

Statistics – Reference Point in the Analysis of the Tourism Phenomenon

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Abstract: Statistics represent an essential element of the information system and occupies a special place in the information supply regarding the status and trends of country's economic, social, demographic and tourism development. The transformations of the global economy driven by the liberalization of the global trade and modern information technologies, lead to a globalization, where the notion of national statistical territory leaves gradually, place to the regional or global statistical area.

This phenomenon is more pronounced in the European Union, where accelerated mergers between groups of countries, the removal of control on internal trade (goods, capital, services and people), settlement of a single currency are essential to harmonize the concepts and statistical standards in order to obtain a unique statistical language. Also, all these lead to the development of statistics that capture the transactions between economic and social groups within the European Union, rather than to statistics limited geographically to national level.

Romanian statistical system must keep pace with these developments and to participate effectively in Europe and globally, adapting its concepts and standards. Under the newly created circumstances, especially those for integration into Europe and expanding the international cooperation, the role of statistics as a leading producer of information becomes increasingly important.

The interest of investors in Romanian tourism is greater and greater, but a huge obstacle in the way of launching the investment projects is the insufficiency of statistics in this field, which hinder a lot the completion of the feasibility studies and of the investment projects. How many foreigners are visiting Romania for business and how many for pleasure? What was the value of the private investments in Poiana Brasov last year or in any other tourist resort in our country? What was the average expense of a foreign tourist in resort X? There is not exact information, only estimations.

“Romanian tourism is suffering from an acute lack of statistics, and those which exist are doubtful and are not available on time”, and “the investments have been hindered by the fact that we have not had sufficient statistical data. I consider

there should exist a department within the Ministry of Tourism which should deal mainly with this problem, declare more and more professionals from Romanian tourism. Until last year, the only existing data regarding the evolution of the Romanian tourism were the ones published by the National Institute of Statistics (NIS). The publishing frequency of these data – every trimester – is too small for the private sector, which needs monthly information. Moreover, the majority of the business people from the industry do not use this information because they do not believe in it. “Even now statistical data are collected, but it would be extremely interesting to check the accuracy of these data through polls, data which is insufficient anyway”, thinks the president of the hotel consultancy company Peacock Management Consulting. The truth is probably somewhere in the middle in Romania ... that we need statistics it is obvious, and tourism and statistics are connected and lead to the desired quality information which statistics has used us with.

Key-Words: tourism, statistics, information, prognosis, poll.

1 Introduction

Even if the human kind is confronting with a financial crisis with a global effect and with a rise of the oil price, the World Organization of Tourism (WOT) remains confident in relation with the perspectives of the tourism industry during this year. The statistics shows that the number of tourists at world level will continue to grow in 2010, after the record of last year. The people prefer to spend money on travels, rather than on other types of expenses, as suggested by the international estimations. Francesco Frangialli, the general secretary of WOT and a good friend of Romania, during the general reunion from Madrid, emphasized the fact that the prognoses for last year were exceeded by the recorded reality. In 2010 the record of 898 millions of tourists was recorded, increasing with 6,2% in comparison with 2009. The numbers are higher than the initial estimations of the organization which hoped a rise of 4% of the world number of tourists. During that period, Europe recorded a percentage of 4,2%, but it holds the first place with 480,1 millions of visitors. The Asia-Pacific region rose with 10,2%, America with 4,7%, while the African continent rose with 7,9%. The highest rise was recorded in the Middle East, with a lead of 13,4% in the number of tourists, and a total of 46,4 millions of visitors. The first two destinations in the world remained France and Spain in 2010 as well, and from the available data we understand that Turkey is coming close to the 5th place.

“The tourism sector has demonstrated once again the resistance and the ability to adapt, and the financial crisis has not had a sufficient impact for its effects to be visible. We predict that the number of tourists will continue to rise this year, although the rhythm will not be as high as 2009. We do not estimate a reduction this year, except for the situation of a profound recession in the United States. Our organization maintains also its estimations related to the rise of the number of tourists to 1,1 billions in 2010 and 1,6 billions in 2020” – declares F. Frangialli, the general secretary of WOT.

2 Problem Formulation

The WOT experts think that the holidays abroad have become a mass sociological phenomenon. They point out the consolidation of a new trend, which consists of the ability of the people to reduce other expenses or their own savings in favour of travelling.

