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TOURISTIC ACTIVITY IN SUCEAVA COUNTY

ELISABETA ROSU¹

Abstract: *The natural and anthropic tourism potential of the Suceava county characterized by numerous natural reserves, many of them unique in the world, by the variety, density and value of historic, religious and architecture monuments are creating conditions for the county Suceava to be a tourism destination chosen, both for the Romanian and foreign tourists. This approach is intended to be an analysis of the main indicators of tourism activity in Suceava county during 2001-2014.*

Keywords: *tourism potential, tourism activity indicators, Suceava county*

JEL: L8, L83, Q2

INTRODUCTION

The tourism potential of an area represents an essential condition for tourism development, while the essential requirement is that this potential is best put into value by the suppliers of tourism products and services.

In recent years, the tourism, both as economic and social activity, has significantly developed compared to other sectors of the economy. Tourists, either Romanian or foreigners prefer to travel as much as possible, to explore new places and to get closer to nature.

The county Suceava is one of the most complex tourism areas in the country. The natural tourism potential characterized by special landscape areas, with diverse therapeutical factors together with the valuable anthropic potential, resulting from the history and culture of the people from this area provide great opportunities for the practice of a wide range of tourism forms.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The analyzed information was collected through the documentary study of the works on the approached theme. The methodology comprised the statistical analysis of the primary data using the Excel software for quantitative data analysis. The statistical data on which the analysis was based were at county Suceava level, they covered the period 2001-2015 and had the following sources: i) NIS statistical data available online – www.tempo-online; ii) other online sources – www.prefecturasuceava.ro.

The first part of the paper contains a brief characterization of the county, focusing on the natural and anthropic potential; in the second part of the paper the main tourism activity indicators are analyzed: the tourism accommodation structure, the tourist accommodation capacity, the tourist accommodation capacity in operation, arrivals and overnight stays of tourists.

Based on these synthetic indicators of tourism activity were calculated two indices: the average length of stay by formula:

$$D_m = N_{in} / N_s, \text{ where:}$$

D_m is the average length of stay; N_{in} represents the number of overnight stays and N_s represents the number of arrivals and the net utilization index of the tourist accommodation capacity in operation, by formula:

$$I_n = (N / C_f) \times 100$$

where: I_n is the net utilization index of the tourist accommodation capacity in operation; N is the number of overnight stays in a certain period; C_f is the tourist accommodation capacity in operation.

The tourism potential of Suceava county

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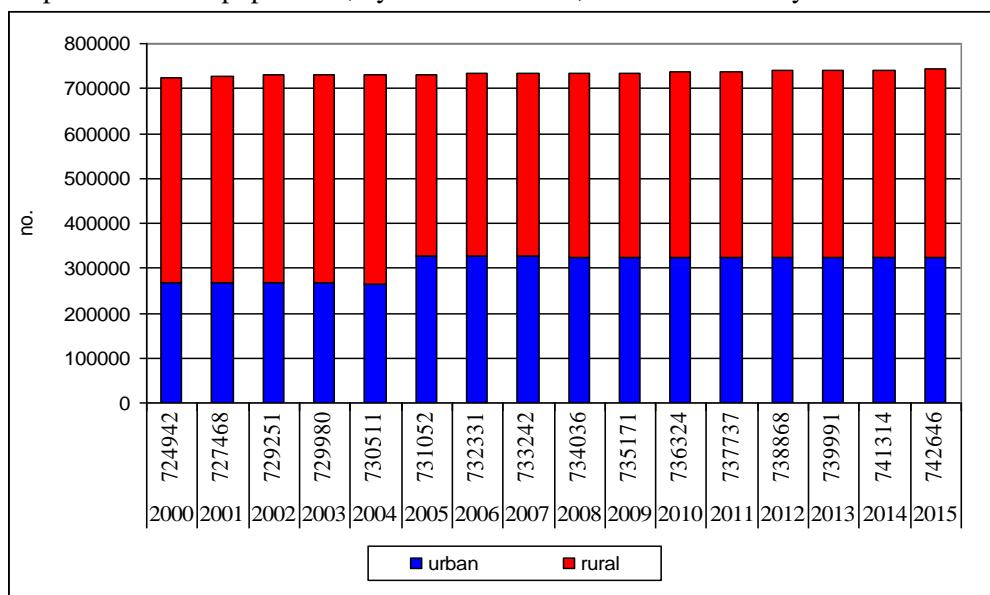
General data

The county Suceava is located in the north-eastern part of Romania, is the second in size in the country, which explains the geological, landscape and natural resources diversity.

