

PROTECTING NATIONAL AND CULTURAL HERITAGE WHILE PROMOTING CULTURAL TOURISM IN ROMANIA – UNSOLVABLE DILEMMA OR MISSED OPPORTUNITY?

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Abstract

The current paper tackles the thorny issue of cultural tourism in Romania, trying to ascertain whether there is an actual chance of promoting it successfully in our country, without further damage to an already endangered national cultural patrimony. The question is whether we were facing a dilemma with little chances of being solved to our advantage – namely, if the promotion of cultural tourism would pose a threat or present an opportunity to a domain in which, unfortunately, very little has been done in recent years. The goal of the paper is twofold – it is meant, on the one hand, as a strong alarm signal, a wake-up call as to the necessity of a coherent, well-funded strategy regarding the promotion of cultural tourism in Romania, and on the other hand as a cautionary tale – one that could envisage what might happen if such a strategy were incorrectly devised and applied. Some hints in that direction are unfortunately already at hand, amply visible when considering the current situation of some essential sites to our cultural and national identity. Some of the case studies we discussed include The Danube Delta, Dacian sites, Bucovina Monasteries, or the Old Town area in our capital, Bucharest.

Keywords:

Cultural heritage, national heritage, cultural tourism, sustainable tourism.

JEL Classification: Q53

DOI:

Introduction

It is a well-known fact that tourism represents one of the branches of the economy with a great potential of contributing to social welfare, while cultural tourism potentially can lead to the sustainable development of society. Therefore, our study explores the complex relationships between the promotion of cultural tourism and the use of the national cultural patrimony and its protection. The aim of our endeavor is to identify the most important measures for a better usage and protection of the national cultural patrimony and for the development of cultural tourism.

The first part contains a short presentation of the state of knowledge in the field and a study on the opinions of specialists related to the usage and protection of the national cultural patrimony in our country. The second part includes research based on statistical and mathematical methods of the evolution of some significant indicators of the supply and demand for cultural tourism. Moreover, the second part of the article presents the results of direct research conducted on a sample of graduate and master's students in BUES (the Bucharest University of Economic Studies). The research allowed the discovery of the extent to which students know the strengths and weaknesses of four areas representative for the national cultural patrimony, namely: Bucharest, the Danube Delta, Sarmisegetuza Regia and the Bucovina Monasteries. Moreover, important information was obtained regarding the opinions of students as to the

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current level of usage and protection of the national cultural patrimony of the four areas and the actions which need to be taken for a better usage and protection.

The results of the research conducted formed the basis of the formulation, in the last part of the study, of some important and urgent actions and measures which should be taken for a better usage and protection of the cultural sites.

1 Reviewing scientific literature

Tourism can become one of the key factors in the process of economic and social development of Romania, considering the fact that our country has an exceptional touristic potential, sadly insufficiently used up to now (Ionciã et al., 2004). Cultural tourism in particular benefits of numerous and extremely valuable tourist attractions, such as: museums, theatres, art galleries, historical monuments, churches, monasteries, castles, cities, traditions and customs, gastronomical attractions, festivals, fairs, exhibitions, cultural events, scientific and natural parks and many others.

It is well known that tourism is one of the branches of the economy with a significant potential for contributing to welfare. At the same time, cultural tourism represents one of the forms of tourism which can contribute to the sustainable development of society.

The development of cultural tourism is stimulated by people's curiosity, by the increase in the level of education and civilization (Minciu, 2004). At world level, cultural tourism has a pace of growth superior to the tourism industry in general. Thus, WTO estimates that to a total average annual growth of tourism of 4-5% an annual growth rate of 10-15% would correspond in travels with a cultural interest.

At a European level, a study of the European Commission shows that 20% of tourist arrivals in Europe answer to cultural motivations, while 60% of European tourists are interested in cultural attractions on their holidays (Cabrini, 2003, quoted by Țigu, 2011, p. 154).

In the practice of cultural tourism numerous forms of manifestation of the latter are found. Thus, function of the specificity of objectives and of the contents of the journeys, the following are part of cultural tourism (Minciu, 2004, p. 87):

- Visiting the objectives of the historical patrimony;
- Visiting museums, botanical gardens, zoos;
- Participating in cultural events;
- Industrial and technical tourism.

We should mention that, in a wide sense, any form of tourism can integrate elements of cultural tourism, if it also answers the need people have for knowledge, diversity, experimenting new things. Especially urban tourism includes voyages with a cultural motivation, as in urban centers many historical and cultural objectives can be found.

Moreover, the religious monuments: monasteries, cathedrals, churches etc. attract a great number of tourists for whom the cultural-religious motivation lies at the basis of the journey.

Not lastly, visiting natural attractions and, especially, protected areas has an increasing importance in motivating people to travel for cultural reasons.

The difficulties in delimiting cultural tourism from the other forms of tourism make it difficult to study its evolution through the use of statistical and mathematical indicators.

Cultural tourism puts to use an inestimable resource, namely the national cultural patrimony.

The national cultural patrimony is formed by the totality of goods which represent a testimony and expression of values, beliefs, knowledge and national traditions, regardless of their property régime. (Law no. 182/2000).

The national cultural patrimony comprises all the elements resulted from the interaction, in time, between the natural and human factors.

The year 2018 will be the European Year of the Cultural Patrimony (2018, The European Year of the Cultural Patrimony). The aim of this initiative is to bring to attention European history and values and the possibilities offered by the cultural patrimony. Moreover, attention is called for to the challenges it faces, among which:

- The impact of passing to the digital era;
- The physical and environmental pressures on patrimony sites;
- The illicit trade in cultural goods.

The European year of the Cultural Patrimony will benefit of a financial package of 8 million Euros.

