

# INCREASING SALAJ COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGIES BASED ON THE ECOTOURISM PRODUCTS

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## **Abstract**

This paper presents a short analysis of international and national touristic area, mainly in Salaj County in Romania. The research was considered a prospective 2014 to existing accommodation capacity in the region, and at the same time, the index of its use. The result of the research shows an unfavorable situation in this county, and in support of applying the methods of improvement of tourist services, we put emphasis on the implementation of strategies based on the ecotourism products.

**Keywords:** Ecotourism services, Capacity of tourist accommodation, Tourist traffic density, Index of tourist capacity utilization.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The global economy currently focuses on informing the welfare services ascendancy. At the same time, focuses on the development of information technology and communication systems in an extraordinarily accelerated acquisition of know-how. The specialist in the field, M. Ioncica argues that for this type of marketing you use different names such as: "*information society*", "*society of knowledge*", "*the third wave*", "*post-industrial society*" or "*the services economy*", the common denominator being the recognition of the role of services in development of economic societies (Ioncică, 2004, pp. 45-46).

The evolution of international tourism is characterised by a growing trend worldwide due to the influence of economic factors, political and social. International tourism is growing in importance due to the tendency of people to visit other countries, getting to know other cultures and customs, but also because of technological advances in the field of transport, progress that makes travel faster and more

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comfortable over short distances, medium and long. In Romania, the number of people who have purchased travel services had the following evolution, that can be seen in Figure 1 Evolution of the tourists number from Romania in July 2006-2012.

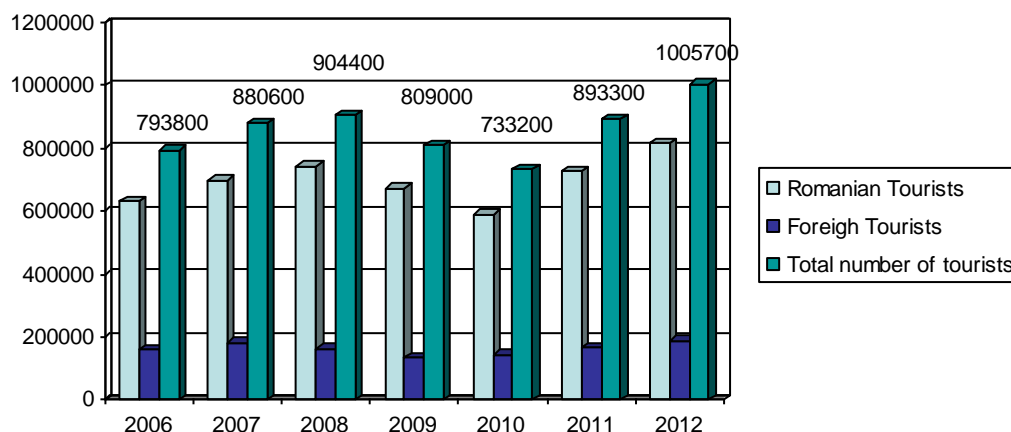


FIGURE 1. EVOLUTION OF THE TOURISTS NUMBER FROM ROMANIA IN JULY 2006-2012  
Source: statistics taken from website: <http://www.insse.ro> accessed at 21.04.2013

In Figure 1, Evolution of the tourists number from Romania in July 2006-2012, it can be seen a fluctuation in the number of tourists from one year to the next, in Romania. From 2006 to 2008 there has been a gradual breeding number of Romanian tourists, then, because of the unfavourable economic context, which appeared in 2008 in Romania. There was a decrease of about 10%, and 15% respectively, over the next two years, 2009 and 2010. However, in 2011 and 2012 was a spectacular comeback, the number of tourists reaching over 800,000 people in the last year. Regarding the situation of foreign tourists, their number also had the same fluctuations. Before the global economic crisis, the number of foreign tourists in the year 2006 was 161.600 and during 2007 their number rised by 20%. Then, a decrease of 18.7% happend in 2008. Over the next four years, it highlights a steady rise from year to year. In 2012 was noted the largest number of foreign tourists, 188.300. The year 2010 was unfavourable, the year in which their number was the smallest, due to the depth of the economic crisis.

