**“BABEŞ-BOLYAI” UNIVERISTY CLUJ-NAPOCA**
**F A C U L T Y O F G E O G R A P H Y**
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# PHD THESIS

## *S U M M A R Y*

# TOURISM AND POLYCENTRIC DEVELOPMENT: MOINEŞTI, TÂRGU OCNA AND SLĂNIC MOLDOVA

**Keywords: tourist cluster, polycentricity, complementarity, tourist cooperation, interrelations, climatotherapy**

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## INTRODUCTION

The PhD Thesis named " Tourism and polycentric development. Case study: Moinești, Târgu Ocna, Slănic Moldova" and formed by nine chapters that are disposed in a logical manner, aims to build a tourist cluster which includes Moinești, Târgu Ocna, Slănic Moldova resorts and operates on the base of polycentric development's principles.

The first chapter aligns theoretical considerations concerning several concepts which included in their lexical field tourism and polycentric development notions: system, tourist cluster, tourist cooperation. Besides there, i outlined the preferences and motivations of modern tourist (the tourist offer must have in view tourist expectations), methods of tourist potential evaluation, methods of favourable areas for climatotherapy identification and tourist destination brand.

Intending to correlate the next tourist offer with active legislation, i mentioned several aspects regarding the strategic and legislative framework specific to the health tourism in Romania.

Before starting to analyze the tourist potential of Moineşti, Târgu Ocna and Slănic Moldova Romanian resorts, i had recourse to the presentation of health tourism evolution on Romania's territory, from Antiquity to present times. Then, i had highlighted the Romanian health resorts' issues as regards accessibility level (the health resorts with natural therapeutic factors as mineral water springs didn't appear inside of urban centers or along the big arteries, but on those areas where these natural factors are placed), specific and related material base of health tourism (which suffers from moral and physical use), the tourist employees, promotion strategies, tourist offer's diversification, followed by a SWOT analysis to establish the actual diagnosis which will have an important role as regards the conception of tourist phenomenon development.

The fourth chapter contains several aspects concerning elements of natural and human setting that determines the tourist phenomenon as geology, petrography, the pedological cover, the complementary services and nearby attractions.

The next chapter shows the tourist potential of resorts taken into case study for outlining the precarious situation of local tourism despite the existent therapeutic factors, and also the necesity of tourist offer diversification. Thus, there are presented elements of natural, anthropical tourist potential, of tourist material base as accommodation, catering, treatment, recreation units.

The successor of this chaper presents the situation of tourist circulation that effectively outlined the effects of tourist potential exploitation through tourist arrivals, tourist overnights, the tourist average stay time.

The seventh chapter contains the first element of originality and comes in addition to the precedent one, presenting a method of tourist potential value assessment of a health resort, a model that was applied on each health resort taken into case study. The basis of this method starts from several studies which were presented in theoretical aspects chapter.

After those studies' analysis, i discovered a lapidary and insufficient way of tourist potential assessment. I haven't find any scientific paper in this sense with a natural theraputic factors assessment from patient-tourist angle, for example.

The chapter is structured in two parts: the first one contains the method of of tourist potential value assessment of an ideal health resort, and the second one presents the results of its application in case of Moinești, Târgu Ocna and Slănic Moldova.

Therefore, it was necessary to present all natural and anthropical environment elements because and ideal health resort offers the entire range of accommodation, treatments, recreation possibilities.

In other words, an ideal health resort presents diversity both within the natural and the anthropic potential. Thereby, its tourist offer, in a stringently way, must respect the motivations and preferences of modern patient-tourist, this being the most conclusive starting hypothesis.

Besides health tourism, the tourist offer of a health resort should include more types and forms of tourism in order to satisfy a bigger number of tourists.

The actual chapter can have a synthesis role of the precedent one, because, on the base of tourist phenomenon analysis, a hierarchy of these three resorts were realised, that will contribute in outlining several measures to provide functionality of the next tourist cluster, to offer that resorts' complementarity attribute so that the cluster's tourism offer to be viable.

Once the situation of resorts' tourist phenomenon has been revealed and the advantages and shortages demonstration have been realized, I have recourse to the prefiguration of health stay components and tourist cluster based on polycentric development principles in rezidents' conception, this being an aspect that aims to center the attention on the fact that tourist planning must take into account the local population, whereas these people know the general local situation and are aware of the strengths that can be exploited, of weaknesses which can be eliminated in order to achieve the best efficiency of tourist phenomenon.

Secondarily, the present chapter, throuh the survey taken on local population (patient-tourists, possible patient-tourists), aims to find out their preferences and motivations as regard the health stay's components, in order to build a successful cluster's tourist offer.

After the health tourism phenomenon analysis at national level and after the established hierarchy according to tourism potential and residents' opinion, comes the most important chapter, where I aimed to create and implement a health tourism cluster based on polycentric development principles. This section contains an analysis of exogenous conditions of tourism, a brief assessment of case studies' tourism potential, trends and market preferences, related industries and those which the role of tourism support, the competitors analysis, a vision, objectives and strategies establishment. All of these are meant to specialize each resort from health tourism point of view in order to be compatible and complementary to the others, and then to integrate them into a tourism cluster.