2 Study on the opinions of specialists on the use and protection of the cultural patrimony in our country

“Romanian tourism needs investments of 10 billion euros so as to be competitive”, stated, for Business24, Dan Matei Agathon, The President of the Federation of Employers in Tourism and Services (FETS). The statement, made in 2013, came as a reaction to the proposals of the Tourism Minister of the time, Maria Grapini, who had presented the priorities for the respective year, among which cultural tourism was mentioned (together with the balneary one and the exploitation of mineral resources).

Agathon commented at that moment that the suggestions of the minister were correct in principle, adding though that “without substantial investments, the Romanian state cannot be listed on the map of major tourist destinations.”

In the same interview, Agathon drew our attention to the need to have a strategy, to prioritize investments:

“It is not realistic to think that in such a short time we shall have this capital, but the money we have must be invested function of a strategy. If you prioritize investments and say 2013 is the year of balneary tourism, cultural tourism and of the exploitation of mineral resources, it is very well, but seaside tourism should be strongly promoted. Romania has 44% of accommodation structures here. The heart of Romanian tourism is the seaside” .

The representative of tourism employers also drew our attention to a sensitive issue in Romanian tourism – underdeveloped infrastructure. The same interview suggests a solution to these problems: the absorption of European funds. With an added statement: “the money should not be in the hands of obscure public servants, but in the hands of young people, paid with 20,000 euros a month.”

The tourism consultant Traian Bădulescu agreed with the investment in balneary and cultural tourism. “If more Romanian tourists come to the Romanian seaside, foreigners are attracted especially by cultural and balneary tourism, so the proposal of minister Grapini to invest more in these two sectors is welcome”, Bădulescu also said. All the more since there are tourism objectives and extremely interesting destinations in the country, which are not sufficiently promoted, although they could significantly contribute to tourism receipts (our highlighting).

“We promote very well Saxon villages, but we do not mention Dacian sites. We have Tatar villages in Dobrogea or an Italian village, with craftsmen who carve in marble”, Bădulescu exemplified. He said that Romania has diversity and this should be much better exploited, as it would generate revenues for the budget. At least as profitable could be the tourist exploitation of the North of Oltenia, the inner Dobrogea or the Danube.

“Inside Dobrogea there are several tourist objectives, from the Cave of St. Andrew to Turkish and Lippovan cities. Also the Danube should be promoted and large investments are necessary, as 1000 km, the largest part of the river, are on the territory of Romania”, Bădulescu also said. (Bădulescu, 2013)

Neither the minister, nor the representative of the employers or the tourism consultant mentioned above put the Danube Delta or cultural tourism in Bucharest on the list of priorities in 2013, although the latter attracts the highest number of foreign tourists.

However, their comments essentially bring to attention three crucial points for the development of cultural tourism in Romania, and for the use and protection of the cultural patrimony in our country, highlighted by us above and which we would like to dwell on, namely: 1. The need for the existence of a strategy, well defined on the long term, so as to attract investments and to allocate funds properly (state funds or from other sources), for activities aimed at consolidating tourist infrastructure and promoting Romanian tourism. We are referring to promotion both in our country and abroad; let us not forget the fact that there are two worrying trends at the moment for Romanian tourism – on the one hand, we can notice the orienting of Romanian tourists who have the resources towards destinations

abroad, even in the cases in which Romania could offer similar services and comparable (or even more interesting) objectives (see the case of the Romanian seaside versus the Bulgarian one or the Greek one, or, to stay in the same geographical area the insufficient promotion of cultural tourism in Romania compared to the two countries in the previous examples). This leads to the leak of Romanian tourists towards other areas abroad, which involves important losses for local tourism, in favor of other destinations. On the other hand, this movement to the exterior of Romanian tourists is matched by a much less significant attraction of foreign tourists towards Romanian tourism – a fact which has as main causes the two problems we identified: 2. underdeveloped infrastructure and 3. insufficient (and inefficient) promotion.

“Eastern Europe is already an attraction for the cultural tourism on the continent, and Romania can capitalize on this interest, especially on the segment of film and music festivals” Elena Badea, Marketing Director, EY Romania, said. The Marketing Manager of the well-known multinational discusses also the problem we posed above, that of infrastructure, bringing important comments on the infrastructure for cultural activities:

“Regarding the infrastructure for cultural activities, Romania needs consistent investments, to cover an obvious deficit. If we cannot talk yet of cultural areas built especially for large events under optimum conditions, we can however focus on the development of urban infrastructure of smaller dimensions, like concert and performance halls and exhibition venues...” Elena Badea stated. (Badea, 2017).

3 The analysis of trends in the evolution of demand for cultural tourism

Considering the conceptual aspects presented, and the availability of the statistical information, our research has focused, in this part, on the analysis of the trends in the evolution of demand for cultural tourism on areas and tourist destinations and types of tourists (Romanian and foreigners).

The indicators used for the analysis were: arrivals and overnight stays of tourists and the average duration of their stay, by tourist destinations and types of tourists (Romanian and foreigners) and the number of tourists participating in internal tourist actions organized by tourism agencies by tourist areas.

Table no. 1: Arrivals of tourists in the establishments of touristic reception with functions of touristic accommodation

Years	Total thou. people	Total Indices with f.b. %	Total Indices with c.b. %	The Danube Delta area thou. people	The Danube Delta area Indices with f.b. %	The Danube Delta area Indices with c.b. %	Bucharest and main cities in county thou. people	Bucharest and main cities in county Indices with f.b. %	Bucharest and main cities in county Indices with c.b. %
2008	7125	100.0	-	96	100.0	-	3363	100.0	-
2009	6141	86.2	86.2	70	72.9	72.9	2884	85.8	85.8
2010	6073	85.2	98.9	68	70.8	97.1	3012	89.6	104.4
2011	7032	98.7	115.8	82	85.4	120.6	3541	105.3	117.6
2012	7686	107.9	109.3	88	91.7	107.3	3817	113.5	107.8
2013	7943	111.5	103.3	81	84.4	92.0	3983	118.4	104.3
2014	8466	118.8	106.6	66	68.8	81.5	4308	128.1	108.2
2015	9922	139.3	117.2	69	71.9	104.5	5088	151.3	118.1
2016	11003	154.4	110.9	73	76.0	105.8	5563	165.4	109.3

Source: Processed using data from INS Tempo online

In the period analyzed, the average annual number of tourist arrivals was of about 7.9 million by total country (approx. 22 thousand people/day), 77 thousand in the Danube Delta (about 210/day) and about 4 million in Bucharest and in the main cities in counties (10.8 thousand/day). The average annual growth was of about 485 thousand people per total country – 2.9 thousand people in the Danube Delta and 275 thousand in Bucharest and the main cities in counties.