From the administrative point of view, the county Suceava comprises 5 municipalities (Suceava – county residence, Fălticeni, Rădăuți, Câmpulung Moldovenesc and Vatra Dornei), 11 towns, 98 communes and 379 villages.

By relief units, the area of the county Suceava is divided into: mountains (53%), plateau (30%) and river meadow (17%). The mountain area is the prevailing relief unit consisting of massive and complex groups of mountain ridges separated by deep valleys or depression areas.

Graph 1. The total population, by residence areas, in Suceava county



Suceava county's population in 2015 was larger than in 2000.

Suceava county's population in 2000 was 724942, of which 37% lived in urban areas, while in 2015 the population was 742642, of which 43.6% lived in urban areas.

Source: www.tempo-online

The natural tourism potential

The territory of the county Suceava is partially overlapping the Eastern Carpathians and the Suceava Plateau. The mountains are represented by: Suhard Mountains – partially the Călimani mountains, Bucovinei ridges (Mestecăniș, Feredău and Obcina Mare), Bistrita Mountains (Rarău, Giupalău, Bârnaru and Budacu) and Stânișoarei Mountains (only Sutra).

The depression system is characterized either by a smooth relief or by hilly relief units (Dornelor Depression), or by fields of meadows and terraces along the valleys (the depression corridors Câmpulung Moldovenesc – Gura Humorului, Moldovița and Găinești depression).

The plateau area and the Sub-Carpathian hills are represented by Suceava Plateau and the Neamtului Sub-Carpathians.

There are 29 **natural protected areas of national interest**² in the county, with a total area of 16199.2 ha, out of which:

- 6 botanical reserves, with a total area of 396.5 ha;
- 11 forestry reserves, with an area of 3351.8 ha;
- 6 geological reserves, with a total area of 257. ha;
- 2 paleontological reserves, with a total area of 1.1 ha;
- 2 mixed reserves, with a total area of 1,287 ha;
- 1 scientific reserve, with an area of 6 ha;

² The natural protected areas of national interest were declared by Law no. 5 from 2000 on the approval of the National Landscaping Plan – Section III - protected areas, by Government's Decision no. 2151 of 2004 on the establishment of natural area regime for new zones and Government's Decision no. 1143/2007 on the establishment of new protected areas.

- 1 National Park - Călimani National Park with a total area of 24041 ha, out of which 10700 ha on the territory of Suceava county).

In the year 2014, from the category of natural protected areas³ of community interest, there were 6 special birds and fauna protection areas (SBFA) with a total area of 96415.4 ha and 23 sites of community importance (SCI) with a total area of 221916 ha.

There is also a **natural protected area of international interest** on the territory of the county – Tinovul Mare Poiana Stampei. This is the largest turf nature reserve in Romania, with an area of 681 ha, localized on the territory of the commune Poiana Stampei, in the county Suceava, which was declared natural monument in the year 1955.

In the year 2007, Tinovul Mare Poiana Stampei Reserve was declared site of community importance, gaining European recognition as part of Natura 2000 Network. The international recognition was obtained together with the accession to the *Ramsar Convention on Wetlands* (Ramsar, 1971) in the year 2011, by declaring the reserve as *Wetland of International Importance*.

The anthropic tourism potential

The cultural-historical and ethnic-folklore patrimony of the county has a great tourism value and attractiveness: historical objectives (Fortress Șcheia, Royal Fortress of Suceava and Fortress Zamca), civil constructions (the Royal Court and the Royal Inn in Suceava), monasteries (Voroneț, Humor) as well as many museums and memorial houses.