Therefore, in the last chapter I solved the main problem: if Slănic Moldova distinguishes by mineral water springs therapy, Târgu Ocna remarks through salinotherapy, then Moinești on which form of therapy could base? Thereby, according to climate indices measurements, I concluded that Moinești can offer climatotherapy services, this being an aspect that assure the complementarity of these three resorts in order to form the tourism cluster.

Once this aspect has been elucidated, I have moved on to ensure the communication between these resorts through accommodation, catering, treatment units, travel agencies, tourist information centers.

Subsequently, in addition to establishing the brand, the program of a curative stay, the promotion process, several measures were taken to streamline the future cluster, for increasing the degree of complementarity and compatibility between the case studies, thus diversifying the tourist offer.

## 1. THEORETICAL, CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL ASPECTS

The first chapter contains theoretical considerations concerning several concepts that include in their lexical field notions such as tourism and polycentric development.

### 1.1. Theory

The main problem that urban and rural settlements are confronting, when it comes to tourism phenomenon, is the absence of a diversified tourism supply that is not capable to satisfy tourist needs. In this context, the polycentric development could be seen as a solution, in case if each settlement specialised itself from tourism point of view, in order to materialise a tourist co-operation and to initiate a general supply.

This concept is clearly defined as the situation in which two or more cities can complement each other, functionally speaking, by providing citizens and companies in their conjoined hinterlands access to urban functions that would usually only be offered by higher-ranking cities; cities should co-operate by joining existing assets, especially the complementary ones (ESPON 1.1.1, 2005).

Related examples are given by several studies, such as "POLYCE- Metropolisation and Polycentric Development in Central Europe", elaborated by ESPON in 2012, which brings into question five European capitals: Bratislava, Budapest, Ljubljana, Prague and Wien, "A Strategic Knowledge and Research Agenda on Polycentric Metropolitan Areas" study, done by The European Metropolitan Network Institute, that examines six metropolitan areas: Linköping-Norrköping (Sweeden), Gdańsk-Gdynia-Sopot (Poland), Leipzig-Halle-Dresden (Germany), Rotterdam-The Hague (Holland), Porto (Portugal), Milan (Italy), and "Tri-City Region" which investigates the case of a famous academic centre in Poland, where the three cities - Gdańsk, Gdynia and Sopot – are situated, the metropolitan region of Mitteldeutschland (Germany), integrating Dresden, Leipzig, Halle, Chemnitz and Zwickau cities, and the metropolitan region of Rotterdam--The Hague.

An eloquent study made by ESPON is "The case for agglomeration economies in Europe" which brings into question the metropolitan zone of Lyon and Rhone-Aleps region.

Concerning tourist collaboration, an eloquent definition refers to a process that includes durable and frequent interactions between government agencies, tourist enterprises, residents and NGO and follows gradual elimination of obstacles to reciprocity by transforming strategic settings, in order to market more destinations into a single one.

A proper definition that semantically approaches the proposed concept states that tourism clusters are geographic concentration of companies and institutions interconnected in tourism activities, whose value as a whole is greater than the sum of its parts, so that they can produce synergy, through their geographical proximity and their interdependence (Flower & Easterling, 2006).

The most basic definition of system concept refers "to a group of interacting components that conserves an identifiable set of relations, whose sum of components along with their relations, conserving some identifiable set of relations to other entities" (Macy, 1991, pp. 72).

In 2000, Bill Bramwell and Bernard Lane focused their research on the benefits that could emerge from tourism collaboration. The implication of a larger number of stakeholders could make tourism development policies implementation easyer. The participation of stakeholders with constructive attitudes may increase the collaboration efficiency and a creative synergy could result from this. Moreover, through the working-groups formation, certain stakeholders can enlarge their knowledge and new activities that are related to tourism may develop. Beyond these advantages, tourism collaboration could also bring in new problems. It is possible that key problems would not be seriously discussed because of financial interests; that collaboration

efforts would differ from a stakeholder to another; that tourism agents with less economic power would be excluded or would have their influence diminished, and that certain stakeholders may refuse to share new ideas. (Bramwell, B., Lane, B. (2000).

Last, but not least, Apostolopoulos offers a better understanding of the concept of tourist collaboration whom he defines it as a process that includes durable and frequent interactions between government agencies, tourist enterprises, residents and NGO and follows gradual elimination of obstacles to reciprocity by transforming strategic settings, in order to market more destinations into a single one (Apostolopoulos, 2000).

On the subject of clusters, most studies focus on the manufacturing industry, despite the growth of the service sector. In a typical tourism cluster the quality of a visitor's experience depends on the primary attraction but also on the quality and efficiency of complementary businesses such as hotels, restaurants, shopping outlets, and transportation facilities (Poter, M.E, Clusters and the New Economics Competition, Harvard Business Review, Vol. 76, Issue 6, 1998).

Similar to usual clusters, the tourism ones are characterised by interrelated companies, promoting joint actions, aglomeration formation (Jackson & Murphy, 2002), and they represent a geographical concentration of interconnected institutions and companies in tourist activities (Capone 2004). In other words, tourist clusters are differentiated sets of tourist attractions which are concentrated in a certain geographic area equipped with qualitative services and facilities, collective efficiency, social and political cohesion, network companies management that generate competitive and comparative benefits (Beni, 2003). The tourist services should include static elements (accommodation, catering), mobility elements (transportation, travel agencies, rent-a-car services), dynamic elements (recreational, cultural services). However, a tourism cluster is associated with tourist product and destination (Costa, 2005).