As expected, tourist arrivals in the establishments of touristic reception with functions of touristic accommodation decreased in the years of the economic crisis 2009, 2010 and started growing again with economic revival, after the year 2011. It is harder to explain why in the Danube Delta region this revival did not take place, or was very feeble, the arrivals in 2016 being with 24% lower than in 2008. A possible explanation would be that, following the economic crisis, the preponderantly cultural destinations recover more slowly, the priority going to business motivations.

Table no. 2: Arrivals of tourists in the establishments of touristic reception with functions of touristic accommodation by types of tourists, the Danube Delta and Bucharest regions and in the main cities in counties

Years	The Danube Delta thous. people	The Danube Delta Romanians Indices with a f.b. %	The Danube Delta Foreigners thous. people	The Danube Delta Foreigners Indices with a f.b. %	Bucharest and the main cities in counties Romanians thous. people	Bucharest and the main cities in counties Romanians Indices with a f.b. %	Bucharest and the main cities in counties Foreigners thous. people	Bucharest and the main cities in counties Indices with a f.b. %
2008	79	100.0	17	100.0	2262	100.0	1101	100.0
2009	55	69.6	16	94.1	1904	84.2	980	89.0
2010	54	68.4	14	82.4	1964	86.8	1047	95.1
2011	59	74.7	23	135.3	2365	104.6	1177	106.9
2012	57	72.2	31	182.4	2555	113.0	1261	114.5
2013	58	73.4	23	135.3	2675	118.3	1308	118.8
2014	52	65.8	13	70.6	2822	124.8	1486	135.0
2015	53	67.1	16	94.1	3369	148.9	1719	156.1
2016	56	70.9	17	100.0	3632	160.6	1931	175.4

Source: Processed using data from INS Tempo online

The average annual number of Romanian tourist arrivals in the Danube Delta, in the period analyzed, was of 58 thousand people (approx. 160/day), and that of foreign tourist arrivals of about 22 thousands (61/day).

In Bucharest and in the main cities in counties, 2.6 million Romanians arrived on average annually, (7170/day) and 1.335 mill. foreigners (3660/day).

The average annual growth of tourist arrivals in the Danube Delta was negative for Romanians (-2.875 thousand people) and 0 for foreigners.

In Bucharest and in the main cities in counties, the annual average growth of Romanian tourist arrivals was of about 171 thousand people, and that of foreign tourists of about 104 thousands.

We should note the negative evolution of tourist arrivals in the Danube Delta, especially concerning Romanian tourists.

The causes of this evolution would be, aside from the ones previously mentioned, referring to the lower demand motivation, also the inefficiency of the promotional actions and of actions for improving the general and specific infrastructure, which is wanting in this area.

Regarding the tourist arrivals in Bucharest and in the main cities in counties, these came back to a positive trend after the economic crisis. Moreover, the dynamics of foreign tourist arrivals surpassed that of Romanian tourists, a positive fact through the lenses of the higher revenues coming from foreign tourists.

Another indicator analyzed was the number of **overnight stays in the establishments of touristic accommodation.**

Table no. 3: Overnight stays in the establishments of touristic accommodation

Years	Total thous.	Total Indices with f.b. %	Total Indices with c.b. %	The Danube Delta region thous.	The Danube Delta region Indices with f.b. %	The Danube Delta Indices with c.b. %	Bucharest and the main cities in counties thous.	Bucharest and the main cities in counties Indices with f.b. %	Bucharest and the main cities in counties Indices with c.b. %
2008	20726	100.0	-	174	100.0	-	6686	100.0	-
2009	17325	83.6	83.6	124	71.3	71.3	5393	80.7	80.7

2010	16051	77.4	92.6	109	62.6	87.9	5584	83.5	103.5
2011	17979	86.7	112.0	131	75.3	120.2	6408	95.8	114.8
2012	19166	92.5	106.6	134	77.0	102.3	6786	101.5	105.9
2013	19363	93.4	101.0	191	109.8	142.5	7083	105.9	104.4
2014	20280	97.8	104.7	125	71.8	65.4	7851	117.4	110.8
2015	23519	113.5	116.0	138	79.3	110.4	9209	137.7	117.3
2016	25441	122.7	108.2	150	86.2	108.7	9885	147.8	107.3

Source: Processed using data from INS Tempo online

The annual average value of overnight stays per total country in the period analyzed was of about 20 mil. (approx. 2.2 mill./day). In the Danube Delta, it was about 142 thousands (388/day), and in Bucharest and in the main cities in counties of 7.2 mill. (19.8 thousand/day).

The average annual growth was of about 589 thousands per total country - 3 thousands in the Danube Delta and about 400 thousands in Bucharest and in the main cities in counties.

As in the case of arrivals, on which the number of stays actually depends, they have dropped in the years of the economic crisis and started recovering after 2011.

On the whole country and in Bucharest and the main cities in counties, the recovery of the losses recorded in the crisis years was achieved, but in the Danube Delta, in 2016 the number of overnight stays was still about 14% lower than in 2008.

