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**Faculty of Geography**

**Geography Doctoral School**

**PhD Thesis**

**Hotels and their impact on the tourism of  
Transylvania**

**~Summary~**

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**Keywords:** tourism, hospitality industry, hotel sector, Transylvania, impact, economy, society, environment, sustainability, tourist flows, hotel concept.

## INTRODUCTION

The present study aims to highlight the relationship which exists between the tourism industry and the hotel sector from Transylvania on the assumption that the hotel as tourist unit with accommodation as its main function, being a component of the tourist material base, through the continuous development and adaptation to the needs of the tourists is contributing to the endowments diversification and to the offer specificity of a certain area. Through the bibliographic documentation, case study applications, data processing, analyzing and evaluating the past and present situations of the hotel sector in Transylvania, it is followed the outlining of a real image of the present situation of the hotel sector taking in consideration that the history of the hotels begins in Transylvania, in Sibiu in 1773 when the first hotel „Împăratul Romanilor” opens in Sibiu. Until the appearance of the hotel as accommodation unit, the inn had a very important role in accommodating travelers. Phasing the development process of the accommodation establishments such as hotels, it is highlighted the correlation which exists between the development of the hotels and the socio-economic changes which took place in the past in Romania and implicitly in Transylvania. The hotel has become as far a symbol of the cities, of the tourist resorts and it represents more than simple accommodation unit, it represents a tourist site. In terms of its three aspects: economic, social and sustainable, the hotel represents a benchmark of the dimension, diversity and tourist offer quality of a certain area, being also an essential element in the development of the tourist act.

Why the hotel sector from Transylvania? Because the Transylvanian touristical region has a vast and important past in this sector and its development stages reveal the evolution of this phenomenon with different fluctuations. Through the research topics, of the methods and the multidisciplinary approach, analyzing the concept of the hotels from geographic, social, economic, environmental and architectural perspective, the thesis entitled “The hotels and their impacts on the tourism of Transylvania” represents a study with a higher degree of topicality and importance in the context in which the tourism of Romania and implicitly the tourism of Transylvania needs a real and appropriate identity, the identifications of the brands and an appropriate promotion, but above all it has to assure the high quality of the tourist services at international standards. Through the extensive analyze of this sector, the study finds an important role and place in the human geography field, and it represents a rigorous and thorough assembly of informations necessary for

every hotel operator. In the same time the study finds its applicability in the privat, but also in the academic area through its case studies, models and theoretical informations offered.

## **1. HISTORY AND METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCHES**

The study introduces in the researches hotel field from Transylvania the impacts typologies which these types of accommodation tourist units have on the tourism of the studied region taking as a start point the researches in impacts of the tourism development on a certain region. The study of the economic, social and environmental impacts of the tourism on the local communities occupies a central position since the beginnings of the tourism research studies (Finney and Watson, 1975; Smith, 1977). In this relationship, the two main parties implied are represented by: tourists and hosts, tourist representing the active vector of change while the host represents the passive vector, those supporting the changes (Leite and Graburn, 2012) materialised in positive and negative impacts. The changes due to the tourist phenomenon which occurs at economic, social and environmental level are rapid and often dramatic (Nepal, 2012). Tourism seen as a branch of human geography assumes in a great way the study of the changes which occurs in time in terms of the three components. The dynamics of the relationships between the providers of the tourist services and the tourism actors (operators) represents the start point of the studies in the researches of the tourism phenomenon. Telfer (2012) mentions that the positive impacts which tourism can have on the development of a community, region or country actions at the economy level through: contribution to GDP, exchange, jobs creations, incomes, reduction of poverty and infrastructure development; at social level through revitalization of culture and traditions specific to the region, at environment level through: sustainable development, environment management and protected areas sustainability; at politics level through: creation of an image of stability, security and peace. The hotel sector, as a tourism branch has the same effects on the economy, society and environment of a certain region.

Tourism represents a system of the economic sectors and of travel behaviors, an ensemble of facilities, services, resources, motivations and activities which have the main aim to create individualized and unique tourist experiences (Swanson, 2010). The studies made in this field have to analyze, first of all, the methods through which this phenomenon integrates in the economic,

social and environmental environment of a city, zone or region and the changes generated, manifested through positive and negative impacts on a certain taxonomic unit. In the present study, it starts from the hypothesis that between the hotels and the tourism industry exists a relationship of interdependence due to:

- the hotels develop as a consequence of the existence and valorization of the tourist potential of a certain region;
- tourism, in the absence of hotels, might not function properly.

In order to highlight the types of impact which the hotels have on the tourism of Transylvania, the chosen methodology is that of the longitudinal study. Therefore, it is considered a study on 12 years (2001-2012) of the following indicators: arrivals of tourist on categories (Romanians and foreigners), overnights, occupancy rate, contribution of hotel sector to the regional GDP, number of employees in the hotel sector, investments made in this sector, number of jobs created and their evolution in time, etc. The longitudinal study method it is the main and in the same time the most important research method used in this study and it allows the analyze of all the indicators for the chosen study area and identifying the existing relationships between them, but mainly the relationships created between the two important components: the hotel sector and the tourism industry. Besides the secondary data obtained from the National Institute of Statistics and the County Directions of Statistics, also from the Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism, the primary data were collected from the questionnaires which were applied on case studies and which had the role to identify the attitude of the hotel managers from Transylvania concerning how they appreciate the sustainable development. The advantage of this kind of study is that of offering a real image of the researched topic and its evolution in time, but the great disadvantage is that of the data dependence of the cooperation with the hotel operators. The case studies performed in this study have the role to determine the existing impact typologies of the hotels on tourism. Taking in consideration the data types (primary and secondary) for their analyze it will be taken in consideration a combination of methods. In the interpretation of qualitative data it will be used the inductive method, and in the case of quantitative data, the deductive method. The impacts of the hotels on the tourism of Transylvania are of three main types: economic, socio-cultural and environmental (see fig.1 and fig.2):

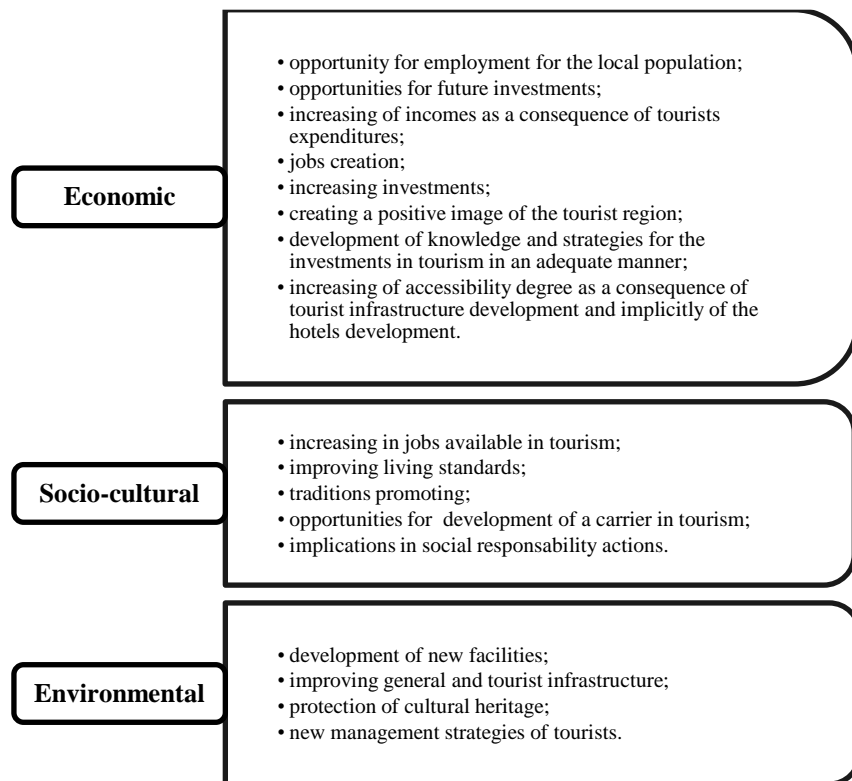


Fig.1. Positive dimensions of the hotel impacts on tourism

(Source: adaptation after Hall and Page, 2000, after Getz, 1977; Mathieson and Wall, 1982; Ritchie, 1984; Hall, 1992)