Sara Nordin described clustering as a means of developing tourism and travel industry, being also a key element to the service sector. In this line, two tourism destinations from the northwestern part of Sweden were analysed, in order to determine whether they can or cannot constitute clusters (Nordin, 2003). Agreeing with Porter, the author points out that operators in the tourism and travel industry can increase their collective markets and capacities by working together.

The objective of a tourism cluster is to bring together companies that usually act alone, in order to create a successfull tourism product in a certain region. Besides, in order to develop a tourism cluster requires the existence of competitive companies, favorable geographic location, natural potential, cultural traditions, gastronomy, favorabile ospitality, various partners among which formal and informal links are established (Novell 2006). Nevertheless, an eficient tourism cluster also depends on the participation of other actors such as, consulting firms, entire transportation infrastructure etc. (Brown & Geddes, 2007).

Tourism clusters can operate in different forms: geographically (from local- economic activities clustered in balneary tourism, to global- space tourism cluster), horizontally (the integration of industries within larger clusters), vertically (production/practical interconnection), laterally (cluster-type conglomerate- joining different sectors), technologically (compatibility branches that use a single technology- tourism cluster reservation system), focus (cluster of companies focused on a centre-enterprise technology centre or educational institution) (Iordache, Carmen, Ciochină Iuliana, Asandei Mihaela (2010).

A proper definition that semantically approaches the proposed concept states that tourism clusters are geographic concentration of companies and institutions interconnected in tourism activities, whose value as a whole is greater than the sum of its parts, so that they can produce synergy, through their geographical proximity and their interdependence (Flower & Easterling, 2006).

An illustrative Romanian example is represented by Carpathian Tourism Cluster Romania which is an independent network of regional and national tourism stakeholders in Romania. It is the first supra-regional tourism cluster of national interest that includes among

target group and members, tourism development associations and related NGOs, local and national authorities, tour-operators, travel agencies, tourism guides, event agencies, accommodation providers, suppliers of the tourism industry, leisure and entertainment industry, transportation companies, service and consulting companies, universities, training institutes (www.tourism-cluster-romania.com).

### 1.2. The applied methods

Regarding the methodology that mediated the objectives achievement, several methods were employed, among which worth noting analysis, comparison, observation, graphic and cartographic ones.

The analysis method consisted in concepts evolution presentation, common features of analysed concepts, outlining a new definition and features of the proposed concept, transport connection situation (links and distances), tourist heritage and infrastructure description of case studies (mineral water springs, salt mine and local bioclimate, religious edifices, archaeological vestiges, cultural and historical monuments, museums, parks, accommodation, catering, treatment, recreational units and tourist transport infrastructure), respectively the situation of tourist flows.

The comparison method focused on quantitative and qualitative aspects of natural and anthropic resources, elements of secondary tourism supply and tourist flow situation. Thereby, both specific and common elements were determined in order to outline the tourist hierarchy and possible proposals. The purpose was to reveal the level of tourism development inside each settlement from the case studies, then to come up with a series of recommendations for establishing a balance between settlements, if is needed.

The graphic method coincided in the highest proportion with the drawn part of comparative method and consisted in representations as tables and charts (elaborated in Microsoft Excel 2011) of upper mentioned elements, offering to the reader a clearer image of tourism situation.

The cartographic method consisted in two maps achievement which illustrated the contextualisation of studied settlements from Bacău county, all materials being realised through ArcGis 9.3 instrument. With the same instrument was realised a method of suitable areas identification for climatotherapy, taking into consideration the hypsometry situation, pedologic and vegetation shell, the slope and aspects of mountainsides, the Euclidean distance towards a lake or a flowing water (Gaman&Nistoreanu, 2015).

Thus, these research methods aimed to create a general tourism supply at the level of each study case study, where was tried to form a compatibility inside tourist phenomenon components. Subsequent were identified or proposed the specific elements of each settlement tourist potential in order to create a compatible supply offer of a case study. Each urban or rural center must participate in general supply offer level with different primary tourist products. Otherwise, one of them will fail because two similar offers will not survive inside a tourist triade presented in each case study.

Taking into account the dominant type of tourism, for ensuring an efficient polycentric development by through tourism, is necesarry each settlement to must specialise in a particular therapeutic factor in the first case study's situation (local bioclimate, salt mine, mineral water spring) or in a specific activity belonging to one tourism type, in the second case of the secondaty settlements triad proposed (watersports, winter sports, water-based activities and nature-based activities).

## 2. HISTORICAL AND EVOLUTIVE ASPECTS OF HEALTH TOURISM

Before analyzing the tourist potential of health resorts included in case study, I appealed to present the evolution of health tourism at national level, from Antiquity to the present, as well as that of Moineşti, Târgu Ocna and Slănic Moldova.

### 2.1. National level

The rise of living standards, economic well-being, on the one hand, and increased physical and psychological fatigue, the spread of diseases, the need for rest and recreation, on the other hand, gave rise to the emergence of health tourism during the Roman period. As eloquent examples in this sense we can consider the complex tourism plannngs from Băile Herculane (Ad aqua Herculi Sacras- Ad Mediam), GeoagiuBăi (Germisara), Călan (Aque), Moneasa, Ocna Mureş (Salinae), Sovata, Felix.