The situation of **overnight stays** by types of tourists in the Danube Delta and in Bucharest and the main cities in counties is analyzed based on the data in the following table.

Table no. 4: Overnight stays in the establishments of touristic accommodation by types of tourists in the Danube Delta and in Bucharest and the main cities in counties

Years	The Danube Delta Romanians thous.	The Danube Delta Romanians with a f.b. %	The Danube Delta Foreigners thous.	The Danube Delta Foreigners Indices with a f.b. %	Bucharest and the main cities in counties Romanians thous.	Bucharest and the main cities in counties Romanians Indices with a f.b. %	Bucharest and the main cities in counties Foreigners thous.	Bucharest and the main cities in counties Foreigners Indices with a f.b. %
2008	142	100.0	32	100.0	4308	100.0	2378	100.0
2009	95	66.9	30	93.8	3467	80.5	1926	81.0
2010	85	59.9	24	75.0	3548	82.4	2036	85.6
2011	95	66.9	35	109.4	4119	95.6	2289	96.3
2012	87	61.3	46	143.8	4381	101.7	2406	101.2
2013	116	81.7	75	234.4	4589	106.5	2494	104.9
2014	97	68.3	28	87.5	5100	118.4	2750	115.6
2015	104	73.2	34	106.3	6002	139.3	3206	134.8
2016	110	77.5	39	121.9	6326	146.8	3559	149.7

Source: Processed using data from INS Tempo on line

The average annual value of the Romanian tourists' overnight stays in the Danube Delta was in the nine years analyzed of about 104 thousands, and of foreign tourists a little over 38 thousands.

In Bucharest and the main cities in counties the annual average value of Romanian tourists' overnight stays was of almost 2.6 million.

The average annual growth of Romanian tourists' overnights stays in the Danube Delta was of 4 thousands, and of foreign students of about 900.

For Bucharest and the main cities in counties, the average annual growth was of approx. 252 thousands, in the case of Romanian tourists, and 148 thousands in the case of foreign ones.

In the Danube Delta, in 2016, 22.5% fewer overnight stays were recorded as compared to 2008, while the overnight stays of foreign tourists were by about 22% higher.

The evolution of the number of **overnight stays** in Bucharest and in the main cities in counties was positive after 2012 both for Romanian and for foreign tourists.

The analysis of the dynamics of the indicator the **average duration of the stay**, presented in the following table, is also relevant for the evolution of the demand for cultural tourism in our country.

Table no. 5: The average duration of the stay (days)

Years	Total country	Total country Romanians	Total country Foreigners	The Danube Delta Total	The Danube Delta Romanians	The Danube Delta Foreigners	Bucharest and the main cities in counties Total	Bucharest and the main cities in counties Romanians	Bucharest and the main cities in counties Foreigners
2008	2.9	3.1	2.3	1.8	1.8	1.9	2.0	1.9	2.2
2009	2.8	3.0	2.1	1.8	1.7	1.9	1.9	1.8	2.0
2010	2.6	2.8	2.1	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.9	1.8	1.9
2011	2.6	2.7	2.0	1.6	1.6	1.5	1.8	1.7	1.9
2012	2.5	2.6	2.0	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.8	1.7	1.9
2013	2.4	2.6	2.0	2.4	2.0	3.3	1.8	1.7	1.9
2014	2.4	2.5	2.0	1.9	1.9	2.2	1.8	1.8	1.9
2015	2.4	2.5	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.1	1.8	1.8	1.9
2016	2.3	2.4	1.9	2.1	2.0	2.3	1.8	1.7	1.8

Source: Processed using data from INS Tempo online

The values for the average duration of the stay are extremely reduced (about 2.5 days per total country, 1.9 days in the Danube Delta and 1.8 days in Bucharest and in the main cities in counties), confirming the general trend of shortening of the stays and the fact that, in the periods of economic crisis, the expenses and the time destined for tourism are not on the first positions in the hierarchy of needs and are diminishing.

Important conclusions on the evolution of cultural tourism as such and forms usually included in its sphere can be formulated through the analysis of data on the number of tourists participating in touristic actions organized by tourist agencies.

Table no. 6: The number of Romanian tourists participating in internal touristic actions organized by tourist agencies by form of tourism, %

Years	Tourism agencies (tour operators) total, of which:	Tourism agencies Cultural Tourism	Tourism agencies Religious pilgrimages	Agencies with sales activities Total, out of which:	Agencies with sales activities Cultural Tourism	Agencies with sales activities Religious pilgrimages
2008	100.0	3.5	1.1	100.0	..	1.9
2009	100.0	2.5	0.7	100.0	1.9	0.7
2010	100.0	3.4	1.7	100.0	0.4	1.4
2011	100.0	2.8	0.6	100.0	3.6	1.0
2012	100.0	0.7	0.2	100.0	2.2	1.2
2013	100.0	1.2	0.7	100.0	2.5	0.5
2014	100.0	1.0	0.3	100.0	7.4	0.2
2015	100.0	1.2	0.6	100.0	5.5	1.1
2016	100.0	2.6	3.6	100.0	5.7	1.2

.. no data

Source: Processed using data from INS Tempo online

According to the data in the table above, the share of cultural tourism per se (according to INS data) is extremely reduced, in the period analyzed, in our country both in the case of tourism agencies (tour operators) (about 2.1 % on average annually) and in the case of agencies with sales activities (3.65% annual average).

The share of the number of tourists participating in religious pilgrimages is also low: 1.1% annual average in the case of tourism agencies (tour operators) and 0.89% in the case of agencies with sales activities.

From the data it is clear that the national cultural and religious patrimony is insufficiently put to use in our country.

The evolution in the period analyzed of this important indicator of cultural tourism demand by forms of tourism and types of agencies is presented in the following tables.