The specialists and the tourism operators say that the effects of the economy crisis will be felt in this field in the summer of 2010. Thus, the flux of tourists will grow with approximately 25%, but the holiday offers will be much shorter.

The ones who prefer the exotic trips will choose holidays of maximum 7 nights long, rather than 13 or 14 days as they used to.

Also, they predict stagnation or even a reduction of the number of tourists at the Black Sea Riviera. This can happen especially because of the lack of internal advertising of the Romanian seaside, not necessarily because of the crisis.

The most recent statistics published by the tourist marketing Society in Berlin confirm the fact that the number of visitors in the European big cities has decreased, as a consequence of the financial crisis. Even if the demand within the international tourism rose with 5% in the first half of the year 2009, in comparison with the same period of the previous year, the financial crisis considerably reduced the travels for personal interest, as well as the business ones. The most affected locations are the European metropolises, and the negative effects in this field will be felt at the end of the year and at the beginning of 2010, according to the analyses of World Organization of Tourism.

The German capital has not been spared either, and it remains one of the most attractive destinations in Europe – in the third place after Paris and London – and also one of the most profitable ones. The tourist marketing Society from Berlin has published the most recent statistics which show that in comparison with the rise in the number of tourists of 10% per year at the beginning of the decade, in 2009 only 2,5% more tourists came to Berlin.

The pockets of the American travellers have been

emptied by the financial crisis, because in the summer of this year, the percentage of their arrivals in Berlin decreased with over 13,6%. Also during the same period, the number of British tourists decreased with over 6%. The positive balance of 2,5% is due to the rise of tourist arrivals from Poland and Russia, of 43%, respective 35%.

Tourism in Berlin has been less affected by the financial crisis than other European capitals, where the prices of the accommodation are significantly higher than in the German metropolis. The British Institute of Statistics for instance predicts a total reduction in the number of tourists with 2,7% in 2010. Also, the number of accommodation units in Paris has been reduced with 2,1% during the summer of this year, announced the Economic and Statistics Observer of Parisian tourism.

However, in Berlin, from a population of 3,4 millions of inhabitants, over 250000 work in tourism, this branch representing a significant part of the economy of the capital. In 2009, tourists brought 8,5 billions of Euros to Berlin.

The effects of the financial crisis on the Romanian tourism are felt differently by the tourism operators. The prices for the holidays will grow, but at the same time it has been estimated an increase in the sales for this year with 20%.

At the same time, “the prices will grow with 5-10% internally, as well as externally, because of the rise in the utilities’ prices, and because of the international economy crisis. The flux of Romanian tourists will not be significantly affected by the global financial crisis. Probably, there will be a reduction of the demand” declared the National Association of Travel Agencies (NATA).

According to NATA, the most demanded destinations in Romania, with holidays bought through the travel agencies, are Prahova Valley, Predeal and Poiana Brasov. Other destinations are Bran-Moeciu, Bucovina and Maramures. The Romanians are going to other mountainous resorts, less popular, but attractive as regions or services: Borsa, Vatra Dornei and Albac – Arieseni. There is a certain interest for the treatment resorts from Sovata, Covasna, Baile Herculane and Baile Felix.

Regarding the journeys abroad, a rise of minimum 20% in comparison with 2009 is estimated, announces NATA. Approximately 50000 tourists will choose foreign destinations from travel agencies. The winter destinations chosen by Romanian tourists are Austria, Bulgaria, Switzerland, Italy, France, Slovenia, Slovakia, and Finland with Laponia. Other locations preferred by the Romanians are the countries around the Mediterranean Sea: Egypt, Greece, Turkey, Tunisia, Cyprus, and Malta. There are requests for holidays in the big cities of Europe: Paris, Barcelona, Wien, Prague, Athens, Lisbon, and Budapest. The ones who want to shop go to Austria, Italy, Dubai, Greece or Turkey.

The World Organization of Tourism (WOT) has announced that the effects of the financial crisis relaxed the growth of international tourism to 2% in 2009, and for 2010 they estimate that this percentage could maintain at the most.

The general secretary of WOT, Geoffrey Lipman, has declared that the tourism industry is passing through one of the most severe crashes in history, after the registered growths of the last 4 years: thus, at a world level, in 2009 a number of 903 millions of tourists was recorded, increasing with 6,6% in comparison with 2008.