The abandonment of Romania's territory by the Romans, corroborated by the lack of application of the science of capturing and using the thermal and mineral waters, the migration of the peoples that triggered countless conflicts, the contagious diseases and the new immoral conception of the baths, led to the destruction of the majority of the settlements built in the period before 275.

With the beginning of the Habsburg domination and the consolidation of the capitalist relations in the historical principals, health tourism had a re-launch through the valorisation of some water sources (mineral and thermal) from Balta Albă, Olăneşti, Călimăneşti, Strunga, Băile Homorod, Băile Felix, Băile 1 Mai, Băile Herculane, Borsec, Slănic Moldova, Bălţăteşti, Vatra Dornei, Buziaş, Bazna, Vâlcele, Broşteni, Borca, Băile Tuşnad, Băile Hebe, Covasna, Moneasa, Băile Episcopiei.

Between 1850-1918, the research on hydro-mineral and thermal sources extended at the theoretical and territorial level, a phenomenon leading to the creation of specific settlements within the perimeter of the volcanic chain of the Oriental Carpathians (Băile Tuşnad, Sovata, Malnaş Băi, Topliţa, Sângeorz Băi) , Olt Valley (Govora, Olăneşti, Călimăneşti) and the western part of the country, thus increasing the number of resorts to 20. During this period, due to the researches on the curative climate valences, appeared the first climatic mountain resort in Sinaia.

Until then, the Romanian spa tourism proved to be able to compete the Western countries, especially by gold and silver medals awarding for mineral water springs of Slănic Moldova, Borsec, Covasna, Căciulata, Breazu, Bălteşteşti due to exhibitions Universal and international events in Paris, Vienna, Berlin.

At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, before the First World War, the Romanian health tourism was also noticeable by the existence of seaside sanatoriums that exploit the marine climate (Mamaia), but also the therapeutic qualities of the salty lakes at Techirghiol and Eforie.

The first global conflagration has affected the entire Romanian tourism, including the health one. The four years of war had deeply affected the infrastructure of health resorts, the most affected in this case being Slănic Moldova, the year of 1917 finding it, for the most part, destroyed.

After 1918, attempts were made to rehabilitate the Romanian tourist bases. Regarding the situation of health tourism, it lost a significant number of resorts, but it won others, which successfully join those that appeared in the eighteenth century.

The post World War I scenario is repeated after the second one, when there was a drastic decline in socio-economic efficiency, including health tourism. The material basis of the existing resorts is seriously affected, but the state of Romanian curative tourism is complicated in 1948,

when nationalization of the means of production takes place, leading to the disappearance of some resorts and the delay of the rehabilitation of others.

A restoration of situation was observed starting with 1960, when Poiana Braşov resort was established, when the investments in the seaside started to be carried out, Mamaia, Eforie, Mangalia and Olimp, Neptun, Jupiter, Cap Aurora, Venus, Saturn, Năvodari, Costineşti, and when the existend health resorts were expanded and reconsidered.

Since 1975, investment in tourism has been decreasing and the infrastructure has been continuously drenched. Health resorts were heavily affected, and as a cause of these issues, tourist arrivals were experiencing a drastic decline.

After 1990, there was a marked deterioration in the social and economic life of the entire country, which had been felt in the tourism sector, the most affected component being the infrastructure.

According to below chart, the largest number of Romanian resorts with a health profile corresponds to the period from 1919 to 1945, a time interval during which the mountain tourism experienced an unprecedented development, a phenomenon that materialized in the appearance of some mountain resorts that have capitalized the curative valences of the local bioclimate, an untouched situation at present. Analyzing the situation of the Romanian health tourism in 1945, it can be said that its decline started after the Second World War and continues today.