## 2. ACCOMODATION CAPACITY IN SALAJ COUNTY

Using the data made available by the National Institute of Statistics, the values relating to the existing accommodation in the county during the period 2005-2012, and using the least squares method, we realized a linear regression, in order to determine the evolutionary trend of the indicator the existence of tourist accommodation capacity for the years 2013 and 2014. Weir variable was 0.6725. In Figure 2,

The evolution of existing accommodation capacity in Salaj County, we represented the final outcome, as follows:

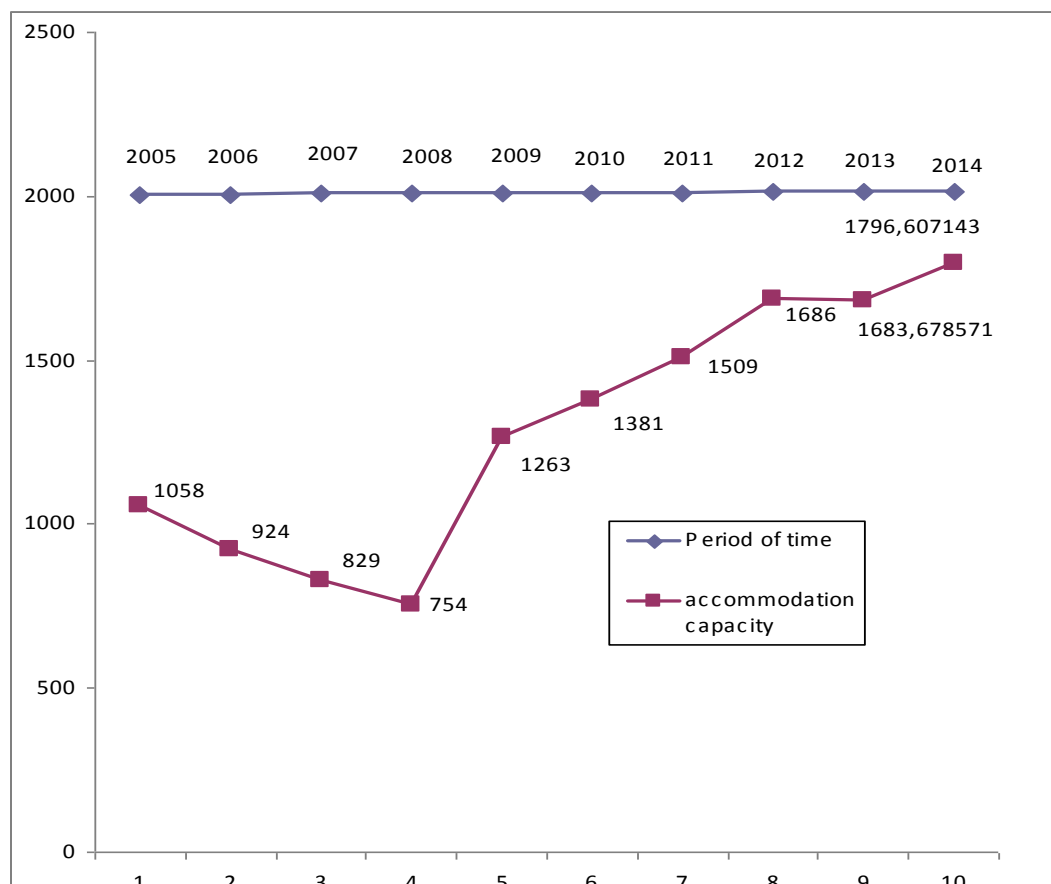


FIGURE NO 2 THE EVOLUTION OF EXISTING ACCOMMODATION CAPACITY IN SALAJ COUNTY

Source: made by authors

As we can see in Figure 2 The evolution of existing accommodation capacity in Salaj County, predicted values, for two years, were recorded as follows: for the year 2013 it was foresaw a decline of 4 places from the year 2012 and during 2014 it is estimated an increase of 113 beds. Increasing the existing accommodation places may happend due to expansion of capacity of the units providing this kind of service or the emergence of new units of housing in Salaj County.