Box 1. Main tourism attractions in Suceava county

<p>The History Museum – Suceava Municipality The Natural Science Museum – Suceava Municipality Stephan the Great’s Fortress – Suceava Municipality Monastery Zamca – Suceava Municipality Monastery Saint John – Suceava Municipality Royal Inn – Suceava Municipality Wood Art Museum – Câmpulung Moldovenesc Municipality Bucovina Ethnographic and Folk Techniques – Rădăuți Municipality Monastery Voroneț – Town Gura Humorului Monastery Humor – Town Gura Humorului Monastery Sucevița – Commune Sucevița Monastery Putna – Commune Putna Monastery Moldovița – Commune Moldovița Monastery Dragomirna – Commune Mitocul Dragomirnei Monastery Slătioara – Commune Râșca The Black Ceramics Center from Marginea – Commune Marginea Daniil Sihuștru’s Hermitage – Commune Putna Ciprian Porumbescu Memorial House – CommuneCiprian Porumbescu Cacica Salina – Commune Cacica</p>

Source: Prefect’s Institution, Strategy for tourism development and promotion in Suceava county, 2005

³ The natural protected areas of community interest are part of the European Ecological Network Natura 2000, created for the conservation of the natural heritage of the European Union, based on two directives: “*Habitats*” Directive (no. 92/43 of 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and wild fauna and flora) and “*Birds*” Directive (no. 79/409 of 1979 on the conservation of wild birds).

The “*Birds*” Directive was implemented by Government’s Decision no. 971 of October 5, 2011 for the modification and completion of G.D. no. 1.284/2007 on declaring the special avifaunistic protection areas as integrating part of the European Ecological Network Natura 2000 in Romania.

The “*Habitats*” Directive was implemented by Order of the Minister of Environment and Forests no. 2387/2011 for the modifying and completing M.M.D.D Order no. 1.964/2007 on the establishment of natural protected area regime of the sites of community importance, as part of the European Ecological Network Natura 2000 in Romania.

The monasteries in the rural areas, the numerous churches and Daniil Sihu's Hermitage represent important attraction points for tourists. The rural areas are preservers of customs, traditions, crafts and old customs and habits – ceramics, hand woven carpets, fur dressing, cloths, folk instruments, folk masks, etc. The county Suceava is well-known for its ethnographic museums (Suceava, Rădăuți, Gura Humorului, Câmpulung Moldovenesc, Solca, Vatra Dornei, Vama, Marginea), as well as for the important creation centers or individual workshops of the folk artists who are well-known for their crafts (Vatra Moldoviței, Ciocănești, Brodina, Poiana Stampei – egg painting; Marginea, Rădăuți – ceramics; Humorului, Rădăuți, Arbore monasteries – cloths; Suceava, Rădăuți, Vatra Dornei, Molid, Fundu Moldovei – icon painting; Marginea, Gura Humorului – knittings; Bilca, Vama, Fundu Moldovei – leather works, fur dressing; Solca – carpentry-sculpture workshops).

The artistic events and the traditional folk festivals organized throughout the entire year are attracting the Romanian and foreign artists.

Main tourism activity indicators in Suceava county

The main tourism activity indicators are: the tourist accommodation structures, the tourist accommodation capacity existing and in operation, arrivals and overnight stays of tourists.

In the period 2001-2015, the tourist accommodation structures, the tourist accommodation capacity existing and that in operation had a positive trend.

The indicator tourist accommodation structures had the highest increase in 2015 towards the reference year 2001, from 24% up to 222.9%.

The increase of the number of tourist accommodation structures lead implicitly to the increase of the number of beds. So, at the level of the Suceava county the tourist accommodation capacity existing doubled in the period.