The OECD Tourism Committee recognizes the major role of statistics and economic information in the development of more effective tourism policies at national, regional and local levels. In the same manner, tourism statistics represent a useful tool to support decision-making in business and in the private sector.

Two key areas of priority have been identified:

- the development of new methodologies, and
- the promotion of a better use of statistics for business and policy. Incidentally, a majority of the work of the Tourism Committee involves a statistic component.

In this field, the Tourism Committee closely cooperates with other international organizations. Together with Eurostat (Statistical Office of the European Communities), the OECD organizes a biennial Forum on Tourism Statistics and participates in the Eurostat Tourism Working Group. Furthermore, the OECD is an active member of the UNWTO Committee on Statistics and TSA. In 2009, the OECD established a partnership with the UNWTO for the organization of the 5th International Conference on Tourism Statistics.

International Forum on Tourism Statistics

Through the biennial International Forum on Tourism Statistics, the OECD and Eurostat provide key players in the private and public sector with a unique platform for the regular exchange of views and experiences on developments in tourism statistics.

The forum discusses major technical issues concerning the establishment of harmonized tourism statistics in an environment that strengthens co-operation between governments, the private sector, researchers, academics, OECD/EU member and non-member countries, and international organizations.

The OECD Tourism Committee played a lead role in the development of the TSA in co-operation with other international organisations and remains a major player in it's development. Latest documents on the TSA are available at the United Nations Statistics Division (Tourism Statistics).

The OECD Tourism Committee promotes better use of TSA data for business and policy analysis for the benefit of decision-makers in tourism, in both public and private sectors. Its aim is to contribute to a wider

dissemination of TSA-based economic and social analysis, as well as to the expansion of a “common perspective” on TSA usage.

The Tourism Committee study “Increasing the Use of TSA Data for Business and Policy” analyses the different uses of the TSA in OECD countries. The report includes key lessons to be shared and identifies the main difficulties in using the TSA. It also discussed specific policy recommendations in this area.

The biennial flagship publication OECD Tourism Trends and Policies includes key tourism statistics in OECD countries and selected non-member economies, providing a broad overview and interpretation of medium to long term tourism trends. This work aims to promote the better use of economic data for business and policy analysis.

The 2010 edition includes statistics for selected non-OECD countries: Brazil, Chile, China, Egypt, Estonia, India, Indonesia, Israel, Romania, Russia, Slovenia and South Africa. A specific chapter discusses the subject of the financial and economic crisis and tourism.

As hosts of the event, Turismo de Portugal and Statistics Portugal would like to welcome you to the **10th International Forum on Tourism Statistics 2010**,¹ which will be held in Lisbon, Portugal, from the 22 to 23 November, organized in partnership with OECD and Eurostat: an opportunity to get up to date with the most relevant work and knowledge in this area, to share experiences and best practices from all over the world, and discuss topics of great importance for developing Tourism Statistics in the forthcoming years.

The core themes for discussion on the Forum will be the following:

- *Statistical coverage of new trends in tourism*
- *Sustainable and competitive tourism*
- *Macroeconomic statistics on tourism*
- *How new technologies can inspire new data collection methodologies*
- *Measurement issues in tourism statistics and how to deal with them*

If in the beginning, the statistics research of Romanian tourism was focused only on the ability of accommodating tourists, following certain objectives like:

- the collection of annual data regarding the number of accommodating structures existing at the 31st of July, the number of existing rooms and places, the types of structures, the categories of classification, the tourist areas, the localities, counties and development regions;
- the completion of quality statistics regarding the ability to accommodate tourists at the 31st of July;

- the revaluation of the results from the statistics research by publishing them in the appropriate magazines.

3 Problem Solution

Currently, the **Statistics Department of the European Union (EUROSTAT)** asks through the Directive 95/57/EC and through the Decision 1999/35/CE of the Committee from the 9th of December 1998 (referring to the procedures of implementation of the Directive), to collect annual statistical data regarding the existing capacity of tourist accommodation.

The information referring to the existing capacity of tourist accommodation at the 31st of July is used in analysis and prognosis works regarding the tourism activity by the National Tourism Authority, the Research Institute for Tourism Development, by societies with tourism activities and by other users.