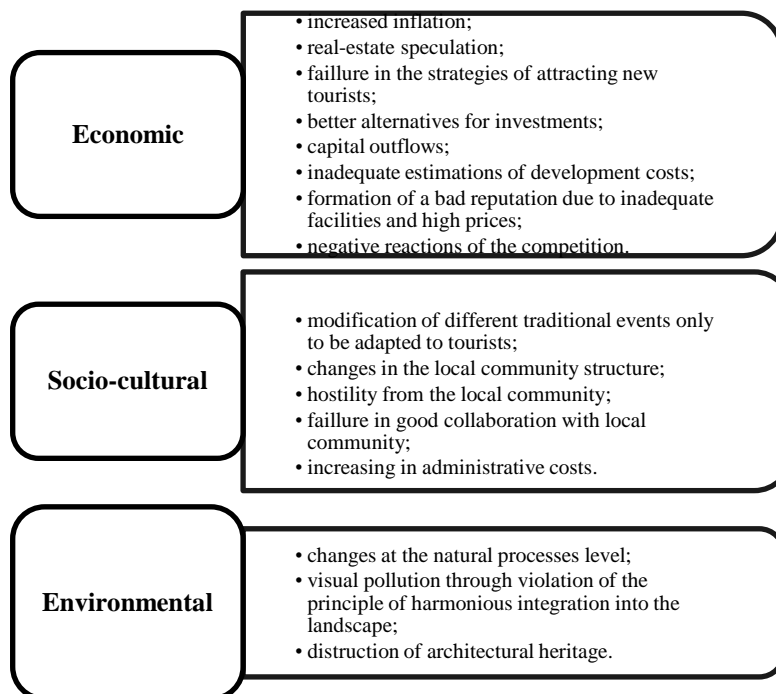


Fig.2. Negative dimensions of the hotels impacts on tourism.

(Source: adaptation after Hall and Page, 2000, p.122 after Getz, 1977; Mathieson and Wall, 1982; Ritchie, 1984; Hall, 1992)



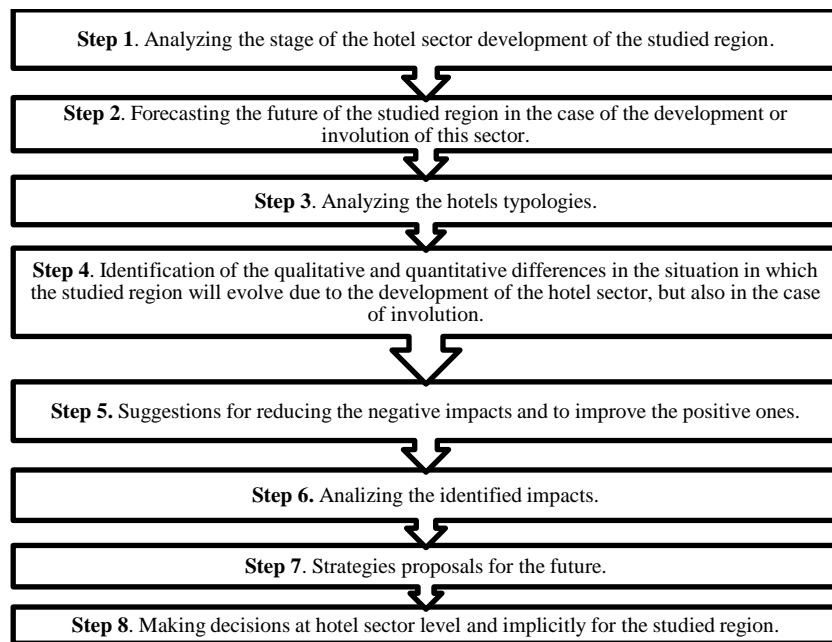


Fig.3. Stages in identifying the impacts of the hotels on tourism. (Source: Adaptation after Page, 1995)

The model used to identify the impacts of hotels on the tourism of Transylvania it is one adapted after the model used by Page (1995) (see fig.3) to identify the impacts which is generated by the tourism development in the urban area. In order to achieve the proposed results, the objectives of this study are the following (see fig.4):