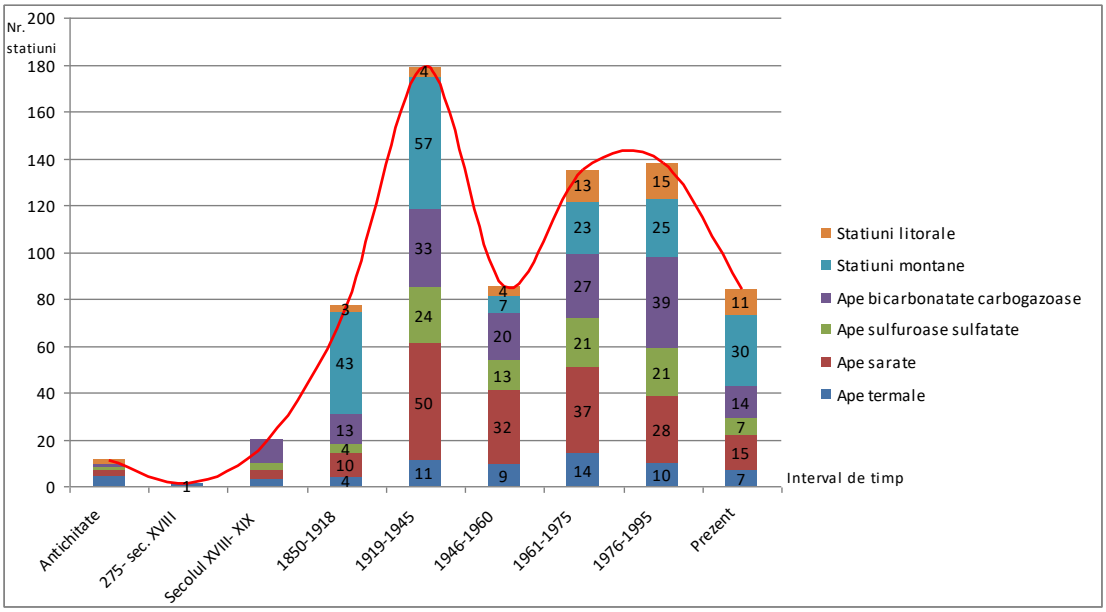


Fig. 1. Quantitative evolution of Romanian tourist resorts from Antiquity to the present

## 2.2. Local level

The Moineşti's tourism evolution is strongly linked with mineral water springs discovery. We talk about 1860-2014 interval, whose beginning coincides with mineral water springs discovery from Parc Băi, during the digging of a crude oil pit until 300 metters depth. The first touristic resources discovered in Moinești were, are and will be the most important, because its are placed at touristic pyramid base, helping by the side of local bioclimate at defining of that tourism type which has the most viable chances of success: curative one.

Ten years later after mineral water springs discovery, it were built special constructions for sulphurous and ferruginous mineral water intake, which until then, this precious resourse had been flowed from the slopes of both Gâzu brook sides, and until 1909, mineral water had been

used to be transported to a cauldron for being warmed, then it had been moved in wood tubs which were positioned in some little constructions made by fir-trees wood.

A rudimentary bath infrastructure was carried out in 1909 and it consisted in a barrack with some cabins. For this time, due to better bath conditions, the therapeutic value of mineral water attracted a bigger number of tourists, among them being the well-known Romanian painter, Ștefan Luchian. Later, even if local authorities couldn`t realize the chemical analysis of mineral water, it was built a working-class hospital wih a medical and social assistance.

After Moinești had been declared a city (1921), the local authorities tried to obtain for this settlement "spa resort" title, efforts which had been concluded in 9 June 1934, due to the decision of Minister of Labour, Health and Social Care, Balneoclimatic Service Direction.

From 1909 until 1954, no other measures had been done for a better mineral water bath utilization, excepting a Jewish Bath which had been used for well-known "Friday bodily purifying", since 1940. Nothing special happened in Parc Băi`s planning, because the local authorities rented mineral water spring`s area to "Pietrosu" Forest Cooperative which used those therapeutic factors only for immediate profit. It didn`t have a durable vision regarding some investments in mordernizing bath conditions.

The first statistical data which revealed the number of tourists who came for treatment appeared in 1934, when the new spa resort enumerated 311 pacient-tourists, excepting those from Moinești and neighboring villages, who weren't registered.

The mineral water springs had been used until 1950, then its were abandoned because the city leadership's attention was centred on crude oil exploitation. Due to this fact, Moinești changed it's SPA resort title to "black gold city", 4 years later.

From 1959, mineral water springs had begun to be used when Communal Bath was built for treatment baths in better conditions: modern installations for water heating and cabins with tubs. In course of time, it was used by a lot of tourists and local citizen, and according to statistical data, Moinești disposed by a bigger number of visitors than was used to, when it was declared a spa resort.

Later, in 1970-1984, some planning actions took place in Parc Băi, which consisted in some benches installing, some panel boards with mineral water physicochemical composition and methods of use information, in extensioning, widening, asphalting the alleys, and it was built a hotel which had 30 accommodation places. Thanks to this hotel, Moinești received the biggest number of tourists (8758), in 1980.

Nine years later, the local authorities decided to build a new 8 floors hotel with 50 accommodation places and a treatment base for mineral water springs utilization, but it's building wasn't completed because the communist regime failed and no other funds had been found .

New planning measures for Parc Băi were taken in 2012, when Moinești's leadership succeed to implement an European project, within which have been installed 85 benches, 150 street bins, 4 ecological toilets, one children playground and have been planted 110 trees. Moreover, new alleys were planned, for pedestrians and cyclists, and the existent ones have been rehabilitated.

In the same year range, the settlement receives 877 tourists, ten times less than the number registered in 1980, due to the fact that in 1990-2008 period, the Moinești's tourist phenomenon was absent, the mineral water springs were left in disrepair and the economy was based on industrial function. Thereby, through those modernizing actions for Parc Băi and mineral water springs, the local tourism has real a chance of affirmation. Besides those measures, the European projects which were implemented are also including promotion activities of natural and anthropic touristic potential like religious edifices, historical monuments, protected areas, special events.

The beginnings of the tourist phenomenon in Târgu Ocna are related to the discovery of the mineral springs in the area of the future resort Băile Nastasache, located in the northwest of the present town, on the area of Magura Park, at the foot of the honored mountain, whose first

mention dates back to 1846 when the magazine " Romanian Bee "announces the opening of" two mineral water wells, recently discovered in the Ocna Fair mahalale ". The first chemical analyses of these waters were carried out in 1846 by Dr. Aga C. Varnav and the pharmacist Pavlovici, but only in 1883 Dr. Samuel Konya published the chemical analysis of all 7 springs.