In the statistics field, NTA has continued the traditional cooperation with the internal institutions – the **National Institute for Statistics (NIS)** – to which it forwards the situation of the newly classified units, as well as international institutions: the World Organization of Tourism and the European Committee for Tourism – to which it forwards annual reports about the tourism situation in Romania, based on the statistics indicators received from NIS. From December 2006, NTA has transmitted regularly complete statistical data from the tourism industry field to the Committee for Tourism within the Organization for Cooperation and Economic Development (OCED), in order to elaborate the regular work “Perspectives of OCED Tourism”.

On the 17th of January 2007, the NATA hosted the first important meeting on this subject – a work meeting among the representatives of NIS, NIRTD (the National Institute of Research and Tourism Development) and of NATA.

The statistics are elaborated according to the European Directive 57/95. Any statistics is completed based on the order of the President of NIS. The research is comprehensive, like all the researches performed in tourism. If until 2007 only the accommodation units with at least 5 places were taken into account, from then on, all the accommodation structures have been taken into consideration. The poll is performed in 9500 homes found in all the regions of Romania.

NIS has performed new enquiries for 2010, widening the field of involvement of statistics into the tourism domain:

1. the measurement of tourist expenses of non-residents
2. the evaluation of tourist activities in the private accommodation structures

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<http://10thtourismstatisticsforum.ine.pt/xportal/xmain?xpid=10FTOUR&xpgid=10thforumtur&xlang=en>

3. the differentiation between tourists and international excursionists

4. the measurement of tourist expenses of resident excursionists

5. the measurement of the business tourism

The new enquiries offered by NIS will be necessary for the completion of the Satellite Account, the development of a policy in the field and the transmission of data to the World Organization of Tourism (WOT) and to Eurostat.

The main subject of the above mentioned meeting was how the statistical data could help defining the business plans or the marketing plans of the private operators.

One of the great problems is the doubling of the numbers. NIS questions many times the tour-operators as well, and detailers. The representatives of NATA have suggested that the association should make up a list of the main tour-operators (which can be 50, instead of 800-900 of questioned travel agencies), which can offer all the necessary information. NATA guarantees that these cover at least 70% of the market.

The NATA representatives consider that the data should be forwarded by the tour-operators for outgoing, by tour-operators and especially by the hotels for the internal tourism and by the hotels for the incoming.

The adjustment of tourism and of the forms of tourism to the contemporary metamorphoses is emphasised by a recent study, completed by Synovate in 11 countries around the world, which shows that the Romanians and the Bulgarians are fonder of shopping than the Americans or the Asians. Contrary to the common opinion, the westerners are not going shopping for relaxation, 46% of Romanians declare themselves sensitive to the psychological benefits of shopping, in comparison with only 20% of the Americans. What can the explanation be?

In luxury products shops, the clients are rarely agitated. Mainly observing, they ask for information, try on a watch or a perfume or a coat. Time seems to stop there. "In our shop clients come just for the sake of entering such a shop", says Bogdan Aanicai, representative of Micri Gold Jewellery, chain of shops selling watches and luxury jewellery.

The clients of such shops are not driven by the daily needs, but by the pleasure of buying objects which can make them feel good, by satisfying their aesthetic needs or by emphasizing their social status. The difference from going shopping daily is fundamental: if the terms "buying" and "shopping" have the same definition in the dictionary, the difference is that the first term refers to a need, and the second to a pleasure. Furthermore, shopping has become assimilated to a type of therapy, efficient against the indispositions and depressions of the modern man.

As we know, the phenomenon of "shopping therapy" has been treated in an ironic matter lately, in films or

books, but also studied using sociological instruments, in order to decide its dimensions. Of course, its origin lies in the West and in the USA, where the credit cards and the malls – modern temples of the consumers' society – have appeared, where the commerce is known as a form of entertainment among others. But things have changed, and the export of western culture towards Eastern Europe tends to move the weight centre of the phenomenon. While in the west the market has reached a certain level of saturation, the countries that have adopted the consumers' society later, rapidly recuperate the delay related to the appetite for shopping.

According to a study completed by the marketing research company Synovate, only 20% of the Americans are fond of shopping therapy, that is, only a little more than the Chinese (16%) or the Taiwanese (19%), while at the top of the list there are the Bulgarians (44%), the Romanians (42%) and the Serbians (39%). "This variety of attitudes is linked to the cultural differences", concludes the study. It is not news that Asians are economical, but the scenes from the supermarkets and the malls of nowadays could hardly be imagined 15 years ago, where the agglomeration and the volume of shops increase every year.