Table no. 7: The number of Romanian tourists participating in internal tourism actions organized by tourism agencies (tour operators)

Years	Total people thous.	Total people Indices with a f.b. %	Cultural Tourism thous.	Cultural Tourism Indices with a f.b. %	Religious pilgrimage thous.	Religious pilgrimage Indices with a f.b. %
2008	416.5	100.0	14.4	100.0	4.7	100.0
2009	130.0	31.2	3.3	22.9	0.9	19.2
2010	113.8	27.3	3.9	27.1	1.9	40.4
2011	364.1	87.4	10.3	71.5	2.2	46.8
2012	642.3	154.2	4.7	32.6	0.9	19.2
2013	401.7	96.5	4.9	34.0	2.6	55.3
2014	374.7	90.0	3.6	25.0	1.0	21.3
2015	430.8	103.4	5.1	35.4	2.5	53.2
2016	590.5	141.8	15.4	107.0	21.0	446.8

Source: Processed using data from INS Tempo online

In the years 2009 and 2010, the years of the economic crisis, drastic decreases took place both in the total number of Romanian tourists participating in internal tourist activities by tourism agencies (tour operators), and especially for the people participating in cultural tourism and religious pilgrimages.

The recovery was slow to come, as late as the year 2016, when significant increases in the participants to tourist activities, especially religious pilgrimages were noticed.

Regarding the **number of tourists participating in internal tourist activities organized by tourism agencies with sales activities**, per total and for religious pilgrimages, although it does not rise to very high values, it seems to be less affected by the economic crisis, recording pretty consistent increases on the period analyzed. On the other hand, the number of participants to cultural tourism was affected by the economic crisis, coming back to a positive trend after 2012 (see the following table).

Table no. 8: Number of tourists participating in internal tourist activities organized by tourism agencies with sales activities

Years	Total people thous.	Total people Indices with f.b. %	Cultural Tourism thous. people	Cultural Tourism Indices with f.b. %	Religious pilgrimage thous. people	Religious pilgrimage Indices with f.b. %
2008	21.1	100.0	0.4	100.0
2009	98.1	464.9	1.9	100.0	0.7	175.0
2010	49.6	235.1	0.2	10.5	0.7	175.0
2011	58.2	275.8	2.1	110.5	0.6	150.0
2012	41.4	196.2	0.9	47.4	0.5	125.0
2013	122.5	580.6	3.1	163.2	0.6	150.0
2014	127.4	603.8	9.4	494.7	0.3	75.0
2015	133.5	632.7	7.3	384.2	1.4	350.0
2016	162.6	770.6	9.2	484.2	1.9	475.0

.. no data

Source: Processed using data from INS Tempo online

The main conclusion of the analyses of this first part is that cultural tourism still represents in our country a developing form of tourism, the exceptional potential for cultural tourism we have being insufficiently put to use.

A possible cause could be the level of development of the capacity of accommodation available, which will be analyzed next based on the data in the following table.

Table no. 9: The capacity of accommodation available by tourist destinations

Years	Total thous. places-days	Total thous. places-days Indices with f.b. %	The Danube Delta thous. places-days	The Danube Delta Indices with f.b. %	Bucharest and the main cities in counties thous. places-days	Bucharest and the main cities in counties Indices with f.b. %
2008	59188	100.0	554	100.0	20502	100.0

2009	61104	103.2	543	98.0	22016	107.4
2010	63808	107.8	549	99.1	23884	116.5
2011	68417	115.6	567	102.3	24970	121.8
2012	74135	125.3	644	116.2	27270	133.0
2013	77028	130.1	657	118.6	27772	135.5
2014	77677	131.2	570	102.9	28007	136.6
2015	81873	138.3	560	101.1	29587	144.3
2016	83323	140.8	607	109.6	29871	145.7

Source: Processed using data from INS Tempo on line

Indeed, if by total country and in Bucharest and the main cities in counties, the capacity of accommodation available increased, even in the years of the economic crisis, in the Danube Delta region it decreased in the years 2009, 2010, and in subsequent years the increases were pretty modest.

This state of facts leads to the conclusion that, among many other factors, the level of development of the material base of cultural tourism influences the demand for this form of tourism, and, as a consequence, the degree of use of our national cultural patrimony.

4.1 Objectives and methodological framework of the research regarding the use and protection of the national cultural patrimony

The present research tried to pinpoint the extent to which young students know the cultural touristic potential and the current level of usage and protection of some areas renowned in this regard in our country.

The study was made on a sample of 138 graduate and master's students in BUES, the faculties of Business and Tourism, Banking and Finance and Accounting, with a probability of 90.11% ($t=1.65$) and a margin of error of +/- 7.02%. The research was conducted based on a face-to-face interview with the help of a written questionnaire. The interviews took place in Bucharest in 2017. The sample included 58% graduate students and 42% master's students. Out of the total, 76% are women and 24% men, 69% between 20-30 years old. 7% are under 20 and 14% over 30.

The stages followed when conducting the survey were: the establishing of objectives of the research, the establishing of the hypotheses, the gathering and processing of the information, the analysis and interpretation of the results of the research (Cătoiu et al., 2009, Balaure et al., 2005).

The objectives of the research were the following: studying the level of knowledge by the students of the strengths and weaknesses of the cultural tourist potential of some areas renowned in this regard in our country, like: Bucharest, the Danube Delta, Sarmisegetuza Regia and the Bucovina Monasteries; studying the way in which they appreciate the current stage of the usage and protection of the national cultural patrimony of the researched areas; knowing their opinions regarding the measures which should be taken for a better usage and protection of the studied areas; knowing the opinions of students regarding other remarkable areas for their exceptional cultural tourism potential and the extent to which young students practice cultural tourism.