### 3. INDEX OF ACCOMMODATION CAPACITY IN SALAJ COUNTY

Next, we presented the evolution of one of the most important indicators in the economic literature, using data provided by the National Institute of Statistics and the method of least squares. Residual variable in this case has a value approximately equal to 0.4.

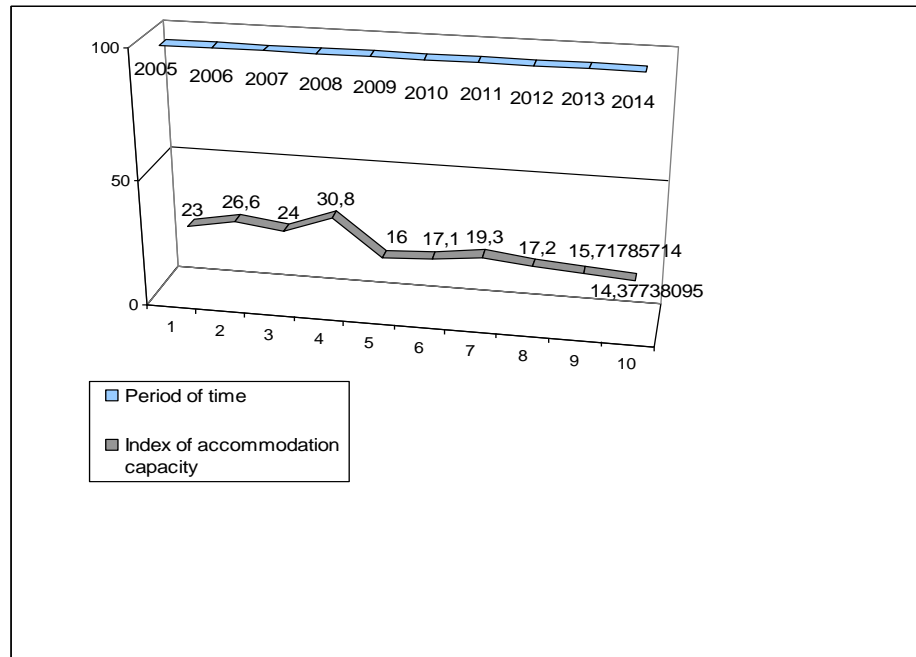


FIGURE 3 THE EVOLUTION OF EXISTING ACCOMMODATION CAPACITY INDEX IN THE PERIOD 2005-2014  
Source: made by authors

In Figure 3 The evolution of existing accommodation capacity index in the period 2005-2014 it can be observed that the smallest value in the ranking, of 16 %, was registered in 2009, followed by 2010 and 2012 with the values- 17,1 %, and 17,2%. The maximum accommodation capacity index was 30,8%, achieved in 2008. Before the advent of the economic crisis in Romania, this index has registered values ranging between 23% and approximately 27%. It is noticed that after the appearance of economic recession in the country, this index registered a negative evolve, except for the year 2011, the year in which resulted an increase, reaching at 19.3%. For 2014 was also envisioned a decrease of the accommodation capacity index with approximately 3% compared to the year 2012 and with 1,4% compared to the year 2013.

#### 4. TOURIST CIRCULATION IN SALAJ COUNTY

In a previous study, we analyzed the tourist development of this county during the period 2005-2012, in terms of its function, which on average is 1%.

Among the main indicators of tourism retrieve in the literature, the specialists mentioned real and potential demand indicators. A main indicator studied in this work is the tourist circulation density of Salaj County.