It is true, for east-Europeans the balance is in favour of the buying capacity, the Romanians are missing from the tops of nations who pay instalments at banks or from the ones of economical nations. For east-Europeans, the need for property is turned to objects of small value, rather than real estates or cars, for which very few have the money. Thus, the pleasure of shopping satisfies in our country through the quantity, while in USA or Western Europe the phenomenon started to reduce, the interest turning towards quality and value.

The shopping therapy is a relatively new phenomenon in Romania, which has been recorded mainly since the appearance of the huge commercial centres, like the malls or commercial galleries, claims Mircea Kivu, sociologist and director of the Marketing and Polls Institute (MPI). "The element of attraction is the new, but on a long term the Romanians will probably get bored."

But besides going shopping, "the shopping behaviour has another feature: that of travelling, with a certain attitude, to observe the others", claims the psychologist and sociologist Ion Stefan. Furthermore, "traditionally, Romanians long for company", so they set common goals, especially for the weekend, when they go shopping together with members of the family or with friends. Less than a fifth (18%) of the approx. 40000 daily visitors of the Unirea Shopping Centre go shopping alone, if they look for things for their houses, says Ana Meculescu, PR for the Unirea Shopping Centre. The percentage is even smaller if they buy things for the children (7%). "Generally, the visitors are accompanied by their

partners", says Underhill. Finally, a special category is those who suffer from shopping addiction, the urgent need to spend at any risk. If, for now, the Romanians (especially the women) who declare to be shopping addicted, do that mostly out of mimesis of what they have read or seen abroad, it remains to be seen how real the hypothesis that we will get bored of shopping at a certain moment, is. Because as the need for shopping has decreased in the West, there have appeared all sorts of sophisticated marketing and advertising strategies, and the product offer has become very specialized, in order to sustain the consume. Moreover, it does not aim for satisfying some needs, but to create new ones for the consumers.

The research and the economic and marketing prognosis referring to the tourism and travels sector from Romania are not generally very well expressed from the points of view of quality and quantity.

As a consequence, the analysis and statistics² of the public sector and the policies related to it tend not to be taken into account or to underestimate the impact of the industry or to treat only the minor components. This study of the Satellite Account in Tourism, elaborated by WTTC and OEF for Romania, ensures an important instrument of planning and development of the policy. The annual updating of the Satellite Account in tourism shall help to ensure that the adequate data are available for the introduction of tourism and travels into the economic strategies and employment strategies. It shall also supply the National Authority for Tourism the concrete economic data on which to base its decisions regarding the marketing and the promotion. This fact shall help bringing awareness among the factors from the public and private sector referring to the full impact of the tourism and travels sector on the national economy - not only for the hotels, restaurants and retail trading, but also for the buildings sector, the real estates, agriculture and other sectors.

As a communist country to which the "most favored nation" clause was granted by the USA due to the anti-soviet governmental policies, Romania was a very well known tourist destination in the western Europe in the 1970s. Sustained by the American loans summed up at 1 milliard USD, which offered a push to the economic development, and being very popular among the visitors from Germany, Great Britain, Scandinavia, France, Italy, Austria and Belgium, the resorts from the coast of the Black Sea flourished. Still, around the end of the 1980s, - due to sub-investment and a more and more unstable political situation - the number of visitors started to

decrease. After the fall of Ceausescu in December '89, this trend continued because of the negative impact of the communist regime on the development of the country. The opening of Romania attracted the eyes of mankind towards the extreme poverty of the Romanian people, mostly incorporated in the image of the orphans - image really far from a tourist paradise.

The slow privatization process combined with the lack of investments in infrastructure in the period of the '90s, while Romania re-adapted to the life after communism, turning into a tourism industry found into a growing suffering. However, the newly discovered freedom and a middle class in formation brought an increase of the travels abroad, encouraged by the low prices of Greece and Turkey. At the moment, a favorable exchange rate of the US Dollar and the better image of Central and Eastern Europe start to draw tourists across the ocean to Romania.