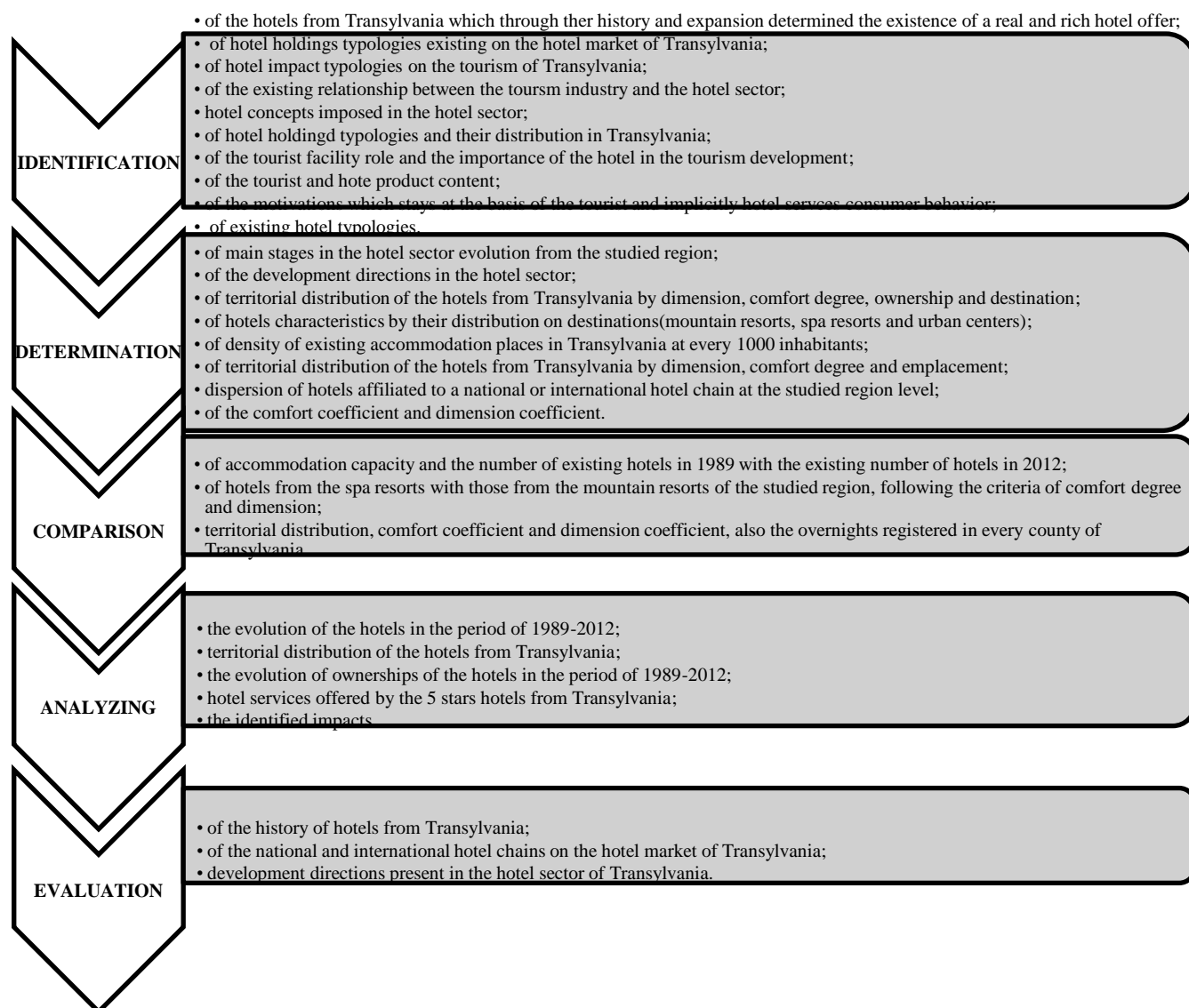


Fig.4 Main goals of the study of impacts of hotels on the tourism of Transylvania

The applicability and reliability of the paper argues by the principles and methods used in the proposed research topic (see Table 1).

**Table 1.** Principles used in researching the proposed topic

<b>Name of the principle</b>	<b>Justification of use in the study</b>
Principle of distribution	Highlighting the discrepancies which exist at regional level between the counties.
Principle of causality	Identification of the temporal and spatial bounds between the 10 counties, components of the region of Transylvania.
Principle of integration	Reporting the characteristics of the component elements to the whole (region).
Principle of actualism	Highlighting the changes which occurred in time due to a cause present through these modifications.

It is required two types of scientific research: deductive research for the part of history of researches, and the inductive research in order to identify the main characteristics of the hotel sector of Transylvania. The methods used in this study are the following (see Table 2):

**Table 2.** Methods used in the research of the proposed topic

<b>Name of the method</b>	<b>Justification of use in the study</b>
Method of longitudinal study	Following the evolution of the tourism indicators for the studied period (2001-2012) and identification of the impacts of hotels on the tourism of Transylvania.
Cartographic method	Representing the studied area and highlighting the discrepancies at every county level; the structure, diversity and specificity of the hotel offer argues somehow the strategic position of a county in a region; Graphing in order to highlight: the evolution of the hotels, their distribution in the region by comfort degree, dimension, destination, etc.
Case study method	Identification of new concepts which are imposing in the hotel sector and the way in which the hotels from Transylvania have adapted to international trends.
Questionnaire survey method	Preparation and application of fewer typologies of questionnaire surveys structured differently depending on the issues tracked and targeted market segments. The results were interpreted through charts, then analyzed and compared at the level of Transylvania region.
Method of analyze	Used in the presented case studies.
Synthesis method	Identification of the main conclusions.
Historical method	Highlighting the evolution of hotels and of the tourism phenomenon from Transylvania.

Through the use of research principles and methods set out, and by processing and analyzing primary and secondary data, this paper aims to be a strong argument for highlighting the importance of this typology of tourist accommodation unit, the interdependence between tourism and impacts that this sector had on the tourism phenomenon.

## **2. THE ROLE OF THE DEVELOPMENT IN TOURISM**

The items pursued in the tourism development strategy aims to „diversify facilities, to create a specific tourist offer, to assure the flexibility of the offer taking in consideration the the tourist preferences, to assure an adequate functionality of the tourist activities (Erdeli et al., 1999: 21). It has as main objective “the harmonization of tourism with other social and economic activities in the territory” (Minciu, 1995: 24). Tourist development made according to the specificity of the region from natural and antrophic point of vue, contributes to the “originality of the tourist image” (Berbecaru and Botez, 1977: 226). Ensure appropriate use of space, modeling activities and human interest consistent with this specificity is one of the main goals of tourism planning (Minciu, 1995). Through this process it is followed to establish an adequate report between the natural ambiance and the built environment, in a manner in which the negative impact on the environment to be reduced. Tourist development it is imposing in the geographic space in the same time with “the modern structure and content which reflects with one of the specific phenomenons of the contemporary world and that gave the globalization starting with the first half of the last century” (Ciangă and Dezsi, 2007: 9). As a part of the territory development, the tourist development represents the process of projection and localization of the new tourist infrastructure, but also the resizing of the existing one, together with the regularisation process and orientation of the tourist flows, considering permanently the structure of the demand and offer. It represents “an ongoing spatio-temporal process proces” (Surd et al., 2005: 325). In the case of this type of accommodation unit it is followed the adequate integration of the elements of the built environment in a way in which the aesthetics wouldn't be affected. The dimensions of a hotel investment implies a special foundation (Falniță and Băbăiță, 2003). This foundation imposes special attention to the location of the hotel, and also to the study of the market. The existence of a balance between the built environment and the natural ones it is more than necessary. Otherwise, the negative effects will soon appear and environmental impacts will be more than undesirable. The hotel is one of the

basic tourist facilities which facilitate population participations to the tourism activity. Activities within this typology of tourist organization and also from the third sector, envisages providing the required services by tourists in a way in which the profitability rate is high. In the specific material and technical base of tourism, the most important role for accommodation structures that otherwise are very diverse depending on the size of the investment, profitability, payback, etc.(Benea and Petroman, 2006).

The hotel represents one of those organizations included in the hospitality industry with an activity with important economic increasings during the years. Erdeli et al. (1999: 154) defines the hotel as “building with accommodation function, having a certain number of rooms with one or more beds and in some casesc with apartments.” The activity of a hotel assures and conditions in the highest degree the volume of tourism activities (Negrușă, 2006: 16). Through the development of this sector, from the point of vue of the architecture but also of the provided services, defining the concept of the hotel can have more dimensions. From the *social dimension* perspective, the hotel can be defined as an accommodation establishment which aims to satisfy the need of socializing of every tourist. Beyond the need of socializing which transformed the hotel unit in a meeting center, it knows an intens typology as a consequence of the fact that the hotel operators know that the success of a hotel business stays in a high occuppency rate which can be sustained only in the conditions that they fulfill the needs and expectations of the tourists. The *economic dimension* gives hotel an important role in the business environment. As it was already mentioned, the hotel business it is influenced and influences the economy of the region where it is located. Through its economic dimension it is characterized through : business cyclicity, capital consuming and extremely competitive. The return of the business is given, mainly, by the combination of occuppency rate and rate (Vallen and Vallen, 1996). The *sustainable dimension* offers to the hotel the role of promoter of responsibility concerning the environment. The tourism industry is responsible of 5% of the CO2 emmisions and 1% it is represented by the hotel sector (Legrand and Sloan, 2011). Therefore promoting a responsible attitude within the tourists and hotel operator is absolutely necessary. Adopting this attitude conducted to a new type of hotel, the eco-hotel which are built on ecologically principles.

