

THE DYNAMICS OF THE NUMBER OF ROMANIAN TOURISTS WHO HAVE ACCESSED TOURIST PACKAGES THROUGH THE "VACANȚE MINUNATE" AGENCY DURING THE PERIOD 2000-2015

Daniela PLEȘOIANU¹, Mihaela DAVID¹, Agatha POPESCU²

¹Ovidius University, 1, University Avenue, Campus, Building B, Constanta, Romania,
Email: plesoianudaniela@hotmail.com

²University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine Bucharest, 59 Marasti Boulevard,
District 1, 011464, Bucharest Romania, Phone: +40213182564, Fax: +40213182888, Email:
agatha_popescu@yahoo.com

Corresponding author: plesoianudaniela@hotmail.com

Abstract

The study of the tourist activity of an agency requires careful analysis of all the components of this activity. The role of the tourism agency in tourism activity is the promotion and development of tourist products, this being the most important. The present paper analyzes the main aspects regarding the touristic activity of a tour operator, as well as its organization and functioning (conditions for the marketing of the tourist products, organizational modalities, the main tourist services offered and possibilities for their diversification for promotion and development tourism. This analysis is very necessary in national and international tourism and the travel agency must have the necessary means to continuously upgrade its tourist product offerings. For the detailed analysis of the indicators, we processed data provided by the Wonderful Vacations Agency, concerning the Romanian tourists, during 2000-2015. The research methods specific to geography were also considered: observation, analysis and synthesis, the means of operation (description, explanation, hierarchy) and the finite elements of the use of research methods (descriptive model, mathematical model or model cartographic). The main activity of the tourism agency both internally and externally, are the total economic and financial results of society, which are largely influenced by the tourism activity, which in turn depends on many conjunctural factors on the domestic and international market. Travel Agency "Vacanțe Minunate" has as activities: relations and discount flight sales for organized groups; hotel reservations in Romania and anywhere in the world at contract rate; organization of meetings, conferences, professional meetings, rent-a-car (cars, minibuses, coaches); serving of sea and passenger ships for foreign currency exchange, as well as for local crew trips (Seaside tour, trips to the Danube Delta, wine tasting at Murfatlar; organization of business or tourist trips including flight ticket, hotel reservation, airport transfers, rent-a-car, optional tours. The Agency is in constant development and adaptation to the requirements of the tourists and the partner agencies with which it collaborates, makes special efforts every year since 2000 when it was established for the promotion and sale of the offers belonging to the Romanian Seas as a tourist destination, this being reflected in the good results he has with the hotels he represents as an agency. The agency has contracts with most hotels on the Black Sea coast of the resorts: Mamaia, Eforie Nord, Eforie Sud, Costinesti, Neptun, Olimp, Saturn, Venus, Cap Aurora, Jupiter, Mangalia, Vama Veche and 2 May in the summer season for over 60,000 tourists.

Key words: tourism, tourists, offers, competition, gain, increased profit

INTRODUCTION

Tourism represents the whole of the relationships and phenomena that result from traveling and staying outside its home, as long as it is not a permanent establishment.

It is a strong economic and social phenomenon involved in the life of society at national and international level.

It has the role of mobilizing innumerable reserves and material and material availability of people, expanding them and enhancing

their cultural horizons; thus it becomes an important factor of education, approach and understanding between people. This represents a new dimension of tourism with profound human meanings that immobilizes an activity that is a component of social, national and international life.

To this end, a great variety of actions is needed to capitalize on the cultural heritage of each country, historical traditions.

The study of the tourist activity of an agency requires careful analysis of all the components

of this activity. The role of the tourism agency in tourism activity is the promotion and development of tourist products, this being the most important.

The travel agency is the main distributor of tourism products.

The agency may have the monopoly of sales because it has two great advantages over other forms of distribution: protection of tourists and financial guarantees provided by tourists and tour operators.

From an organizational point of view, the tourism enterprise is considered to be an autonomous human group that has a heritage and whose long-term development depends on the sale of a product, a service and the domestic activity and the receipts it has.