THE GENERAL PERSPECTIVE

According to the researches from 2005 of WTTC regarding the Satellite Account in Tourism, Romania ranks the 4th place from 174 countries regarding the increase of the demand on a long term. Member of NATO from 2002 and the designed adherence of Romania to the European Union in 2007 mean an increase of awareness about Romania internationally. At the middle of the 1990s, a new interest for tourism from the part of the central government was shown, when tourism was designated as a national priority. The controversial Dracula Park, although it has never been executed, is a proof of this commitment. However, the current lack of understanding of the importance of tourism and travels, the lack of availability of the independent operators to work together and the incoherent governmental strategy mean that this untouched potential waits to be unlocked.

The inconsistency and even the lack of a strategy in tourism, the lack of promotion of Romania abroad, the expensive and poor quality services are some of the issues that top managers present at the meeting "Private Government" on tourism have identified as requiring an immediate rehabilitation to re-launch market in Romania. We have been talking about tourism as about agriculture for the last 15 years as a priority, but we must admit, it has never been a priority, even at the level of central, local authorities or governments. If we take a look at the political platforms of parties, we always see three lines on tourism. A strategy exists, but, unfortunately, it is not applied!

In the context of defining by analogy with the international trade the specific concepts of international tourism and identifying the fundamental determinants of international tourism that allow the quantification of the link between socio-economic conditions and the conditions of specialization in tourism, as factors generators of

² Dumitru Bălă, Mazilu Mirela Elena, Roxana Marinescu, *Tourism and Statistics, Inseparable Binomial*, in Proceedings ISI of 5-th WSEAS International Conference on Economy and Management Transformation (EMT'10), p.39-44

international tourism flows, the paper aims to identify the extent to that this complex area, the tourism, seen as a system, determines the driving forces of global economy and outlines the direction in which tourism development strategies may constitute in the factors of sustainable development at national, regional and global levels (Fig. 1).

Tourism is an extremely complex sector, which includes activities in many branches of national economy. The diversity of those involved in tourism means that a system of organization of tourist activity should exist to ensure the coordination between various governmental institutions and organizations dealing with the tourism activity. There must be, outside the central coordination of tourism activities, the coordination, not chaotic actions, between representatives of tourism government bodies at regional and local levels.³

Complex mechanism of interaction between the state and the market economy implies the need of the public power to use the techniques and the means appropriate to the difficult role that the state is required to play in the economy. The allowance role, the distribution and especially the state regulator, it requires the promotion of the economic policy. Macroeconomic policy-making exercises a profound impact on economic agents in tourism. It has an active role in transforming the environment and its actions on other factors, for the purpose of achieving its objectives. The environment offers tourism an orderly framework, but the behaviour of economic agents must take into account the specific constraints arising from the economic policies of the state.

In this respect, the article has been designed in a structure that facilitates the understanding of the complex system of tourism, approaching, in turn, the following aspects: the place of tourism in the Romanian economy and, thus, the economy of the world, the role of tourism in the international services trade, the trends in the organization and regulation of Romanian tourism, the impact of Romanian tourism on the national economy and development of trail intervention aimed at reviving the Romanian tourism within the global economy, but also within the economic crisis that shows "its teeth" at the beginning of 2010.

In the paper, we have used both general theoretical concepts of the economic world (sustainable, globalization, foreign direct investments) as well as particular elements of tourism (the tourist industry terminology, evaluation indicators of the tourist activity etc.).

The trips with luxurious or ecological tendencies or having the simplicity that make us think of grandmother's

house shall increase in 2010. A top of the tendencies, drawn up by the chief - editor of *Mr. and Mrs. Smith Magazine*, Juliet Kinsman, suggests that the offers from tourism in 2010 shall still be affected by the economic crisis, but the consumers shall prefer the customised offer when they plan their holiday.

Considering itself as a unique market, the European Union has the most developed economy from the sector of Travels and Tourism, now representing a share of approximately 40% of the world market. Obviously, its share has grown significantly during the last few years, according to the EU extension beyond its initial borders to the current 27 member states.

The EU dimension and its importance in the economy of Travels and Tourism explains why the World Travels and Tourism Committee (WTTC) has remained very active in the region, intensifying as well its activities in the whole Central and Eastern Europe in the last 12 months, in close collaboration with industry and individual government in order to try and increase the operational environment for Travels and Tourism.⁴ The activities include the promotion of members and the consolidation of the unfolding relations with industry and governmental leaders.