### 3. STAGES OF THE HOTELS DEVELOPMENT FROM TRANSYLVANIA

Being hospitable is to be responsible to some extent for the happiness of the guest during his stay. The hotel operators have this duty beyond the high profit. Optimizing gains comes as a result of a balance between business interests, environmental concerns and social knowledge of the phenomenon of perspective. Hospitality is an interpersonal exchange between the host and the guest, characteristic of a lifestyle designed to create certain wellbeing, relaxation, and pleasure. The Greeks are those who establish the hospitality institution, on the time of Zeus Xenion, the foreigners' protector. From the virtue of the faithful people which felt themselves obliged to accommodate every traveler who needed temporary shelter, the hospitality will became a paid service. In the Middle Age, the monasteries, the first establishments that offered accommodation to the travelers, begin to impose a fee to the middle class in order to assure that the donation that were expected from the part of every traveler is done. This is the first form of paid hospitality, but it can not be named commerce. The commercial character of hospitality brings in addition to private hospitality characterized by hosting physiological needs such as thirst, hunger, sleep and psychological needs, and market profits and limiting production. The first accommodation establishments as inns are opened with the main aim of doing commerce. Their location was the center of big markets, but also the most intens circulated commercial roads. Hospitality is a concept that underpins the development of the hotel industry and and implicitly the restaurants. It can be defined "providing generous and cordial services" (Negrușă, 2006: 135), implying a positive attitude from the part of the employees of this sector, that guarantees in a great manner the financial success of the business. The 19<sup>th</sup> century highlights the concern of the inn owners to improve the services offered to guests. Therefore, they expand their properties, improve the facilities of the rooms and diversify the kitchen, therefore they transform the inn in what in the future will be named hotel.

In the period of 1945-1948 the tourist material base from Romania is in a poor condition due mainly to the adverse consequences of the Second World War. In 1948 the tourist material base will be nationalized, the state will retrieve all the accommodation units and it will transfer it to social organisms such as the Syndicates or the Ministry of Work. In the period of 1948-1960 will manifest the union tourism as a result of the accordance of some facilities to the social class with modest incomes from the unions. In the same period it will be constituted the tourism of the masses. Beginning with the year of 1956, the hotels from the spa resorts will be improved with

cure systems and they adopt the “tout service” system which offers to tourists in the same building: accommodation, food&beverage, treatment (cure) and recreation. While the spa resorts adopt this system, in the urban area, the hotels were built on the principle of separation the diferemt functions in independent buildings. In accordance with the program initialized in 1965 for the urban area, every city with over 25.000 inhabitants has at least one hotel. The period of 1960-1975 it is considered being the most dynamic for the Romanian tourism. There were made a lot of investments in the tourist material base, especially in accommodation. The reestablishment of ONT Carpați in 1955 and the establishment of the Ministry of Tourism in 1971 will follow the introduction and promotion of the tourist potentiel in the European space, application of an unitary arrangement concerning the development of the tourist zone, the individualization, typology, size and location of tourist units and of the largest components (Ciangă, 2006). The author Curinschi Vorona, in his work “The history of architecture in Romania”, considers that in the period of 1960-1980 is built in a style “rootless and without God”. The modern building was appropriately integrated in the context of history considering the location of the hotel at the limit of medieval enclosure. Starting with the year of 1980 the tourist material base begins to involuating due to the social-economic conditions existing in Romania. This involution will lasts until the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The establishment of democratic system in Romania, the revolution of 1989 produced major changes in the economy of the country. It was considered that the only method trough which it can be obtained the economic progress it is the privatization. This economic process consists in transformation of the state property in privat property and liberalization of the privat capital, at the basis of the law no.15/1990.

The new generation of hotels, those built starting with the year of 2000, are characterized trough a higher degree of comfort, multiple demandings, especially concerning the conference tourism, and more recently the medical tourism. Nowadays, the trends in the hotel sector are more and more numerous. The hotel has ceased to represent only an accommodation space, it became a real source of attractiveness.

#### 4. THE HOTEL PRODUCT

In contrast to the product concept which presents material form, its main role is that of satisfying a need, the services represent those products which does not present material form and which can be consumed only in a certain place and at a certain moment (Gherasim and Gherasim, 1999). The *tourist product* its is defined as an ensemble of material goods and services which have the role to satisfy the needs and wishes of the tourists during their vacation. The accommodation service represents a basic tourist service, an ensemble of benefits offered to tourists during his stay. The accommodation units know an important diversification of parallel with the development of transport infrastructure and the development of the tourism phenomenon. From the virtue of faithfull people offering accommodation to travelers without claiming any reward, the convents that provided shelter to foreigners, accommodation paid services turns gradually with increasing flows of travelers/tourists. In tourism, the hotel product represents “the central element of all the activities” (Firoiu, 2004: 26). Therefore, in its quality of product, it has a lifecycle which follows four important stages: launch, development, maturity, decline. The typology of transport means influences since ancient times the development of accommodation units. The hotel product diversifies in the same time with the changes which occur in the tourists behavior which prefer this kind of accommodation units. The complexity and diversity of accomodatin services represent a prestige factor, an attractivity factor and indirectly a factor of its marketing efficiency increasing (Bran et al., 1998). A very important aspect is that of employed human resource in the hotel sector, the hotel service is influenced by the degree of employment human resource, the degree of its qualification and also by the work organization in the hotel (Bran et al., 1998). The tourism employee’s behavior it is a part of the tourist product. The tourist services, in general, and the hotel products in particular, represent experiences for the tourist and performance for the employee, being the best opportunity for differentiation of a product from another by comfort and ambiance (Powers, 1995). Therefore, we cannot classify the hotels without correlating the needs, wishes and motivations of the tourists and the importance of the quality of tourist services offered. The service is that offering quality to a tourist product. The hotel product knows a bigger and bigger variety, in the lack of imaterial elements of the quality of service offer, it can not represent a tourist product, neither competitive. The quality of hotel services perceived by tourists depends on:

- tourists past attitudes and experiences;
- received benefits as consequence of their expenctancies.



The quality services will bring direct benefits through customer's satisfaction and indirectly through the hotels promotion by the recommendations made by other guests to friends and their relatives; customer loyalty and money savings, time and good image through avoiding complaints. The tourist, in its quality of hotel services consumer, expects that in exchange of the paid money, receive more than a shelter; it expects to experience and taste the local culture and traditions.

## 5. HOTEL TYPOLOGIES

The hotels know a continuous diversification which it is related in a strong interdependence relationship with the changes which occur in the hotel services consumer behavior. In the typology of this accommodation tourist unit it will be considered the following criteria: comfort degree, size, location, emplacement, running times, average length of stay, rate, services offered, theme, market target, ownership. In Romania, according to the Order no.1051/2011 concerning *Methodological Norms concerning the classification certificates, licences and patents*, tourist accommodation units are classified on stars and it is known five degrees of comfort : from one to five stars (see fig.5).