In 1912 the first organized baths (40 booths and 70 baths) appeared, the spring water being heated by the hot stones and in the central area were three hotels, one of them in 1900 had 52 rooms, facilities that transformed the park in health tourism complex.

In 1966 the works for opening the "Trotuş" mine were started, which was to become the main sanatorium in Targu Ocna.

Compared to the other two urban centers, Slănic Moldova has emerged and developed due to the mineral resources that have established the tourist phenomenon. If Moinesti had economic prosperity due to oil exploitation and Târgu Ocna developed on the basis of salt deposits exploitation, the economy of Slanic Moldova resort was based, from the outset, on the use of mineral waters whose varied chemical composition and therapeutic efficiency had been recognized abroad.

The first planning focused on the valorisation of mineral waters when the same hunter, built a cult place and around this edifice he raised dwellings and special baths for people who wanted to be treated. Until 1820, on the Slanic valley were 40 rooms, and the number of visitors was constantly increasing due to the rapid spread of the therapeutic efficiency of the springs. The way of preparing the baths was the same as for the other two localities, by heating the mineral water with hot stones.

The two World Wars destroyed the resort for the most part, a new period of flowering for Slanic Moldova taking place after the process of nationalization of health resorts, in 1948.

## 3. ROMANIA'S HEALTH RESORTS ISSUES

Through this chapter I highlighted Romania's health resorts issues concerning accessibility level, tourism infrastructure, tourist staff, promotion actions, lack of diversified tourist offer, all folowed by a SWOT analysis in order to establish the actual diagnosis, that will have an important role in tourism development measures outlining.

The accessibility level of Romanian's health resorts was correlated with tourist accommodation infrastructure and tourist flow in a study where were taken into account railway road and airport infrastructure (Gaman & Răcășan, 2015).

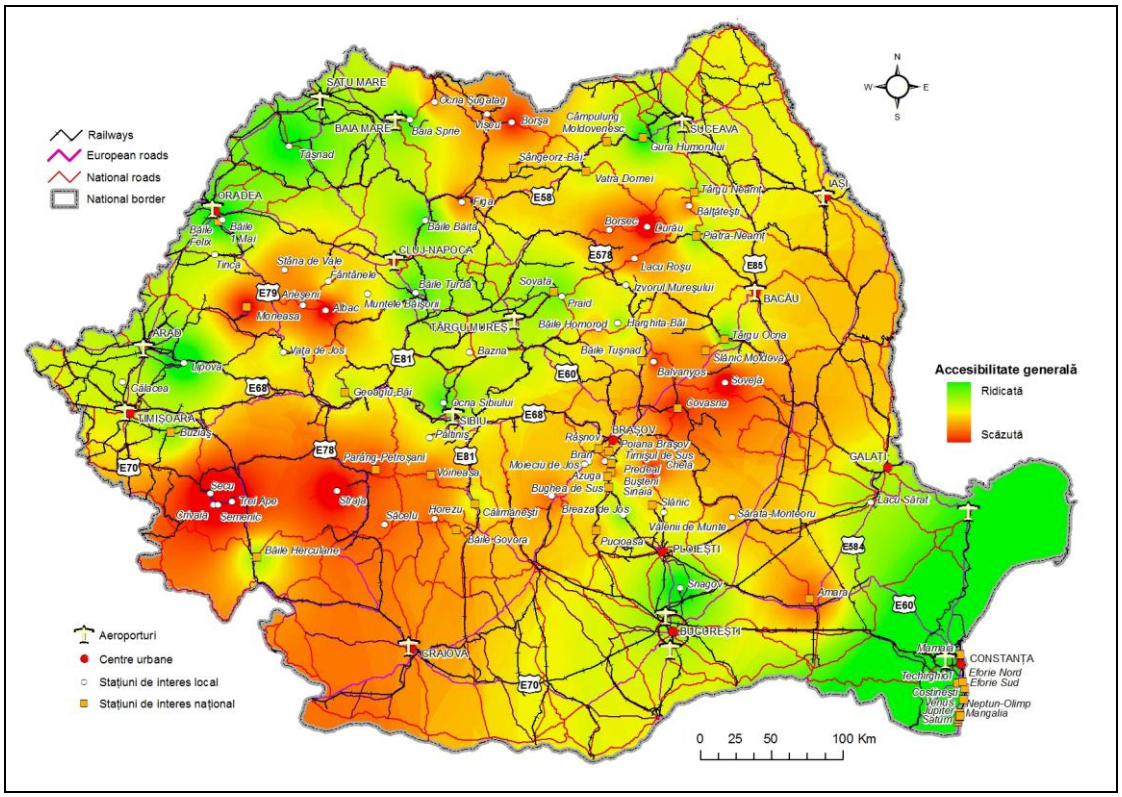


Fig. 2. General accessibility level of Romanian resorts

The results outlined that 42 from 90 health resorts presents under-average accessibility level values, most of these being positionated in Apuseni Mountains, North Group of Oriental Carpathians, northern part of Oriental Carpathians central group, Curvature Carpathians, Bărăgan Plain, Oltenia's zone, western part of Meridional Carpathians, Getic Subcarpathians. The health resorts represent an unique situation, because its appeared and developed exactly were therapeutic factors had been found.