The tourist company places on the market a tourist service which is limited to informing, booking, transporting and accommodating a destination, restaurant services and short animation activities. [2]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Consultation of the specialized bibliography was the starting point for research carried out with simpler or more elaborate scientific papers, statistical information and data, some data requiring careful filtering.

Tourism is analyzed and tracked through a system of specific indicators, based on a methodology of calculation recognized and used worldwide (accommodation capacity, tourist traffic, tourist demand).

For the detailed analysis of the indicators, we processed data provided by Vacanțe Minunate Agency, concerning the Romanian tourists, during 2000-2015.

The research methods specific to geography were also considered: observation, analysis and synthesis, the means of operation (description, explanation, hierarchy) and the finite elements of the use of research methods (descriptive model, mathematical model or model cartographic).

For the present analysis, we have used data provided by the Vacanțe Minunate Agency, data on the number of foreign tourists and Romanian tourists who have accessed the tourist packages of the agency with reference

to spa tourism, seaside tourism and mountain tourism.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The tourist business has only a few characteristics:

- services in the service sector
- protects immediate contact between the manufacturer and the consumer
- can undergo changes according to the tastes and needs of tourists. [1]

Tourist companies may be:

hotel (similar or complementary) hotel is understood to mean accommodation and catering, transport companies, travel agencies and travel organizers.

A travel agency is composed of several sub-systems, in particular:

- Tourist sub-system (characteristics and motivation)
- Sub-system of information, promotion and communication
- Sub-system of transport to and to destination.
- Sub-system of tourist attractions.

The present paper analyzes the main aspects regarding the touristic activity of a tour operator, as well as its organization and functioning (conditions for the marketing of the tourist products, organizational modalities, the main tourist services offered and possibilities for their diversification for promotion and development tourism.

This analysis is very necessary in national and international tourism and the travel agency must have the necessary means to continuously upgrade its tourist product offerings.

The organization of the activity of a travel agency is reflected through the organizational structure representing the whole of the existing compartments in an enterprise and the relationship between those compartments in order to facilitate, use the resources and achieve the set objectives.

The organizational structure of a travel agency depends on the following factors: type of agency (tour operator or retailer), size of the travel agency (number of employees, complexity of the activity, legal framework and managerial competence).[4]

The organizational structure also represents the skeleton of a travel agency and includes 2 parts:

Managerial structure and management structure the operational or production structure. [5]

Travel Agency "Vacanțe Minunate" is a company with subscribed capital, it was established in 2000 as a limited liability company and is registered in the Trade Register.

The main activity of the tourism agency both internally and externally, the overall economic and financial results of the society are largely influenced by the tourism activity, which in turn depends on many conjuncturing factors on the domestic and international market. [3]

The company has the following object of activity:

-domestic tourism-occasional and contractual actions - by organizing domestic and foreign trips with Romanian tourists, as well as excursions for rest, health - treatment bases.

-international tourism-contractual actions based on external contracts in the accommodation infrastructure of the seaside tourism companies and the running of these contracts; organizing tourist programs in the country and abroad organizing meetings, economic missions, symposiums, organizing exotic holidays, weekend programs, city tours, day trips around the world, tours around the world, accommodation reservations and places in public catering establishments.

Travel Agency "Wonderful Vacations" has as object of activity: reservations and airline sales on any route on all airlines with discounts for sailors and for organized groups; hotel reservations in Romania and anywhere in the world at contract rates; organizes meetings, conferences, professional meetings, rent-a-car (cars, minibuses, coaches);servicing of sea and passenger ships for foreign currency exchange, as well as local crew trips (Seaside Tour, Trips to the Danube Delta, Murfatlar Wine Tasting), organizes business or tourist trips including flight ticket, hotel reservation, airport transfers, rent-a-car, optional tours.

Tour Operator Features of the "Vacanțe Minunate"

The tour operator is an agency that works with several travel agencies, the purpose of which is to organize and sell tourist packages at the lowest rates through various intermediaries.

The "Vacanțe minunate" working as a tour operator, having the fastest development on the tourism market in recent years, being one of the main tour operators in Romania for the Romanian Black Sea Coast. [9]

The agency has contracts with most hotels on the Black Sea coast more precisely with the seaside resorts of Mamaia, Eforie Nord, Eforie Sud, Costinesti, Neptun, Olimp, Saturn, Venus, Aurora, Jupiter, Mangalia, Vama-Veche and 2 Mai) annually especially in the summer season over 60,000 tourists.