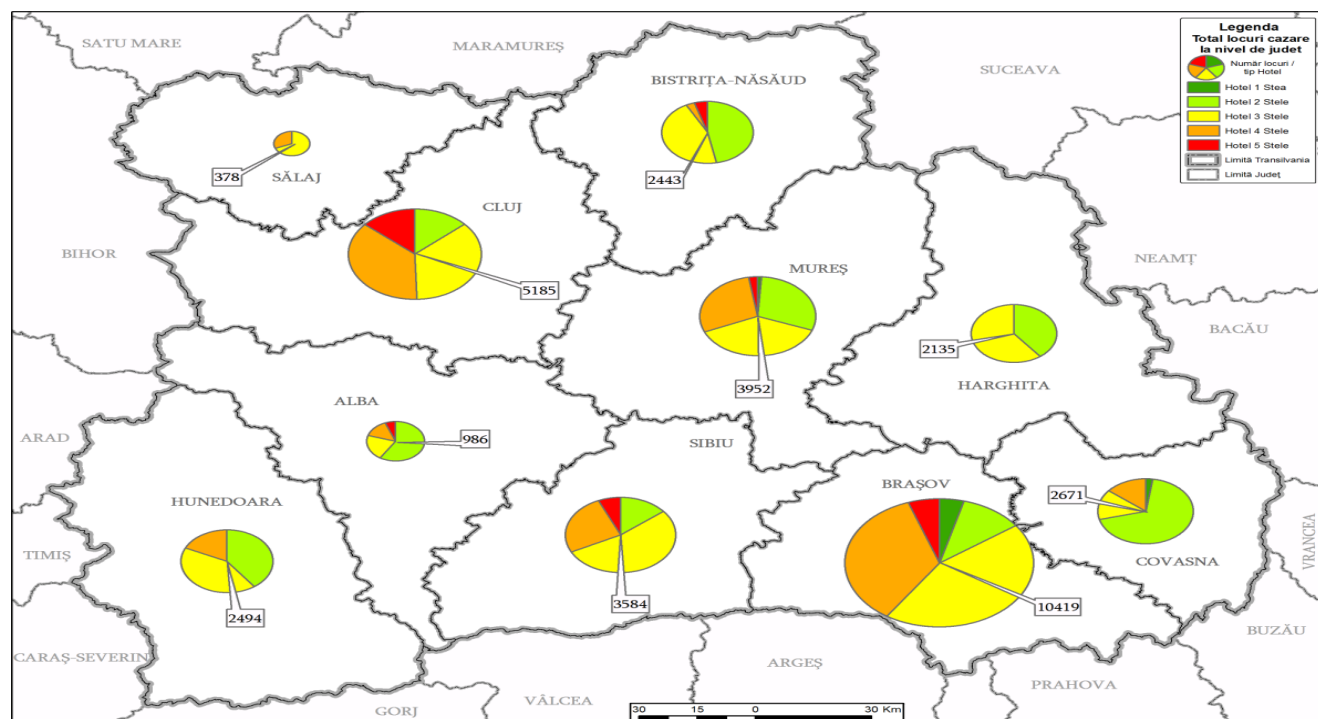


Fig.5 Distribution at county level of the accommodation places available in the hotels of Transylvania in 2012

(Data source: MDRT, 2012)

The typology of the hotels highlights the imposing of the concept hotels in the hotel sector, such as the *urban hotel*, the *heritage hotel* or the *boutique hotel*. The *urban hotel* is almost synonym with the accommodation unit which below the accommodation component and restaurant, it offers Spa centers, fitness salons, beauty centers, but especially conference rooms. *Heritage hotels* represent the hotels which valorise the local specific through design, traditional cuisine and they are promoting themselves through their own story. Heritage hotels represent a cultural heritage left by centuries from the past generations to the present ones. Harris (1999) argues that when a building has its own biography, it continues to "live" in a certian way. "The value of historical buildings it is differentiating not only through originality and beauty of its architecture, but through the history of its emplacement, through the stories which have their roots in rememorating the past events, the stories of employees" (Rahovan, 2013a: 100). The elements which can transform a hotel in an attractive tourist site for cultural tourism are (see fig.6):

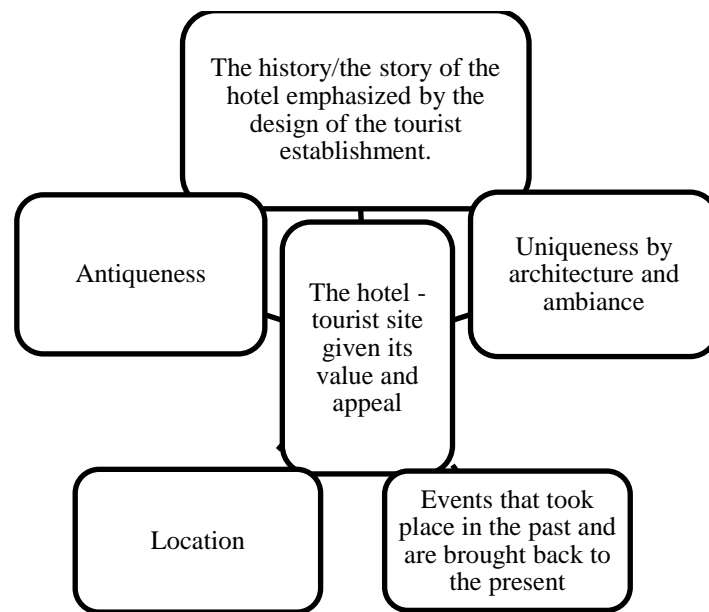


Fig. 6. Appealing elements of the tourist sight hotels (după Rahovan, 2013a: 102)

“Through the preservation of the hotels historic monument and by inserting them in the tourist circuit, not only the local authorities show their interest in developing cultural tourism, but it mainly shows the respect towards the values of the past, towards the personalities of those times and towards what they have accomplished” (Rahovan, 2013a: 101).

*Boutique hotels* are hotel units built in historical buildings (see fig.7), in central locations. Rooms are stilish, often combinning the contemporary style with the antiqueness. These hotels are address

to the business tourists which are not satisfied with the services of a five stars hotel. The attention to details and the personalized services assures to the boutique hotels the customers's loyalty this aspect being a strong argument when the investors choose to invest a big amount of money in a small hotel.

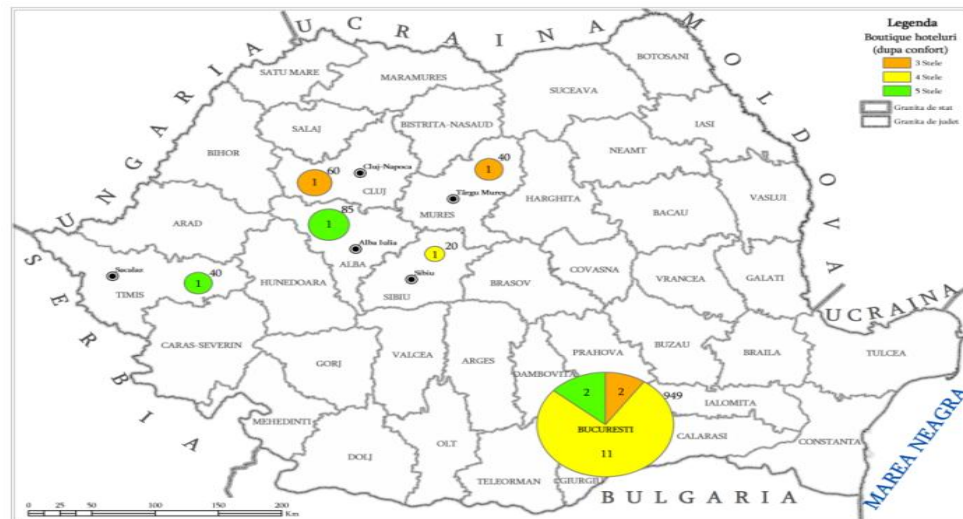


Fig.7. The map of the boutique hotels from Romania

(Source: Rahovan, 2012d: 180)