Another problem is that tourism infrastructure (accommodation, catering, treatment, recreation units) suffers from cantitative, qualitative and typological point of view.

Likewise, Romania's health resorts face with an important problem in terms of staff. Health tourism represents a type of this phenomenon that requires high quality services because, in this context, we cannot talk about tourists' recreation, but about tourist's treatment and there are no excuses for the inadequacies in the tourist offer.

The Romanian health resorts do not benefit by an efficient tourist or scientific promotion that should be adressed to specialist doctors or to researchers from balneary and climatotherapy domains. A scientific promotion have an important role because through this action can be organized medical exchanges, conferences on different themes (tourism development, tourism planning, promotion, treatment infrastructure, marketing, treatment development), several

specialized Romanian medical journals can be published. Moreover, publication of articles in foreign specialized journals may be encouraged.

For a pertinent tourism promotion it is necessary to specialize the resorts in different treatment modalities, as well as the appearance of such multi-purpose establishments that respond to the tendency to combine medical treatment with recreation and rest, and it is recommended to be addressed to those who want to cure, as well as those who opt for recreation, wellness or sport.

The modern tourist prefers an active stay, with different programs, this being an aspect that not many Romanian health resorts are able to fulfill. Several seaside resorts represent few exceptions where the tourist spends most of diurnal interval on the beach. This issue refers especially to those resorts equipped with therapeutic factors such as mineral waters, saline microclimate, favorable local bioclimate, where the daily treatment followed by a tourist-tourist requires a much shorter time.

## 4. THE ELEMENTS OF CASE STUDIES' NATURAL AND HUMAN ENVIRONMENT THAT INFLUENCE THE LOCAL TOURISM PHENOMENON

The fourth chapter contains several aspects concerning elements of natural and human setting that determines the tourist phenomenon as geology, petrography, the pedological cover, the complementary services and nearby attractions.

### 4.1. Geographic contextualization

All of these three urban settlements are situated in the western part of Bacău County, in contact area of Subcarpathian zone and Carpathian one, the single exception being Slănic Moldova which can be found in the eastern extremity of Moldo-Transilvani Eastern Carpathian group. Moinești is located at the boundary between Intracarpathian Basin of Comăneşti and Subcarpathian Basin of Tazlău, in the nordwestern part of Bacău District, in the middle basin of Trotuş-Tazlău river system, Târgu Ocna resort is positioned in north-western part of Cașin Depression, at Berzunți Mountains hem, and Slănic Moldova resort is situated at Nemira Mountains hem. From these three localities, only the last two possesses „health resort" title.

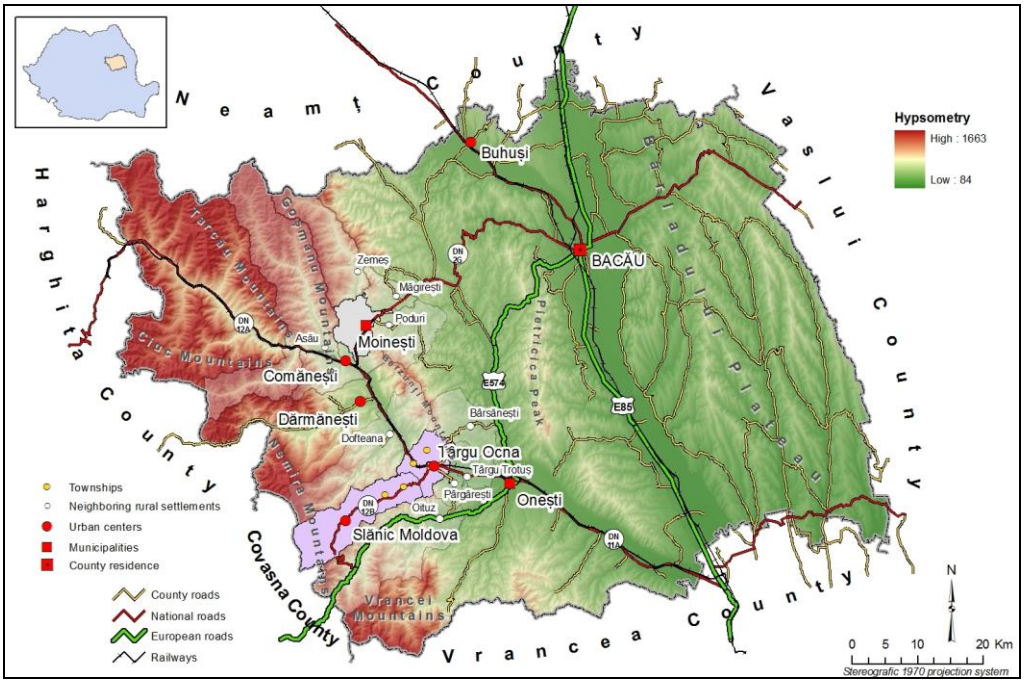

Fig. 3. Moinești, Târgu Ocna, Slănic Moldova's county level contextualization

### 4.2. Petrography and geology

Regarding petrography, in western part of Moinesti, on south-eastern peak of the Goşmanul Mountains clays, marls, sandstone, salt are localised, the sandstone occupying the largest surface. In southern part of Lunca, Hangani, Vasâieşti zone are found sandstones , sands, clays that are characteristic of the Sarmatian period. On south-eastern part of the territory, the northern peak of the Berzunti Mountains is occupied by deposits of lime, limestone, limestone sandstone that are intercalated with silky sandstone. In central part of administrative territory, also called Moinesti saddle, can be found helvetiene cut, conglomerates and sands.