In addition, the agency also offers tourist assistance services on all external destinations, travel insurance and flight ticket issuance.

Through the agency, thousands of tourists can benefit from services for other destinations than those mentioned.

Evolution of the number of Romanian tourists who have accessed offers through the agency "Vacanțe minunate".

The tourist flow of the agency comprises many tourists, both Romanian and foreign, over a period of 15 years. The following are presented tables showing the ascending and descending evolution of the number of tourists.

Table 1. The number of Romanian tourists arriving in tourist reception facilities through the Agency during 2000-2014 in spa resorts

Year	Number of tourists
2000	5,450
2001	6,005
2003	7,860
2004	9,890
2005	8,900
2006	8,567
2008	7,849
2009	8,000
2010	5,675
2011	4,960
2012	6,500
2013	9,040
2014	10,070

Source: Vacanțe Minunate Agency [11].

During the period 2000-2015 the tourists were accommodated for 2 to 10 days at different hotels or hostels.

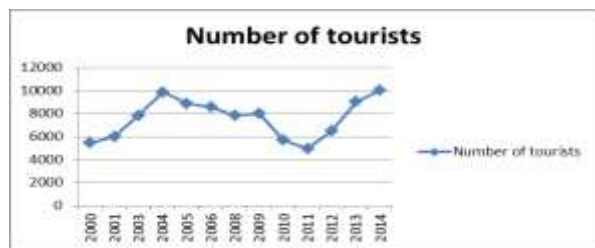


Fig. 1. Romanian tourists arriving in tourist reception facilities through the Agency during 2000-2014 in spa resorts

Source: Own calculation.

Observing the tables presenting the data from the period 2000-2014, periods with maximum flows and periods with minimal flows can be observed.

Among the resorts preferred by the tourists who use the agency are: Sovata, Baile Tusnad, Călimănești Căciulata, Baile Felix. These spa resorts are renowned for treating various diseases as well as relaxing.

At that time tourists benefited from different packages for the treatment and relaxation Romanian tourists at that time preferred to choose the best hotels in order to have an unforgettable rest and relaxation stay. This hotel stayed at 2 hotels, 3 or 4 * each based on the allocated budget.

Sovata Resort: Hotel Danubius Health Spa Sovata Resort 4*. It has used the best package packages, namely treatment offers or half board with medical treatment, optimal accommodation conditions.

Băile Tușnad Resort: Hotel O3Zone 4 *. This hotel is renowned as the other treatment packages for treating various conditions with various accommodation and relaxation facilities.

Călimănești-Căciulata spa resort: Hotel Central 3 *

Băile Felix Resort: 4 * Hotel Crișana and 4 * Hotel Internațional.

The tourists stayed for a period of 3 to 10 days, more exactly a few days' stay, during which they benefited from these accommodation and medical treatment facilities where they find outdoor thermal pools and special treatment bases.

Table 2. The number of Romanian tourists arriving in tourist reception facilities through the Agency during 2000-2015 in the Danube Delta and Tulcea

Year	Number of tourists
2000	2,300
2002	3,450
2001	2,590
2003	3,200
2004	5,670
2005	5,600
2006	4,300
2007	4,800
2008	5,789
2009	4,560
2010	4,320
2011	3,900
2012	5,690
2013	6,000
2014	4,500
2015	3,900

Source: Vacanțe Minunate Agency [11]

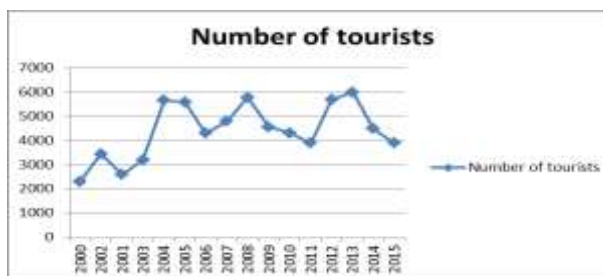


Fig. 2. Romanian tourists arriving in tourist reception facilities through the Agency during 2000-2015 in the Danube Delta and Tulcea

Source: Own calculation.

