

**APPROACHES AND EVALUATIONS
OF THE TOURISM SECTOR IN EMERGING ECONOMIES**

ANA-MARIA NICA
Scientific Coordinator: Prof. PhD. GABRIELA STĂNCIULESCU

Considered by many an exclusively recreational activity, a way of spending holidays or free time, tourism proves itself to be an item with a major influence on both social development and especially on the economic state of affairs that is emerging in the increasingly prominent current global economic structures.

This scientific approach has three main pillars, namely economic emergence, impact assessment of the tourism sector in the economy and its economic competitiveness. The link between the three pillars is made during the six chapters of the thesis.

The ultimate goal of the research undertaken was to determine the "place" occupied by Romania in the emerging Central and Eastern Europe region, in comparison with other countries, in terms of tourism economic impact and competitiveness. The proposed model aims mainly: to identify destinations that are on a relatively equal competitive position, given the homogeneity of characteristics within the group, the relevance level of tourism impact in the economy recorded by the members of a cluster within the competitiveness groups created; the results of this study will help managers concerned to see competitive destinations positions compared to other destinations in the region more clearly than with simple ICT, positioning Romania on the group map of tourism competitiveness in Central and Eastern European, with an end to finding some strategic directions of development.

The specific objectives are achieved through a model based on cluster analysis. Thus, European countries are divided into four groups, each of which is homogeneous in terms of competitiveness. The crucial link of tourism competitiveness, as the modern approach of the tourism sector in the economy, with the tourism sector in the economy impact assessment, as its classical approach, is performed in the second part of this model, which thus establishes a point of convergence between the impact of tourism in the economy, competitiveness and economic emergence of states analyzed.