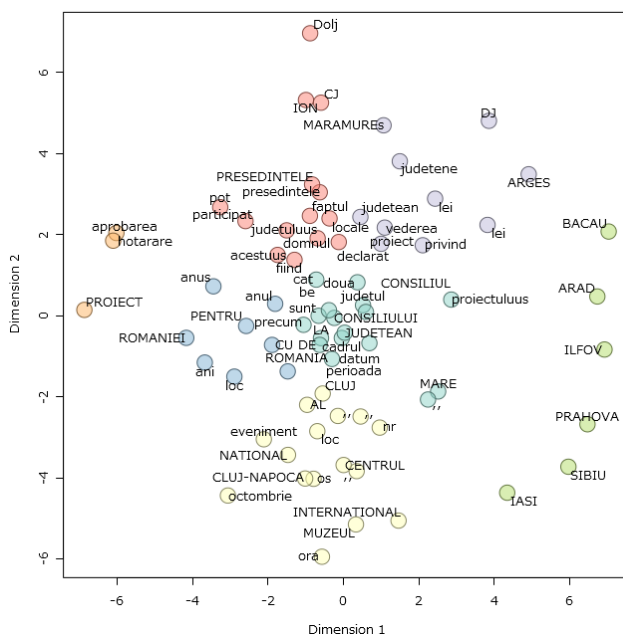


Fig. 7. Co-occurrence network

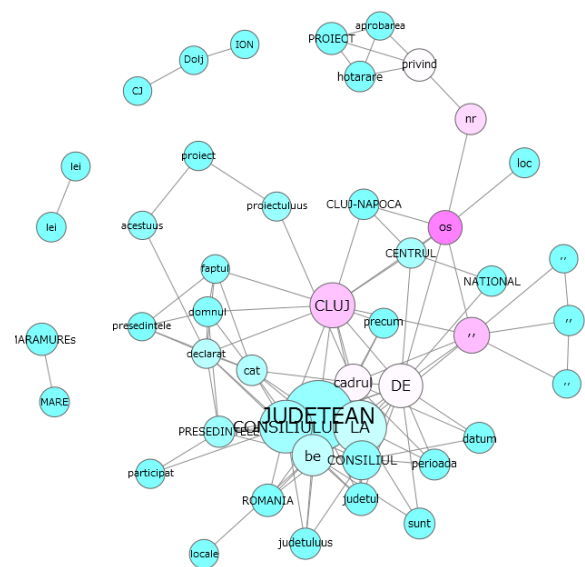


Fig. 8. MDS

## Conclusions

In this paper, we analyze what are promoting on social media, two of the most important institutions and organizations in Romania, County Councils and Chamber of Commerce of Romania. Through analyzing more than 35000 posts on Facebook from 31 County Councils Facebook pages and 29 Chamber of Commerce Facebook pages, it could be said that there is a lack of patterns on what they are posting and a lack of a unitary strategy. There is no correlation between the size of the county and the number of

followers or shares. Moreover, these institutions and organizations are using their Facebook pages just to promote their presidents or their activities such as cultural events or fairs, but they are not looking for feedback and engagement from the citizens or other organizations, institutions or authorities. Furthermore, even if their attributions are related with socio-economic development and investments, there is almost no information regarding this field of interest presented on their pages.

The limitations of this research are represented by the uniqueness of this case study regarding just two of the major institutions and organizations presented on Facebook, but it could be extended to more organization and, as well, to more social networks, and at the same time social media sources could represent a huge data potential.

## References

1. Counties of Romania - Wikipedia. Retrieved from Wikipedia: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Counties\\_of\\_Romania](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Counties_of_Romania) on 20th of April 2018
2. Danowski, J. A., 1993, "Network analysis of message content," W. D. Richards Jr. & G. A. Barnett eds., Progress in communication sciences IV, Norwood, NJ: Ablex 197-221
3. ENSR - European Network for Social and Economic Research. Retrieved from <http://www.ensr.eu/chamber-of-commerce-and-industry-of-romania/> on 20<sup>th</sup> of April 2018
4. Fotis, J., Rossides, N., & Buhalis, D. (2010). Social media impact on leisure travel: The case of the Russian market and the challenges for the Cyprus tourism industry. Paper presented at the 3rd annual Euromed conference of the Euromed Academy of Business: Business developments across countries and cultures, Nov 04–05, 2010. Nicosia, Cyprus: Univ Nicosia.
5. Ghose, A., Ipeirotis, P. G., & Li, B. (2012). Designing ranking systems for hotels on travel search engines by mining user-generated and crowdsourced content. *Marketing Science*, 31(3), 493–520.
6. Hsu, Y. -L. (2012). Facebook as international eMarketing strategy of Taiwan hotels. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 31(3), 972–980.
7. Kaplan, A.M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons*, 53(1), 61.
8. Multidimensional Scaling - Wikipedia. (2018, April 1). Retrieved from Wikipedia: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Multidimensional\\_scaling](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Multidimensional_scaling) on 20th of April 2018
9. Niwattanakul, Suphakit & Singthongchai, Jatsada & Naenudorn, Ekkachai & Wanapu, Supachanun. (2013). Using of Jaccard Coefficient for Keywords Similarity,
10. OECD (2007) Participative web and user-created content: web 2.0, wikis and social networking
11. Peters K, Chen Y, Kaplan AM, Ognibeni B, Pauwels K (2013) Social media metrics—a framework and guidelines for managing social media. *J Interact Mark* 27(4):281–298
12. Sotiriadis, M.D., & van Zyl, C. (2013). Electronic word-of-mouth and online reviews in tourism services: The use of Twitter by tourists. *Electronic Commerce Research*, 13(1), 103–124
13. Tham, A. G. J. (2013). Social media in destination choice: Distinctive electronic word-of-mouth dimensions. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 30(1/2), 144.
14. Zeng, B., & Gerritsen, R. (2014). What do we know about social media in tourism? A review. *Tourism Management Perspectives*.