The statistical data show that many tourists visited the Danube Delta natural reserve, most tourists were in 6,000 in 2013. As it can be seen in 2000 there were the fewest tourists who occupied the tourist reception structures and who have used the services offered by the agency. In recent years, as can be seen from the tables, the number of Romanian tourists increased considerably, due to the capitalization of the Danube Delta reservation and the increase in the tourist reception capacity. [6]

The tourists preferred to choose standard tourist packages, they chose as the destination the following areas: Sulina, Murighiol, Nufaru, Tulcea, Sfântu Gheorghe and other accommodation facilities. With the time these accommodation capacity increased their capacity accommodation and have improved their accommodation conditions, then to be very frequented by tourists, as shown in the tables and graphs above.(Table 2 and Fig.2)

Most tourists preferred to stay for a short period of time, more exactly a stay or even longer. [9]

They chose to stay in:

Murighiol: Complex Peninsula Resort 4 *

Sulina: Casa Sibiana 4 *

Tulcea: Cristal Boarding House 3 *, Hotel Expandada 4 *

Sfantu Gheorghe: Hotel Green Village 4 *

Romanian tourists on the seaside

Table 3. The number of Romanian tourists arriving in tourist accommodation structures through the agency in 2015 on the coastal area

Station	Number of tourists
Mamaia	8,000
Eforie-Nord	4,500
Eforie-Sud	5,000
Costinești	3,800
Venus	3,500
Vama-Veche	4,500
Neptun-Olimp	2,500

Source: Vacanțe Minunate Agency [11].

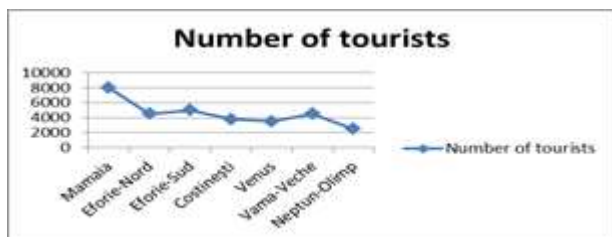


Fig.3. Romanian tourists arriving in tourist accommodation structures through the agency in 2015 on the coastal area

Source: Own calculation.

The statistical data in the table shows the number of Romanian tourists who appealed to the agency in the most recent year, the most favored resort on the seaside, which is the most popular, the resort of Mamaia, with 8,000 visitors per year, increase. [7]

Tourists have accessed in 2015 the best early booking offers, standard offer, treatment offer, special offers and holiday offers, all of which are most frequented by tourists who have turned to the agency.

The majority of tourists took advantage of long time before to get more affordable. The most overburdened tourist reception facilities were those in Mamaia resort and the other ones on the seaside. Below I will list which were the most requested accommodation facilities favored by tourists. [8]

The resorts and hotels where they were accommodated are the following:

Mamaia Resort: Hotel Ambasador 4 *, Hotel Park 4 * Hotel Astoria 3 *, Hotel Voila 3 *, Hotel Lido 3 *, Hotel Tomis 3 * Hotel Victoria 3 *

Eforie Nord Resort: Hotel Complex Dunarea 3 *, Hotel Europa 4 *, Hotel Vera 3 *

Eforie Sud Resort: Hotel Splendid 3 *, Hotel Amurg 3 *

Costinești Resort: Hotel Pierre 3 *, Hotel Impact G 3 *, Complex Vox Maris Grand Resort 4 *

Venus Resort: Hotel Afrodita 4 *, Hotel Melodia 4 *, Hotel Corina 3 *

Vama-Veche Resort: Hotel Laguna 2 *

Neptun-Olimp Resort: Hotel Sara 3 *, Turist Complex 3 *

The Mamaia resort is famous for its large beaches, being the largest in Europe, stretching over a distance of about 10 kilometers, between the cities of Constanta and Navodari, and the width often reaches 200 meters. [10]

The beach is covered with fine sand, with no excess stones and shells, and the entrance to the water is smooth, the depth of the sea gradually increasing over a large distance. Most of the beach is equipped with sun beds and umbrellas that tourists can benefit from cost, but there are also areas where you can install free of charge with your own sunbeds. The resort's beach is full of bars and terraces, perfect places to hide from the summer heat with a cocktail or ice coffee or ice cream.