## 6. THE HOTEL OFFER FROM TRANSYLVANIA

The main characteristic of the hotel sector is that of permanent/continuous change, determining a certain inaccuracy degree when it is followed the whole hotel sector offer. The degree of development highlights in the same time the degree of economic development and the strategic position in which the studied region is. From the total of 1308 hotels which exists in Romania, 27% is represented by the hotels from Transylvania with a total of 16994 rooms. Concerning the size coefficient (see Table 3), calculated as report between total number of accommodation places from Transylvania and total number of accommodation places from a certain size category resulted that the highest value it is represented by the hotels from the 51-200 accommodation places category with a coefficient of 0,48. It was also considered that at the level of the Transylvania region exists a total of 34247 accommodation places in the hotels (MDRT, 2012).

**Table 3.** Size coefficient of the hotels from Transylvania

No.crt.	Accommodation capacity depending on size(no. of places)	No. of accommodation places/cathgory	Size coefficient
1.	to 50 places	4761	0,13
2.	between 51-200 places	16667	0,48
3.	between 201-500 places	11524	0,33
4.	over 500 places	1295	0,03
5.	Total no. of accommodation places in Transylvanian hotels	34247	

(Data source: MDRT, 2012)

Concerning the density of the accommodation places available in the hotels of Transylvania at 1000 inhabitants, it is remarquable the low value of this indicator at the region level (1,37 accommodation places at 1000 inhabitants).

**Table 4.** Accommodation places density (at 1000 inhabitants) in the hotels from Transylvania in 2012

No. crt.	County	No. inhabitants/county	No. Of accommodation places/county	Accommodation places at 1000 inhabitants
1.	Alba	371520	986	2,65
2.	Bistrița-Năsăud	316947	2443	7,70
3.	Brașov	598813	10419	17,39
4.	Cluj	21413815	5185	0,24
5.	Covasna	222065	2671	12,02
6.	Harghita	324419	2135	6,58
7.	Hunedoara	459967	2494	5,42
8.	Mureș	579747	3952	6,81
9.	Sălaj	240260	378	1,57
10.	Sibiu	426128	3584	8,41
11.	Transilvania(total counties)	24953681	34247	1,37

(Data source: National Institute of Statistics and MDRT, 2012)

From fig. 8 it can be observed that the geographic distribution of the accommodation places available in the hotels of Transylvania highlights differences from a county to another and from a city to another. It is remarquable the spa tourist resort of Covasna, the mountain tourist resort of Poiana Brașov and the county seats of Brașov and Cluj-Napoca, with a total of over 2000

accommodation places/city while the majority of cities have an existing accommodation capacity in hotels of maximum 100 accommodation places/city.

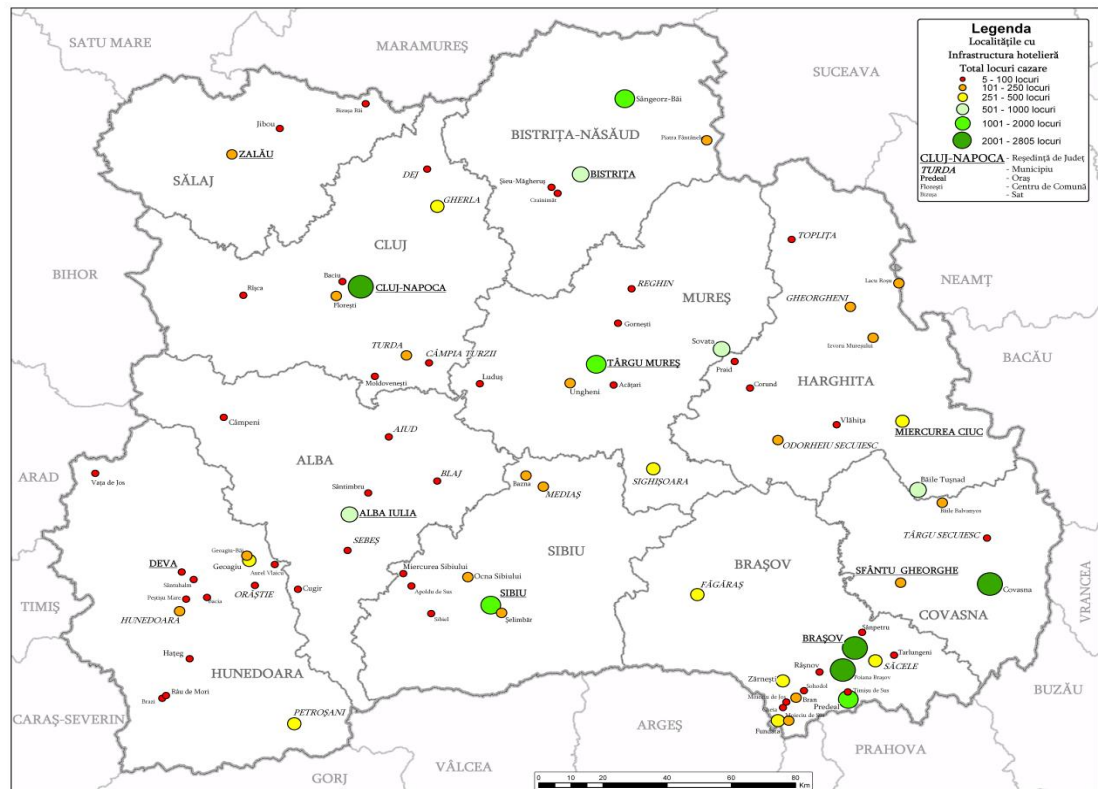


Fig. 8 Distribution of the accommodation places available in the hotels of Transylvania’s settlements in 2012

(Source: Rahovan, 2012b: 64; MDRT, 2012)

An integrated hotel chain can be defined as a group of hotels or another types of accommodation units which function on the name of brand and which belong, are managed and operated under a business agreement, franchise or management agreement (contract), by a single company (Pop and Coruțiu, 2006). This type of hotel ownership has advantages and also disadvantages (see Table 4).