Table 1. The tourist accommodation structures, the tourist accommodation capacity existing and in operation, in Suceava County, in the period 2001-2015

Year	The tourist accommodation structures		The tourist accommodation capacity existing		The tourist accommodation capacity in operation	
	No.	% ^{*)}	Places	% ^{*)}	Thou. places days	% ^{*)}
2001	96	100	5034	100	1421	100
2002	119	124.0	5192	103.1	1400	98.5
2003	122	127.1	5577	110.8	1641	115.5
2004	143	149.0	5755	114.3	1761	123.9
2005	179	186.5	6526	129.6	1932	136.0
2006	220	229.2	7012	139.3	2057	144.8
2007	236	245.8	6831	135.7	2087	146.9
2008	233	242.7	7029	139.6	2102	147.9
2009	235	244.8	7554	150.1	2176	153.1
2010	245	255.2	8033	159.6	2264	159.3
2011	271	282.3	8835	175.5	2440	171.7
2012	296	308.3	9447	187.7	2594	182.5
2013	295	307.3	9585	190.4	2643	186.0
2014	296	308.3	9650	191.7	2686	189.0
2015	310	322.9	10143	201.5	2780	195.6

^{*)} these percentage data represent reductions (-) or increases (+) towards the basic year (2001=100.0)

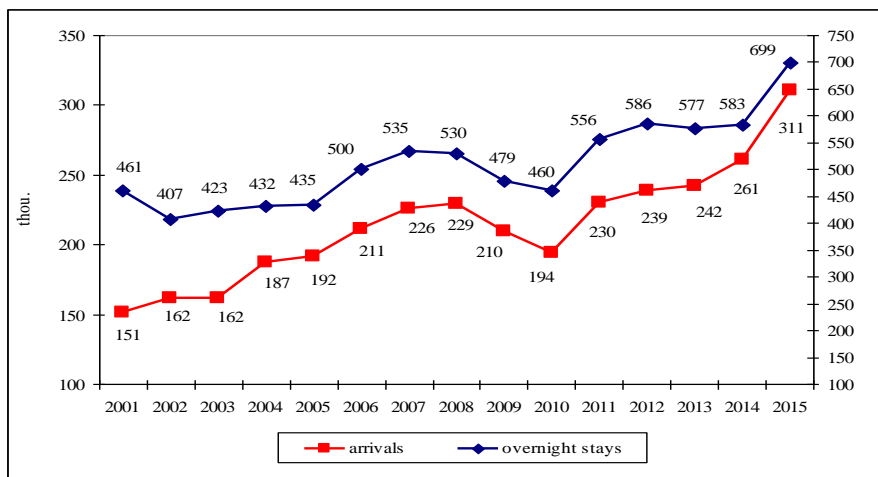
Source: own calculation by www.tempo-online

The tourist accommodation capacity in operation, which represents the number of housing places put at the tourists' disposal by the units of tourist housing, registered an ascending trend, except the year 2002. In the year 2002 the tourist accommodation capacity in operation at the level of Suceava County situated at only 98.5% from the level existent in the year 2001, but starting with the year 2003 this enlarged from 15.5% up to 95.6% in the year 2015.

Except the years 2009 and 2010, the number of tourist arrivals in Suceava county registered an ascending trend, being double in the period under analysis.

The number of overnight stays in the tourist accommodation structures in Suceava county registered oscillating evolutions. With all this, towards the reference year 2001, the number of overnight stays in Suceava county increased by 1.5 times.

Graph 2. The arrivals and the overnight stays of tourists in Suceava County



The number of overnight stays at the level of the Suceava county was, in the period 2002-2005, and also in the year 2010 under the level registered in the year 2001, while in the rest of the period under analysis was over the reference year level, reaching a maximum of de 699 thousands in the year 2015.

Source: *www.tempo-online*

The average length of stay reflects the capacity of the tourist offer to keep the tourist in the respective zone. In the year 2001 tourists had an average length of stay in the Suceava county of 3.1days, while in the year 2015 their average length of stay shortened, reaching to an average of 2.2 days.