Mamaia resort, is preferred to tourists coming through the agency but also to the numerous high quality touristic reception facilities. [10]

The second very visited resort of Romanian tourists is Eforie Sud, with about 5,000 tourists annually.

These resorts are very famous due to the extensive beaches, the tourist reception structures as well as the public and recreational facilities. The least visited resort on the Black Sea coast is Venus resort has a number of 3,500 annual tourists coming through the agency.

"The seaside attracted in the season 2016 with up to 12% more tourists due to the investments made during the last years by

hoteliers, which led to the increase of the quality of tourism services, the increase of the beaches of Mamaia, Eforie Nord and Constanta, through a Company investment The Romanian Waters of Dobrogea-Litoral, but also the international conjuncture, which determined a larger number of Romanians to spend their holidays in domestic destinations, "ANAT communiqué shows.

Table 4.Number of Romanian tourists arriving in tourist accommodation structures through the agency in 2015 in mountain resorts

Station	Number of tourists
Sinaia	5,070
Bușteni	5,000
Predeal	5,600
Azuga	4,700
Păltiniș	4,980
Poiana Brașov	6,500
Maramureș	3,570
Brașov	8,000

Source: Vacanțe Minunate Agency [11]

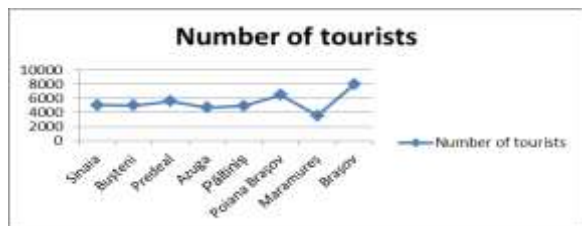


Fig.4 Romanian tourists arriving in tourist accommodation structures through the agency in 2015 in mountain resorts

Source: Own calculation.

Tourists appealed to the agency in 2015 and took advantage of the same prices of tourist packages during the winter season. The most popular touristic offers by the Romanian tourists in 2015 were the special ones, holidays, ski holidays and also standard offer. The tourists were accommodated, of course, at different times, at various tourist reception facilities and on certain categories of 2,3 and 4 *.[9]

The most frequented hotels by the Romanian tourists in 2015 were:

Sinaia Resort: Hotel Palace 4 *, Hotel Caraiman 3 *, Hotel Cota 1400 3 *

Bușteni resort: Bavaria 3 * and Popasul Vânătorilor 4 *

Predeal Resort: Hotel Belvedere 3 * and Hotel Boulevard 3 *

Azuga Resort: Holiday Villa Alma Azuga, Azuga Ski & Bike Resort3 *, Trifoi Villa 3 *

Păltiniș resort: Hotel Cindrel 3 *, Victoria 3 * Pension, Rafael Pension 4 *

Poiana-Brașov Resort: Hotel Ruia 3 *, Hotel Escalade 4 *, Hotel Teleferic Grand 4 *

Maramures resort: Hotel Diafan 3 *, Hotel Carpati 4 *

Brașov resort: Hotel Ramada Brașov 4 *, Hotel Kronwell 4 *, Coroana Brașovului 3 *.

Analyzing chart and table no. 4 , we note that 8,000 tourists have called the Vacanțe Minunate Agency in 2015 due to the good offers and all inclusive services the agency has.

The second resort preferred by the tourists who use the agency is the Poiana Brașov resort due to the landscapes, the good conditions of accommodation, the public and leisure facilities. The Poiana-Brașov resort is a rest and treatment resort and is situated at the foot of Postăvaru Mountain, at an altitude of 1,030 m and 12 km from Brașov. In addition, it also draws on size, having the largest ski area in România.