The starting hypotheses were:

1. Young students do not know the cultural tourism potential of the areas: the Danube Delta, Sarmisegetuza Regia and the Bucovina Monasteries
2. Young students consider the cultural tourism potential of the areas Bucharest, the Danube Delta, Sarmisegetuza Regia and the Bucovina Monasteries to be poorly used;
3. Young students consider the cultural tourism potential of the areas Bucharest, the Danube Delta, Sarmisegetuza Regia and the Bucovina Monasteries to be poorly protected;
4. Young students broadly define cultural tourism potential

4.2 Results and discussions

The research has shown that the Bucharest area is 100% known by the respondents, which is easily explainable as they study at BUES. Regarding the other studied areas, the results are that about 25% of the students interviewed do

not know the Danube Delta area, 54% do not know the Sarmisegetuza Regia area and 41% do not know the Bucovina Monasteries area. This result partially confirms hypothesis 1, given the mentioned results.

Regarding the Bucharest area, the young people interviewed mentioned, firstly, as strengths of the cultural tourism potential: the museums, the theatres, the opera (a percent of 45% of the interviewed), mentioning: the Village Museum, the Romanian Peasant's Museum, Antipa, the History Museum, the National Art Museum, the National G. Enescu Museum a.s.o. Secondly, in a proportion of 30%, the young mentioned the House of Parliament and palaces such as: Cotroceni, Cantacuzino, Ghica, Șuțu, Știrbei etc. In significant proportions they mentioned: the old center (20%), historical monuments (15%), the Arch of Triumph (11%), memorial houses, churches, monasteries, the unique architecture. Strengths were also considered the parks (15% of the interviewed mentioned them), the lakes and the relaxation areas and the Botanical Garden. As strengths, they also mentioned: cultural events (festivals, art galleries, exhibitions, opera and theatre shows). In a relatively reduced proportion, students mentioned as strengths of the Bucharest area: multiculturalism, the fact that it is the capital of the country, that there are many English speakers, the existence of information points, the richer population. The strengths of the cultural tourism potential of the Danube Delta area mentioned by students were: the flora and the fauna (30%), the diversity of the species of fish, birds, the water lilies; the scenery, the Caraorman forest, the Letea forest, the centuries old forests of grey oaks, white and black poplar trees, the forest areas, the Măcinului Mountains, the cities: Enisala, the Greek-Roman city of Argamim; the history of the area; the natural attractions: the Musura Gulf, the Polosman Cape, the Doloșman Cape, the Fortuna lake, the Danube-Black Sea Channel, the Chilia hills, the Monasteries: Saon, Buna Vestire, St. Anastasie hermitage; the Sulina Lighthouse, Tulcea, Sf. Gheorghe, Mila 23, Crișan, Murighiol etc. Other facts mentioned: the fact that it is a fishing area, the boat rides, the agri-tourism options, the accessible prices. Among the strengths of the cultural tourism potential of the Sarmisegetuza Regia area, the following were mentioned: the Dacian historical ruins (14%), the great round Sanctuary, the East and West gates, the Observation Tower, the City, the Andesite Sun, the Dacian calendar; the history of our ancestors; the forest scenery; the Godeanu Peak; the life and habits of the locals etc. We should notice that the young students who know the area (26% of the total) prove to be passionate about history and proud of the historical remains to be found in the area. As expected, the students who know the Bucovina Monasteries area, mentioned first, as strengths of the cultural tourism potential of this area the monasteries: Voroneț, Putna, Sucevița, Moldovița, Humor, Arbore, Dragomirna, Agapia. Other strengths mentioned were: history and traditions; the memorial houses; the impressive architecture; the uniqueness of the interior and exterior frescoes; the impressive architecture; the miracle making icons etc; rare landscapes; relation areas for tourists.

Young students also proved their mature capacity of discerning the weaknesses of the areas studied that they know.

Thus, the weaknesses of the cultural tourism potential of the Bucharest area mentioned by students were: the fact that it is crowded (33%), the degrading of the tourist objectives, the insufficient promotion, the poor infrastructure, the pollution, the old buildings in need of renovation, the high seismic risk, the high rate of crime, the insufficiency of green areas, poor coordination between the responsible authorities, the lack of the connection subway-city-airport, the lack of the indicators in English, the lack of a strategy in the cultural domain, high prices, poor neighborhoods, transport deficiencies, insufficiency of tourism programs etc. We should notice that the weaknesses noticed by students include a wide array from general problems related to busyness, pollution, infrastructure etc, to issues directly related to the use of the cultural tourism potential, such as: degrading tourist objectives, the lack of a strategy in the cultural domain etc.

Just like in the case of the Bucharest area, the weaknesses noticed by students regarding the Danube Delta area refer to general as well as specific issues. Thus, in the category of general problems, they mentioned: the poor infrastructure; the low degree of safety; the flooding danger; the high degree of isolation; water pollution; the migration of population; the high prices etc. Among the specific problems mentioned: the insufficient network of restaurants and accommodation facilities; the insufficient promotion; the lack of relaxation areas; the lack of investments; the poor skills of the tourist personnel; illegal fishing; the weak development of agritourism etc.

Among the weaknesses of the cultural tourism potential of the Sarmisegetuza Regia area, the students who know the area mentioned: the lack of renovation or sporadic renovation; poor promotion; difficult access; lack of indicators; poor infrastructure; the insufficiency of the accommodation; the lack of offers, information points, tourist guides.

A lot of the weaknesses mentioned previously are to be found for the Bucovina Monasteries area as well. Thus, students mentioned for this area also: insufficient promotion, the degrading of the cultural objectives, the lack of periodic restoration, bad roads, insufficient accommodation facilities, poorly trained personnel, the difficult access to the area, weak attraction of European funds, high prices etc.