The demand for Travels and Tourism in Europe in general is expected to grow with a relatively modest share of 2.3% in 2010, although this region masks the average growth which varies from country to country. Montenegro anticipates a powerful grow, of 14.2%, followed by Romania with 8.9%.

The sector of Travels and Tourism is an inseparable part of the world we live in, having an essential contribution to the world economy, as well as to the quality of life of its citizens. This divides the achievement of the universal aspirations, of unifying friends and families, the stimulation of the trading beyond frontiers, the creation of sustainable work places and the minimisation of the climate changes.

Or, the sustainable and responsible economic growth may be achieved only by overcoming all the inequalities regarding the welfare and opportunity, the increase of the international understanding, as well as the balance of the use of resources with their availability.

³ Mazilu Mirela Elena, *Excellent Or Chaotic Globalization In Tourism?*, The Journal of the Faculty of Economics - Economic 2, University of Oradea, Faculty of Economics, Issue (Month): 1 (May), 2008, p.: 609-703

⁴ Mazilu Mirela Elena, Roxana Marinescu, *The Competitiveness of the Romanian Tourism - a ghost or sustainable reality?*, in Annals of Faculty of Economics, Oradea, 2009, vol.4, Issue 1, p. 367-372.

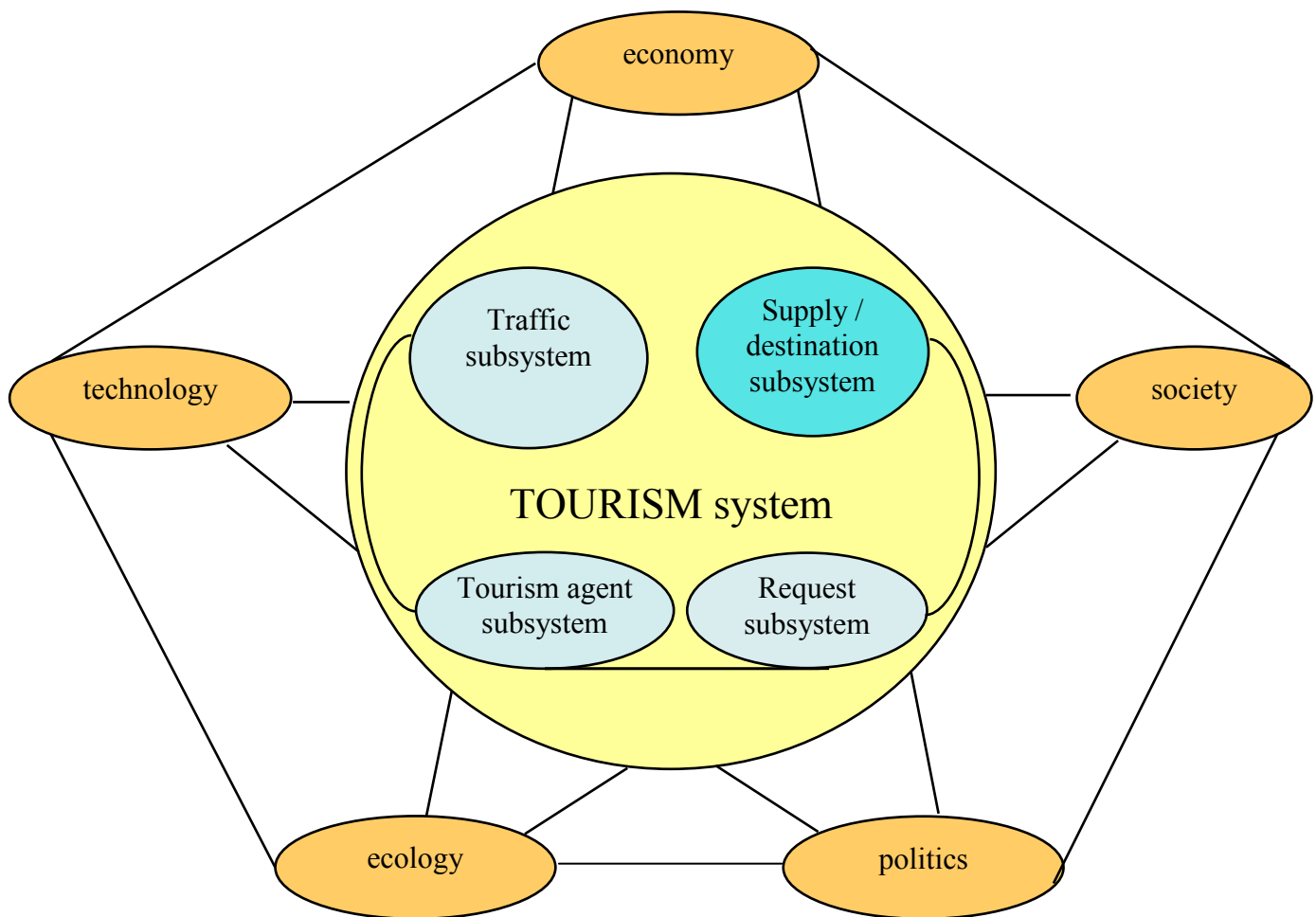


Fig.1 The interrelation of the tourism system with the other economic and social subsystems

4 Conclusion

From a systematic approach, tourism can be seen as a cybernetic system, included in the system of national economy, formed at its turn of a series of inter-linked subsystems, whose state of functioning must be permanently known. In order to formulate, fundament and choose the right decision, the decisional factors must constantly have new information about the state of the system, about what it is achieved through research, systematization, presentation under the form of indicators.

Taking into account the great diversity of services, the seasonal character of tourism, the different shapes of tourism practised (organised, unorganised, tours, holidays, treatment etc.), the types of prices and differentiated tariffs on the degrees of comfort, on forms of tourism etc., the activity of this branch cannot be characterised by a single indicator, but by a system of indicators, which has a

complex content. This system of indicators forms the main part of a statistical informational system within the tourism field and it represents a component part, a subsystem of the system of indicators of the national economy. Tourism is analysed and followed in its evolution through a system of specific indicators, based on a methodology of calculation uniform at a world level.

The tourism indicators supply and quantify the necessary information for the actions of tourist policy, allowing the measurement of their effects. Of course, time will prove if this world financial crisis makes of tourism a victim, but the alarming statistical data clearly emphasise, even from its incipient actions, that the number of tourists will have to suffer and will record significant reductions as its consequence.