The Sinaia resort is also one of the favorite tourist resorts. The Sinaia Station is at the foot of the Bucegi Mountains at 850 m altitude. The tourists here can visit Bucegi Mountains, Omu Peak, Babele and Sphinx or Peleş Castle and can also do hiking trails. It is famous for its slopes, chairlift, ski lift, cable car. [11]

As a means of leisure we have 12 ski slopes in our country (Olympic lanes, slopes for downhill and giant slalom, trampolines), lake, sledge, pedestrian, cable cars, a telegondola and 7 ski lifts, plus artificial snow. For those who are romantic there are also horses drawn by horses. These and others have made Poiana Brașov occupying the 1st place in the Top 10 Most Strong Mountain Resorts in Romania. [11]

CONCLUSIONS

The study of the tourist activity of an agency requires careful analysis of all the components of this activity. The role of the tourism agency in tourism activity is the promotion and development of tourist products, this being the most important.

Travel Agency "Vacanțe Minunate" is a limited liability company and is based in Constanța.

The agency has the role of strengthening relationships with customers and business partners and the "excellence in travel" attribute has attracted through transparency, creativity, boldness and consistency of extraordinary results.

The main activity of the tourism agency both internally and externally, are the total economic and financial results of society, which are largely influenced by the tourism activity, which in turn depends on many conjunctural factors on the domestic and international market.

Travel Agency "Lovely Vacations" has as activities:

-relations and discount flight sales for organized groups.

-hotel reservations in Romania and anywhere in the world at contract rates

-organizes meetings, conferences, professional meetings, rent-a-car (cars, minibuses, coaches)

-serving of sea and passenger ships for foreign currency exchange, as well as for local crew trips (Seaside tour, trips to the Danube Delta, wine tasting at Murfatlar)

-organize business or tourist trips including flight ticket, hotel reservation, airport transfers, rent-a-car, optional tours.

The Agency is in constant development and adaptation to the requirements of the tourists and the partner agencies with which it collaborates, makes special efforts every year since 2000 when it was established for the promotion and sale of the offers belonging to the Romanian Seas as a tourist destination, this being reflected in the good results he has with the hotels he represents as an agency.

The agency has contracts with most hotels on the Black Sea coast of the resorts: Mamaia, Eforie Nord, Eforie Sud, Costinesti, Neptun, Olimp, Saturn, Venus, Cap Aurora, Jupiter, Mangalia, Vama Veche and 2 May) in the summer season over 60,000 tourists.

In addition, the agency also offers tourist assistance services on all external destinations, travel insurance and flight ticket issuance.

REFERENCES

- [1]Capota, V., Mihai, Ș., Costea, F., Vetemeanu, C., 2007, Organizarea agentiei de turism,Editura CdPress (The organization of the tourism agency. CdPress Publishing House), pp. 26-28.
- [2]Cândea, M., Bran, F., 2006, Organizarea, amenajarea și dezvoltarea durabilă a spațiului geografic (Organization, management and sustainable development of the geographical space), University Publishing House, Bucharest, pp.35-36.
- [3]Dinu, M., 2004, Geografia turismului (Tourism geography), Didactic and Pedagogical Press, Bucharest, pp.47-49.
- [4]Draica, C., 1999, Ghid practic de turism international si intern (Practical guide of international and domestic tourism), ABC turism, pp.39.
- [5]Gherasim,T., Gherasim, D., 1999, Marketing turistic, Editura Economica (Tourism marketing, Economica Publishing House), București, pp.69.
- [6]Glăvan,V.,1995, Geografia turismului în România, Publisher of Tomorrow Foundation Romania Press, Bucharest
- [7]Iordache.M.C., Cebuc, I., 2009, Tehnica operațiunilor de turism, Editura Independența Economică (The technique of tourism operations, Economic Independence Publishing House), Pitești, pp.42.
- [8]Istrate, I., 1988, Un fenomen in miscare, Editura Sport-Turism (A phenomenon in movement, Sport-Tourism Publishing House), pp.61.
- [9]National Institute of Statistics, 2000-2015.
- [10]Rădulescu, I., Herbst-Rădoi, A.,1986, Județele Patriei, (The counties of the country), Publishing Romanian Academy, Bucharest, pp..25.
- [11]"Vacanțe Minunate"Agency, Statistical Reports.