The answers to the question about the current stage of usage of the area are centralized in the following table:

Table no. 10: The current stage of usage of the area (%)

Area	Very poor	Poor	Good	Very good	Unknown
Bucharest	-	34	57	7	2
Danube Delta	4	27	32	21	16
Sarmisegetuza Regia	4	27	15	6	48
Bucovina Monasteries	-	11	38	24	27

Source: by authors, based on research

We can see that for Bucharest, 57% of students opted for a good appreciation of the usage of the cultural tourism potential, while 34% considered the current level of usage to be poor. Only 7% of students appreciated the level of usage of the cultural tourism potential as very good, and 'very poor' was not given by any student. 2% did not make a statement. The same hierarchy is maintained also for the Danube Delta region, with the distinction that the percentage of those saying they do not know the area is higher (16%) and 4% consider the current level of usage of the cultural tourism potential of the Danube Delta to be very poor. At the same time, 21% consider the current level of usage to be very good. For the Sarmisegetuza Regia area, almost ½ of the students interviewed declared that they do not know the area, and among those who gave their opinions, the majority consider the current level of usage of the cultural tourism potential of the area to be poor, 4% consider it to be very poor, 15% consider it good, and 6% even very good. Regarding the Bucovina Monasteries area, the majority of the students interviewed who know it consider the usage of the cultural tourism potential good or even very good. The results of the research do not confirm the 2nd hypothesis that the current usage of the cultural tourism potential of the areas studied is poor, except for the Sarmisegetuza Regia area.

Regarding the question about the measures for superior usage of the cultural tourism potential of the areas under research, the array of the opinions of students was very wide, proving their interest and preoccupation for a better usage of the cultural wealth we have.

Thus, for the Bucharest area, most of the proposals referred to a better promotion, the rehabilitation of buildings with a historical value, fiscal facilities and/or the subsidizing cultural activities, improving transports, improving cleanliness, creating more green areas, investments in infrastructure, public-private partnerships, for the development of cultural institutions and activities, organizing tours with specialized buses, increasing the number of accommodation units and restaurants, more information points (centers), reducing busyness, actions for increasing safety etc. For the Danube Delta region, students mentioned also better promotion, as a priority action, followed by the combating of pollution, improving accommodation conditions, organizing tours, facilitating access, protecting unique species of birds and plants, stricter regulations for hunters and fishermen, developing entertainment, modernizing infrastructure, fiscal facilities for the development of tourism, diversifying the profile of restaurants, using traditions, advantageous offers, programs of personnel training, partnerships for accessing European funds etc. The improvement of promotion is the most often proposed action for the Sarmisegetuza Regia area as well. Moreover, students have also suggested: reconditioning historical monuments and artifacts, improving transport, infrastructure, information, access, organizing events and tours accompanied by specialized guides, organizing school camps, reducing pollution etc. Referring to the Bucovina Monasteries region, the improving of promotion is also on the first place in students' proposals, followed by: the rehabilitation of buildings, the restoration of paintings, the improvement of accommodation, of transports, of information, of cleanliness, investments in infrastructure, diversifying activities, more attractive tourist packages, organizing camps, using tradition, gastronomy, granting fiscal advantages.

The answers referring to the question regarding the current stage of protection of the area are centralized in the following table:

Table no. 11: The current stage of protection of the area (%)

Area	Very poor	Poor	Good	Very good	Unknown
Bucharest	4	51	39	4	2
The Danube Delta	7	34	32	8	19
Sarmisegetuza Regia	2	25	21	6	46
The Bucovina Monasteries	1	13	40	17	30

Source: by authors, based on research

It can be noticed that for Bucharest, most opinions are for a poor assessment of the protection of the cultural tourism potential, followed by an assessment as 'good'. Only 4% of students appreciated as very good the level of protection of the cultural tourism potential, also 4% granted the 'very poor' rating, and 2% did not make a statement. The same hierarchy is also maintained for the Danube Delta region, with the difference that the percentage of those who declare that they do not know the area is higher, 19%, while 7% consider the current level of usage of the cultural tourism potential for the Danube Delta to be very poor. For the Sarmisegetuza Regia area, almost ½ of the students interviewed said they did not know the area, and among those who made statements, most of them consider the level of protection of the cultural tourism patrimony to be poor or even very poor. Regarding the Bucovina Monasteries area, most of the students interviewed who know it consider the current level of protection to be good or even very good. The results of research confirm partially the third hypothesis, in the sense that the affirmation that the cultural tourism patrimony is poorly protected represents the opinion of most of the students interviewed, but this is not confirmed for the Bucovina Monasteries area where most of the respondents consider the current stage of protection to be good.

To the question regarding the measures for superior protection of the cultural tourism patrimony of the areas researched, the array of students' opinions was, as in the case of the measures of usage, very wide.

Thus, for the Bucharest area, most proposals referred to: the reconstruction and restauration of cultural objectives, the improvement of the sanitation services, regulations for the diminishing of traffic, harsher sanctions for pollution, creating parking lots, multiplying and taking care of parks and green areas, the security of tourism objectives, the elaboration of strategies for protecting tourism patrimony, the forbidding of unauthorized constructions, the education of the population, measures to reduce crimes etc.

For the Danube Delta region, the students mentioned: sanctioning illegal hunting and fishing, regulations regarding the protection of flora and fauna, of maintaining cleanliness, investments for the protection of the environment, fines for pollution, educational actions, partnerships with NGOs in the cultural domain.

For the Sarmisegetuza Regia area, students suggested: protecting the ruins, forbidding unauthorized constructions, restoration of the city, fines for pollution, the security of objectives, the disposal of waste, investments in infrastructure.

Regarding the Bucovina Monasteries area, the repairing, maintaining and restoration of historical monuments is on the first place in students' suggestions, followed by: the restoration of paintings, the caring for the green spaces, fines for pollution, investments in infrastructure, the inclusion in UNESCO projects of nature protection etc.