**Table 4.** Advantages vs. Disadvantages of a hotel affiliation to an integrated hotel chain

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ special assistance in the management of the hotel, personal training and human resource management;</li> <li>➤ reservation systems;</li> <li>➤ accessibility to the financial resources of the head-company.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ development of a big number of brands in order to answer fewer market segments;</li> <li>➤ standardization as a consequence of the criteria imposed by the head company.</li> </ul>

(Source: adaptation after Lupu, 1998)

**Table 5.** International hotel chains in Transylvania

No. crt.	Name of the hotel chain	Yaer of affiliation	Affiliated hotels	Total no. of rooms	Total no. of places
1.	Golden Tulip	2006	Tulip Inn Sunny Hill 4*, Cluj-Napoca Golden Tulip Ana Tower 4*, Sibiu Golden Tulip Ana Dome 4*, Cluj-Napoca	240	478
2.	Hilton Worldwide	2009	Hilton Sibiu 5*	115	234
3.	Wyndham Hotels	2008	Ramada Sibiu 4* și Ramada Braşov-Săcele 4*	240	470

With the evolution in time of the hotels, it occurred changes concerning the ownership. If at their beginnings, the investor coincided with the owner and the hotel manager, together with the imposing of the modern hotel, it is more and more remarkable that the investor, the owner, the developer and the hotel manager doesn't represent the same person. The hotel chains represent groups of two or more hotels which function under the same name. These can be integrated or volunteer, knowing different degrees of independence and financial autonomy. In Transylvania, there are present only three main international hotel chains (see Table 5).

## **7. IMPACT OF THE HOTELS ON THE TOURISM OF TRANSYLVANIA**

The hotels from Transylvania, through their geographical distribution, present different impacts on the economy, society and environment. In most cases, the economic impact studies focus on highlighting the positive aspects and less the negative impacts such as:

- consuming the capital available for other sectors, creating imbalances;
- lack of experience and specialized knowledge can compromise the development of a business in this field;
- seasonality of jobs;
- it can not develop in lack of general infrastructure existence.

Economic impacts of hotels on tourism can be *direct* or *primary*, for example the spendings of tourists in order to buy food from the restaurant of the hotel; *indirects* and *induced*, these being

*secondary*, such as reinvestment of the obtained profit in equipments and development of the tourist accommodation infrastructure, and as induced impact, purchase of goods and services by the tourism employees. The analyze of the economic impact follows the estimations of changes which occur at the region level concerning spendings, incomes and/or employment rate, availability for jobs in association with the tourism politics, events, facilities and tourism developments (Tyrell and Johnston, 2006). Analyzing the economic impact considers the quantification of the economic activity or incomes, while the cost-benefit analysis estimates the net economic benefits. It is imposing the differentiation between the economic impact generated by the spendings of tourists in a zone or tourist region and the economic impact generated by the development of tourism through different tourism developments (Page, 1995). In the present study, it is following the identification of the direct economic effects materialized through the evolution of overnights, arrivals, occupancy rate, investments made in the hotel sector and also the turnover registered, Gross Domestic Product (GDP) at regional level and the contribution of the hotel sector, the evolution of hotels by employees number, wage earnings, but also through the evolution of the employees from this sector.

At *social* level, tourism as a phenomenon extends beyond the tourist-host relationship, implying the tourism employees, the members of tourism organizations, researchers, but also the inhabitants of the receiveing areas which are not directly implied in the tourism industry (Picard, 2007). The relationships which occur between the tourists and the local community stir tensions, animosities, affinities and stereotypes that operate across interpersonal, intercultural and international (Graburn, 2008). Social impact of the hotels on the tourism of Transylvania reflects the changes in the local community structure, in the tourists behavior and of the locals also. How are the changes from the hotel sector perceived by the local communitie and which are their effects on the job market of this sector. Also, the effects of social impact of the hotels on the tourism of a region, it depends on the characteristics of the tourist as a visitor, but also on the resident (Pizam, 1978). On the other hand, the degree to which the hotels impact the society and implicitly the local community depends on a number of factors such as:

- size of the hotel sector from the studied region;
- implication degree of the population on the hotel services providing to tourists;
- relationships types between the local community and tourists;
- cultural differences between the two communities.

Social and cultural impact of hotels on the tourism of Transylvania are classified in three categories which involves:

- *the tourist* as a representative of the hotel services demand, with own motivations, attitudes and expectances;
- *the host (hotelier)* as a representative of the hotel services offer. This category involve the whole local community, work force employed in this sector and the local tourism organisations.

Tourism industry is responsible with 5% of the greenhouse gas, respectively CO<sub>2</sub> in the entire world, of which 1% is represented by the hotel sector (Legrand and Sloan, 2011). The responsible behavior in the hotel sector it is imposing by establishing a balance between the exploitation of resources, technological orientation and investments made (Rahovan, 2012a). The development of the hotel sector in a sustainable way targets the rational use of natural resources such as: water, electricity, heating, waste and replace conventional with renewable resource. This use will pursue rational economic, social and environmental efficiency, in a way in which the future generations can benefit from these kind of resources. The identification of the impacts of the hotels on the environment, pursue the highlighting of the way in which these facilities are integrated in the environment (Mowforth and Munt, 2003) without damaging through visual, noise or atmospheric pollution. After analyzing the main indicators of tourist flows in Transylvania, focusing on the tourist activity from the hotels of the studied region, it is found that there are weaknesses in the occupancy rate and the average length of stay which is reduced, while the hotels shows a continuous increasing of the existing accommodation capacity.

## **8. GUIDELINES AND HOTEL DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS IN TRASYLAVANIA**

The period of 2007-2013 can be considered an advantage for the entire tourism of Romania, especially through the possibility to attract structural funds from the E.U. In this respect, for the revitalization of the spa resorts from Transylvania, it is required:

- the research of the domestic and international market of the existing demand and also the potential one;
- indentifying the segment markets;



- promoting the spa resorts through different campaigns sustained by the ONT (National Tourism Office);
- encourage the process of empowerment of local authorities to lease water springs, therapeutical resources, gas and slurry and its use with the sustainable development principles;
- creating the image of every spa resort through the valorisation of the existing natural and anthropic tourist potential;
- improve the relationship with the National Institute of Physical Medicine, Medical Rehabilitation and Balneology;
- improving the business environment in health tourism by improving legislation in order to become an advantage of the investors from this field;
- differentiation between social tourism, medical tourism and wellness tourism;
- the activities of the tourism forms specific to the spa resorts needs a classification in the aspect of its subordination, Work Ministry through social tourism, Health Ministry through medical tourism and Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism through wellness tourism;
- development of spa cities in the resorts in which it is considered not only the senior tourist segment market which choose these resorts only to benefit of treatment free of charge. The development of such a concept assumes the existence of a quality built heritage, but also the existence of a spa park, thermal springs and animation and recreation possibilities at least 6 months per year;
- renovation of the existing accommodation units and improvement of the comfort degree and diversification of the offered tourist services;
- according grants to the hotel owners but conditioned by the specific equipment for medical or wellness tourism;
- good cooperation with public authorities at central and local level, responsible with the tourism development politics, territorial development, infrastructure, but especially with the sanitary control of the treatment centers and of the hotels, the checking of the methods through which the natural resources are exploited considering the sustainable development and the private investors which can renovate the private tourist accommodation units, but they need support from the central and local authorities in the aspect of according operating grants;

- creating a network of spa/health resorts for better monitoring of operation parameters set in advance and control their proper functioning;
- creating a set of criteria that need to be met by the hotel premises requiring integration into the network and thus better promoting through this integration.

Concerning this aspect, in Spa Tourism Action Plan it is planned to create such a set of criteria for planning and development of tourist resorts and addressing the quality of tourism products and services offered in these thermal cities, but also the quality of urban developments and tourist equipments, pursuing aspects such as: accessibility, tourist flow in the resort, diversity and quality of accommodation units, activities and tourist equipments in the resort, urban developments, environment protection and the presence of green spaces, rehabilitation of historical heritage, existence of signs, landscaping, equipment and treatment facilities, quality and diversification of the restaurant offer, animation in the resort and security assurance.