Specialists in tourism argue that tourist circulation density provides information regarding the application of patches and indirectly, the measures to be taken to ensure tourists' needs, without being disturbed the life and activity of the residents or the ecological balance of the areas (Minciu, 2004, p. 97).

The tourist circulation density in Salaj County for 2005-2012 period is determined on the basis of the following formula:

$$DCTsj = \frac{NTsj}{Psj} \quad (1) \quad \text{where:}$$

- DCTsj- Tourist circulation density in Salaj County;
- NTsj - The number of tourists arrivals in Salaj County;
- Psj- The resident population of Salaj County.

We used a series of data, provided by The National Institute of Statistics, which has been processed by calculating the indicator mentioned above.

The tourist circulation density in this county of Romania is represented in Figure 4. The evolution of the tourist circulation density in Salaj County during 2005-2012 period:

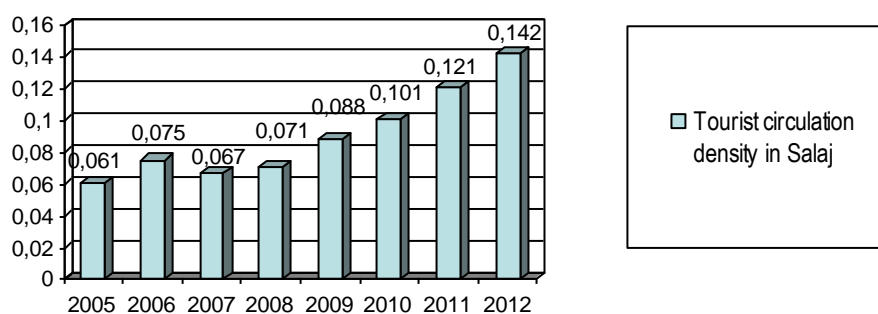


FIGURE 4. THE EVOLUTION OF THE TOURIST CIRCULATION DENSITY IN SALAJ DURING 2005-2012 PERIOD

Source: made by authors

In Figure 4 The evolution of the tourist circulation density in Salaj County during 2005-2012 period can be noticed that, in those eight years, tourist traffic density probe has fluctuated. 2006 has seen an increase of 0.02% compared to the previous year, following, then, to drop by about 0.01%, in 2007. In the next period, it may submit to the continuous growth of the indicator, the highest threshold touching it in 2012, 0.14%. We can say that on average, in those eight years, the County's tourist traffic density was 0.1%. Practicing smart travel, both in Salaj County, as well as at the national level, may represent

an opportunity for increasing the tourist development of the area, and thus, increasing the density. Intelligent tourism in complying with the natural environment, flora, fauna, local communities, their culture and traditions. Smart tourist services are in close touch with ecotourism, and the existence of them in an area with high tourism potential is essential. Salaj County benefits from a number of places that might have the status of ecotourism destination. Bazinul Somesan offers the possibility of excursions on canoe, boat rides, visiting the ruins of the ancient fortress from Moigrad in local natural environment, landscape, Gradina Zmeilor reserve and others. At the same time, Meses Mountains are available, you can organize excursions with the backpack and olympics mountain biking for all ages.

Also, the 12 rural pensions, which have an average occupancy of the accommodation of about 50%, on an annual basis, can improve the quality of services provided, both for accommodation and food, through the diversification of supply, for example, the in-house restaurant of the hotel can offer only organic food, made from their own production of the area, and the water could be supplied by the springs in its vicinity.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Services quality is key to the success of ecotourism in terms of ecotourism activity in optimal conditions, and at the same time, the maximum satisfaction of the ecotourists' need through continuous improvement of it and trying to get zero defects. Ecotourism services diversification has an essential role in international tourism, national, regional and local levels.

Orientation on the client, in order to satisfy its need for maximum is the most complex approach, and requires special attention from the ecotourism service providers, and guiding ecotourism product is dependent on the one mentioned above.

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