Currently two phenomena have priority: the transition to a market economy and integration into European and world globalization.

During the transition to a market economy it is vital that the official statistics to assert their role as land mark for all economic and social actors. This objective can be achieved only if the offer of the official statistics have credibility among all users. The Fundamental Principles adopted by

the Economic Commission of the UNO for Europe must be respected. These principles are summarized as being:

- Provide the citizens with impartial statistics;
- Use of scientific methods;
- Information on sources and methods used;
- Penalizing the erroneous interpretations and misuse of statistics;
- Selection of data sources on reasons of quality, cost and burden of respondents;
- Protection of individual data;
- Dissemination of statistical activities at national level;
- Use concepts and international standards.

The association of countries to the European Union requires from the national statistical institutions, a detailed analysis of each statistical area in correlation with the European norms and standards regarding the progress achieved in the respective fields, in order to identify ways, methods and sources for future development of the statistical system.

The procedure of aligning the national statistics to the EU standards requires answers to several key questions, such as:

- What are the statistical requirements stipulated by the European Union in decisions or regulations?
- What are the incompatibilities between the national statistical systems and requirements of the European Union?
- How to resolve the incompatibilities?

The experience of member states warns the national statistical offices of the candidate states that the ambitions too high and slow progress in building or adapting the statistical system are not viable solutions to achieve the objectives, namely an advanced level of official statistics, harmonized and integrated. The message is that, considering the member states, it can be said that statistics are not entirely consistent, maintaining the national characteristics, but the basic principles and methodologies are articulated considering a system widely adopted and applied to allow comparison of key indicators. The member states are those which often deal with the new requirements of information and are taking place real "negotiations" regarding the date when the data become available, the use of different data sources, priorities of the statistical areas.

Regarding the principles and methodologies agreed upon, there is a degree of flexibility that gives an extra chance to the National Statistical Offices in Central and Eastern European countries to achieve an efficient national statistical system. This opportunity arises from the situation that their statistical system does not require adjustments, but its entire construction, situation in which the entire infrastructure, techniques and methods adopted for collecting, processing, analysis and dissemination of data circumscribed in international standards and current performance.

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