Concerning the hotels from the mountain resorts of Transylvania, in conditions of a diversified existing hotel offer, it is imposing the need to create varied tourist products which address to fewer market segments respecting the quality/price rate. On the other hand, it is necessary to rehabilitate the old hotel dating back to the years of 1970 and which could offer a significant number of accommodation places after restauration and modernization. In the context of these building/construction, rehabilitation, development and modernization works it has to be considered the tourist development principles, but especially the principle of harmonious integration. In this respect, nowadays, it can be observed serious misconducts from the local architectural styles, resulting the artificiality and visual pollution of all that means authenticity and valuable. Of course promoting these resorts have to remain a constant concern of the authorities, especially of the hotel operators aiming to increase their profits. After analyzing the tourist resources, of the accesibility infrastructure and of the market analyze principles it were identified through these Masterplan, priority zones for tourism development. The region of Transylvania is one of these priority zones under the form of circuit tourist product entitled *Transilvania-Culture, Naturre, Ecoturism, Health and Treatment, Ski and Adventure Tourism*.

## 8.1.SWOT analyze of the Transylvanian hotel sector

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-the existence of a diversified hotel offer;</li> <li>-the central position of the region of Transylvania and also the natural and anthropic rich tourist potential, favors the development of these accommodation units;</li> <li>-their distribution in territory allows the development of these tourist units in the spa resorts, mountain resorts, but especially in the urban centers and in the county seats;</li> <li>-the history of the presence of hotels in the region of more than two centuries;</li> <li>-the existence of a high number of hotels which determine this tourist accommodation unit to dominate within the tourist units with accommodation function.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-advance stage of degradation of hotels built in the 1970 due to the large size of the hotels, but also to the lack of interest shown by those who have taken these units from the state through state tenancy management;</li> <li>-neglect of cultural value of the hotels listed on List of Historical Monuments from Romania;</li> <li>-low degree of affiliation to national and international hotel chains and the prevalence of individual hotels, determine the existence of high sensitivity to economic fluctuations which manifest on the national and international economic market;</li> <li>-low adaptation of services to the international standards;</li> <li>-improper collaboration of hoteliers with local and regional authorities in development of these facilities;</li> <li>-lack in continuity of the national development programs of the tourist resorts and implicitly of the existing tourism infrastructure;</li> <li>-pronounced seasonality and low employment degree affect the economic activity of these hotels, forcing them often to operate under unprofitable conditions;</li> <li>-the average length of stay registered in the hotels of Transylvania in the period of 2001-2012 decreased with approximately 2 days;</li> <li>-it prevails the small hotels with 0-9 employees, often an employee has more than one function which can affect the quality of hotel service;</li> <li>-the Turnover registered from the NACE section "Hotels and restaurants", in the period of 2008-2012 involuted;</li> <li>-the investments made in development and modernization of hotels involute for the period of 2008-2012;</li> <li>-the methodological norms concerning the classification of hotel units have criteria that refers exclusively to physical characteristics and they ignore the aspects concerning the quality of provided services.</li> </ul>
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-possibility to set up a chain of historical hotels and including in in the cultura circuit of Transylvania;</li> <li>-increasing of involving degree of the local population in the tourism activities and implicitly the creation of jobs;</li> <li>-promoting local traditions (especially culinary and architectural) through adequate integration of the hotel in the built environment;</li> <li>-integration of the individual/independent hotels in international hotel chains and implicitly improving the quality of provided services, increasing the employees wages and improving the management system through permanent assistance given by the head hotel company;</li> <li>-it contributes to the economy development of the region.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-due to the lack of interest concerning the management strategies which adopt the economy development through sustainable development, hotels could loose especially international tourists which through their mentality sustain this type of development;</li> <li>-continuous degradation of hotels from the List of Historical Monuments from Romania, will lead to their deasappearance and in the same time to the loss of a heritage with important cultural values;</li> <li>-lack of diversification of recreation services offered by the hotels, these units may be affected more severely by the seasonality, and in conditions of an occupancy rate under 60%, to operate in loss.</li> </ul>

The analyze of the hotel offer at the level of mountain resorts, spa/health resorts and urban centers focusing on the county seats, allows the SWOT analyze which highlights the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the hotels from Transylvania. This analysis contributes to the identification of the main three market segments to which the Transylvanian tourism can address: spa/health/wellness tourism, mountain tourism and urban tourism with its component, the business tourism.

## CONCLUSIONS

Tourism represents an important leverage in the development of a country, region or zone. The hotel, basic component of the tourist infrastructure, it is an essential element of the tourist act ongoing. The concept-hotels which imposed also on the Transylvanian hotel market are: *urban hotel*, *heritage hotel*, *boutique hotel* and *eco-hotel*. Another important aspect it is about the organizational structure of the hotels. At the level of this structure it is remarkable the higher degree of disparity, the departments being built and structured depending on degree comfort, size, emplacement, chosen management strategies and ownership.

Assuming that the tourism from a certain zone can not function in normal parameters without the existence of the accommodation units and these ones can not find their role without valorizing the tourist potential and tourism practicing, the study highlights the evolution of tourism from Transylvania, pursuing the dynamics of tourist flows registered in the period of 2001-2012 in the tourist accommodation units, fact that highlighted the important role that the hotel has within the accommodation infrastructure and implicitly in the tourism activities. The impact of this accommodation unit on the tourist phenomenon from Transylvania it is manifesting in terms of: region's economy, the society involved directly and indirectly in tourism and the effects on the environment, effects which for sure affects the human being. The results of the study confirm the existence of a situation which can not be neglected at the level of hotel sector evolution from Transylvania. In this respect, there are imposing a set of measures such as:

- identification of appropriate strategies for a better promotion of the Transylvania tourist region at international level and in order to attract a higher number of international tourists considering that the highest level of tourism intensity manifested in the region registered in the hotels of Transylvania in the year of 2012 it is 226,6 overnights at 1000 inhabitants comparing to 2042,6 overnights performed by Romanian tourists at 1000 inhabitants (in the county of Covasna);
- improving the cooperation between the governmental, regional and local authorities in order to attract investments in the hotel sector;
- increasing of the involvement degree of the local community in the hotel activities through the work force employed;
- establishing limits to which the development of hotels does not affect the local community and the structure of landscape of the taxonomy unit;

- attention paid to the principle of harmonious integration of the hotels in the structure of the resort or city;
- drafting a code of ethics for the tourism industry entrepreneurs and implicitly for the hoteliers;
- promoting the environmental spirit within the local community;
- education in the environmental spirit of the employees of the hotel sector organizing special training;
- restauration and reintroduction in the tourist circuit of the hotels from the List of Historical Monuments;
- increasing the affiliation degree of the independent hotels at national and international chains, mainly, to benefitiate of specialized management assistance, promoting techniques, increasing visibility at international level, increasing of turnover, of employees eranings/wages, but especially increasing the quality standards of the provided services.

The present study through its case studies and through the obtained results after the detailed analyze of the Transylvanian hotel sector, at the level of the three main dimensions: economic, social and environmental, it represents a first step in researching the hotels and the importance of their impacts on the tourism of a taxonomic unit.

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