Regarding the mentioning of "other regions with a cultural tourism potential", the opinions of students included cities, resorts, palaces, castles, churches, monasteries, dams, lakes, salt mines, mountain roads, gorges, baths, caves, waterfalls, confirming hypothesis four, that the young give a broad definition of cultural tourism patrimony.

Among cities, Brasov is mentioned the most often, followed by Sibiu, Timișoara, Cluj Napoca, Sighișoara, Alba Iulia, Iași, Constanța, Tg. Jiu, Hunedoara, Oradea, Piatra Neamț etc. The resorts mentioned were: Predeal, Sinaia, Poiana Brașov, Herculane, Râncea, Amara, Covasna, Tușnad. The historical monuments renowned for their cultural tourism patrimony, included, in the opinion of students: Peleș and Pelișor Palaces, Chindiei Tower, the cities: Râșnov, Neamțului, Sighișoara, Alba Iulia, Deva, Ponorului, Enisala, Prejmer, Rupea, Ghimbav, Viscri, the Saxon churches of Transylvania, the Monasteries: Cozia, Prahova Valley, Curtea de Argeș, castles: Bran, Cantacuzino, Corvinilor etc, the merry graveyard of Săpânța etc.

Moreover, a large number of sites of the cultural patrimony mentioned in the last category were mentioned, of which we can mention: Vidraru Dam, the mountain roads Transalpina and Transfăgărășan, the Danube Boilers, the Tihuța Pass, Bicazului, Grădiștei, Nerei Gorges, the

Văcărești, Roșu lakes, the salt mines: Praid, Ocnele Mari, Slănic, the caves: Scărișoara, Urșilor, the baths: Felix, Geoagiu, Bigăr waterfall, the Sfinx, the Babele, the Maramureș area etc.

The same great diversity, including: cities, resorts, castles, monasteries, museums, gorges, caves, salt mines, etc. is also present in the answers of students to the question referring to the cultural areas (objectives) visited in the last 2 years.

We consider the results of the research to be relevant, highlighting the fact that young students have ideas worthy of being applied for a better usage and protection of the national cultural tourism patrimony.

5 The proposal of measures for a better use and protection of the cultural patrimony and for the development of cultural tourism

These measures follow logically from the problems identified in the two parts of the study, namely:

1. The need for the existence of a strategy, well defined on the long term, so as to attract investments and to allocate funds properly (state funds or from other sources), for activities aimed at consolidating tourist infrastructure and promoting Romanian tourism.
2. underdeveloped infrastructure (in particular, underdeveloped cultural infrastructure) and 3. insufficient (and inefficient) promotion of Romanian tourism in the country and abroad.

Regarding the strategy of development for tourism, our proposal is to focus on the absorption of European funds so as to finance both the development of infrastructure and the promotion of tourism, doubled by the stimulation of investments in the field, through known methods (fiscal incentives granted to firms – especially Romanian ones – activating in tourism, stimulating small businesses – hostels, family restaurants, etc. – through tax deductions, reducing red tape, financial aid in certain cases – founding local business advisory centers, especially in the regions with high tourism potential but less than qualified /insufficiently formed and informed local personnel, maybe in partnership with specialized universities, like ours, and with the support of the business environment and of the local community a.s.o.)

Regarding the promotion of Romanian tourism in the country and abroad, the examples in the experience so far are unfortunately really counter-examples – huge amounts have been spent on campaigns with minor or inexistent positive effects (see the successive unsuccessful attempts to create a country brand, visible and recognizable worldwide). The methods which can be used are generally known at a theoretical level, yet insufficiently applied.

At the same time, any coherent strategy for promoting cultural tourism should take into account two important aspects: the sustainability of planning (creating a strategy that would not affect negatively in the long run the natural and cultural heritage, as well as the quality of life of the inhabitants in the areas targeted by the planning) and the maximization of benefits to the local community (any plan made at a central level should be based on well-made local studies, so as to avoid any possible mismatch between the intent of the strategies and the real effects at community level).

Conclusions

Cultural tourism represents one of the forms of tourism with growth rhythms which are far higher than the average of tourism dynamics in general. Especially in emerging countries, like ours, the development of cultural infrastructure and of cultural tourism can be a great chance for sustainable development.

The results of our research, both on the opinions of tourism specialists, as well as the statistical ones and the direct research proved the close relation existent between the current level of usage of the cultural tourism patrimony and its protection. Moreover, they highlighted the strengths and weaknesses regarding the usage and protection of the cultural tourism patrimony in four areas remarkable for the value of the cultural tourism patrimony they have, namely: the capital of the country, the Danube Delta, Sarmisegetuza Regia and Bucovina Monasteries. Among the strengths worth highlighting, for all the four areas: the richness and diversity of the historical monuments, the wealth and diversity of

natural resources, the life and traditions of the inhabitants. Among the weaknesses, the three research types have shown in particular the following: the poor infrastructure, the absence of a well-thought strategy, which could be applied in the shortest time possible, insufficient promotion. These deficiencies were reflected also by the statistical analysis of the evolution of demand for cultural tourism, which showed the negative dynamics of tourist arrivals and overnight stays, especially Romanian ones, in the Danube Delta in the period 2008-2016. The conclusions referring to the share of cultural tourists in the number of Romanian tourists participating in internal tourist actions organized by tourism agencies, both in the cases of tour operators and in the case of agencies with a sales activity are also negative.

The results of the mentioned research were at the basis of the formulation of priority measures for improving the usage and protection of the cultural tourism patrimony, focused on promotion, efficient strategies and investments in the general and cultural infrastructure.

Of course, our research has certain limitations, in the sense that a limited number of indicators and aspects of the use and protection of the cultural tourism patrimony were subjected to analysis.

The research should be continued, also, through the use of direct research methods addressed to other categories of potential cultural tourists and at the level of other areas with a valuable touristic patrimony.

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