Table 2. The average length of stay in the Suceava county in the period 2001-2015

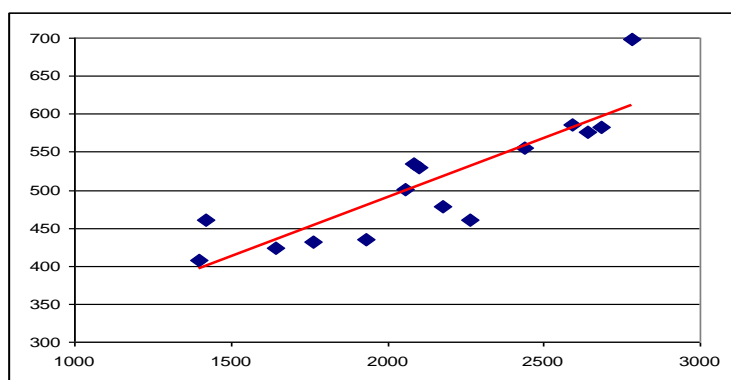
- no of days . -

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
D _m	3.1	2.5	2.6	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.4	2.2	2.2

Source own calculations after *www.tempo-online*

A stay of 2.3 or 2.4 days shows the fact that the tourists who reached the Suceava County had a high degree of mobility.

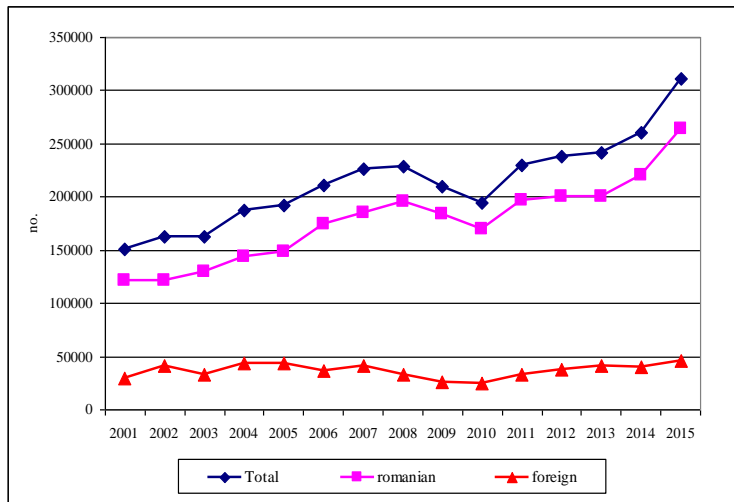
Graph 3. The correlation between the tourist accommodation capacity in operation and the number of overnight stays in Suceava county, in the period 2001-2015



Correlating the two indicators, the tourist accommodation capacity in operation with the number of overnight stays we can affirm that there is a direct positive correlation, which means that the increase of the number of places-days of housing lead implicitly to the increase of the number of overnight stays of the tourists in the Suceava county in the period 2001-2015.

Source: own calculation by *www.tempo-online*

Graph 4. The types of tourists visiting the Suceava county



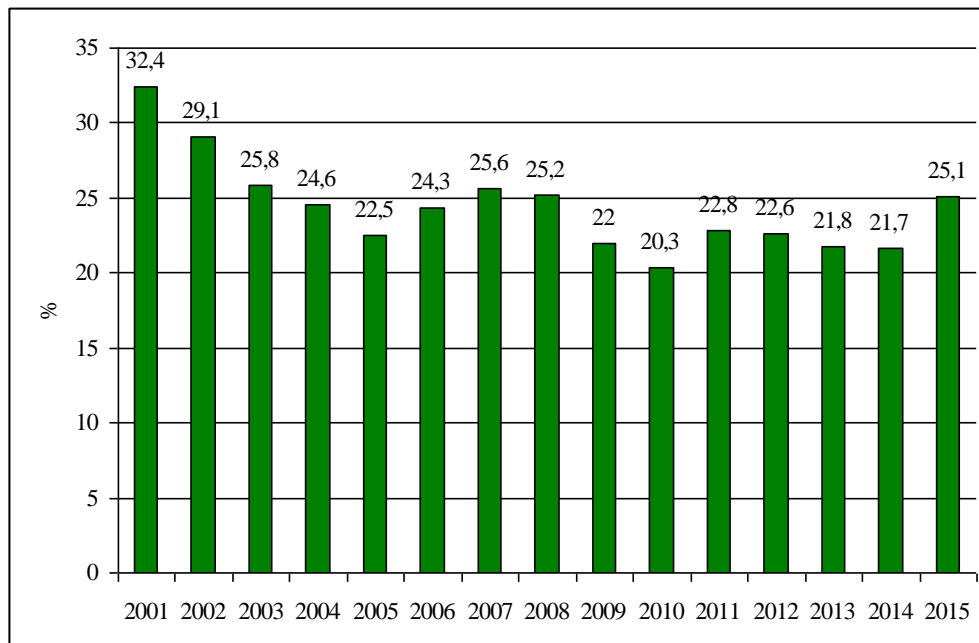
In the period analyzed the total number of tourists who visited the Suceava county was continuously increasing, except the years 2009 and 2010, years when it was felt the economic crisis started in 2008. The total number of tourists increased from 150,000 in the year 2001, to over 300,000 in year 2015. In total number of tourists, the Romanians predominated, while the tourists from abroad represented over 20% in the period 2002-2005, in the rest of the years their share situating under this threshold.

Source: *www.tempo-online*

On basis of the two synthetic indicators: the tourist accommodation capacity in operation and the overnight stays we can calculate the net utilization index of the tourist accommodation capacity in operation, which shows the degree of tourist capacity utilization.

The net utilization index of the tourist accommodation capacity in operation in period 2001-2015 had oscillating evolutions, registering the highest value of 32.4% in the year 2001, reaching to 25.1% in the year 2015.

Graph 5. The net utilization index of the tourist accommodation capacity in operation



Source: *own calculation by www.tempo-online*

In the year 2010 it was registered the smallest value of the degree of tourist capacity utilization (20.3%). This fact is due to the small number of tourist overnight stays in the tourist units in ratio with the relatively big number of their accommodation capacity in operation.

The net utilization index of the tourist accommodation capacity in operation in Romania, in the year 2001, was of 34.9%⁴, higher by 2.5 percentage points than that of Suceava county. This gap

⁴ <http://www.insse.ro/cms/files/pdf/ro/cap20.pdf/turism>

enlarged in the year 2015 when the net utilization index of the tourist accommodation capacity in operation in Romania was of 29.7%⁵ higher by 4.6 percentage points than that in Suceava County.

CONCLUSIONS

Following the analysis of the main tourism activity indicators in the period 2001-2015 in Suceava county we can draw the following conclusions:

- three of the main indicators of the tourism activity: the tourist accommodation structures, the tourist accommodation capacity existing and the tourist accommodation capacity in operation registered positive trends;
- the number of tourists visiting Suceava county doubled in the analyzed period;
- the number of overnight stays by these ones in the tourist accommodation structures was of 1.5 times bigger in the year 2015 opposed to the year 2001;
- the time spent by the tourists in the Suceava county had a duration between 2.3 and 2.4 days, which means that they preferred to visit Suceava county in a limited time;
- the net utilization index of the tourist accommodation capacity in function registered fluctuations in the period under analysis, situating under the value registered by this per total Romania.

Evolution results of the tourism activity show the fact that there existed a positive tendency under the aspect of putting into value of the tourism potential of the Suceava county. Different actions are necessary which should have as result the increase of the tourists flow, either they choose only to stop, but especially to spend more time in Suceava County. For this thing we need as many tourism programs as possible, with the practicing of some promotional prices and of tourist offers to lead to the increase of the number of tourists and to their keeping as many nights as possible in the zone.

So, a better promotion of this destination could lead on the future to a better putting into value of the natural and anthropic touristic potential so rich and diverse of this zone.

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⁵ <http://www.insse.ro/cms/files/publicatii/publicatii%20statistice%20operative/Seria%20turism%20tr%20III%202015.pdf>