From geological point of view, the territory of Moineşti is divided into two distinct units: the Tarcău unit within the Eastern Carpathian flysch and the pericarpic unit. Over these formations, during the transmigration of Sarmatian, had been deposited the sediments of the Comanesti intraotonic basin.

As in the Moinești's case, Târgu Ocna resort is located between two geological units (the Carpathian flysch and Subcarpathian formations) being localised in tectonic ramps, situation which leads to a complex structure, this being the decisive factor in impregnating a variety of underground resources, these having an important role in tourism development: salty salt, potassium salts, mineral springs.

From petrographic point of view, we can find marno-clays, sandstones and conglomerates on the banks of the Slanic River, marble with gypsums intercalations in Vâlcele village, clay on the Podei and pebbles and sands on the banks of the Trotuş river.

Slănic Moldova is located in the area of the Eastern Carpathian flysch, above tertiary old deposits such as the Kliwa or Tiseşti sandstone that was formed by cementing the sandy beaches of the sea that covered this territory.

### 4.3. Pedology

According to researches, on Moineşti's administrative territory, the soil cover presents a great diversity due to rocks, vegetation, climate and anthropic action: brown soils, podzolic soils, endzins, alluvial soils and alluviums (146 ha).

In Târgu Ocna resort can be found a predominant brown forest soils in the mountainous and sub-Carpathian areas, the rendezvous soils, gypsic and marble soils in northeast part of the administrative-territorial unit, the alluvial and lacquerous soils on the floodplains, but the hydrographical basins of the Vălcica and Gălean streams contain halomorphic soils, which have a high salinity.

Slănic Moldova possesses mostly cambisols in the high mountainous zone. In western part of administrative territory spodosols can be found. The smallest territories are occupied by chernozems and in the south-eastern administrative unit, respectively in the sludge of the Slănic river protisols are present.

### 4.4. Technical and urban infrastructure

Thiscomponent includes the sewerage network, the drinking water supply networks, the natural gas and electricity networks. UAT Moinesti has a drinking water distribution network with a length of 44.4 km, 87.6% of the homes having drinking water. The length of the simple sewerage network is 29.7 km and 83% of the dwellings are connected to it. The natural gas distribution network has a length of 74.9 km and the coverage of the inhabited area exceeds 95%. The electricity distribution network has a length of 120 km, of which 112 km LEA and 8 km SES (underground), 97.2% of the existing dwellings in the municipality being connected to the electricity distribution network.

Concerning the Târgu Ocna resort, the length of the drinking water supply network is 49.6 (2012), and the share of the dwellings with water supply facilities is 78.3%. The length of the sewerage network is 16.9 km, and the percentage of connection to the sewerage network - 70.5%. The length of the public lighting network is 56 km, and the gas distribution pipeline is 42 km.

Slănic Moldova has a total length of 50 km of drinking water distribution network. The length of the sewerage network is 16.2 km (the connected population to the sewerage network constitutes 39.3%), the gas distribution system measures 27.2 km, while the electricity distribution network is about 18 km length.

### 4.5. Transport infrastructure

Moinesti, in terms of road infrastructure, is crossed by the DN2G national road on a length of 10.1 km, which establishes the connection with Bacău Municipality on the county road DJ 117 which connects with the commune of Poduri (0.9 km) and by DC180A communal road on a distance of 4.3 km, which ensures the connection with the commune of Zemeş. The railway infrastructure is represented by the simple non-electrified 508 Comăneşti-Moineşti line which serves only freight transport, crossing the administrative-territorial unit on a distance of 5.5 km. 50 km. The air transport is provided by the heliport of Moinesti Municipal Emergency Hospital, the nearest airport being 50 km away from the city, in Bacau.

Târgu Ocna is crossed by DN12A on a length of 7.6 km, which connects with the town of Comăneşti and Onesti municipality, the DN12B national road on a distance of 3.1 km that provides the connection with Slanic Moldova, the County road DJ 116 On a length of 8.6 km, which establishes the connection with Barsanesti commune, DC152 with Târgu Trotuş. City streets total 60 km, of which 31 km are upgraded. The railway transport is provided by the electrified railway, the secondary railway 501 Adjud Ciceu on a length of 7.9. The air access is provided by the George Enescu Airport in Bacau, 61 km away.

The road transport of Slănic Moldova is provided by DN12B national road on a distance of 16.8 km and by the county road DJ 116 A (7 km), which connects with Transylvania. The total length of the city streets is 46 km. Air accessibility depends only on Bacău Airport, located 80 km away.

### 4.6. Complementary services

The level of efficiency of tourism phenomenon is closely in line with the level of economic development of studied territory. In this respect it is necessary to review the situation of the economic sectors and economic agents that are active in tourism. The level of efficiency of tourist phenomenon depends on the quality and quantity of above mentioned factors, but it is also conditioned by complementary services belonging to tourism related fields: oil stations, car service stations, banks, exchange offices, post office, internet access, commercial units, police, sanitary institutions, administrative institutions, tourist information centers, travel agencies.

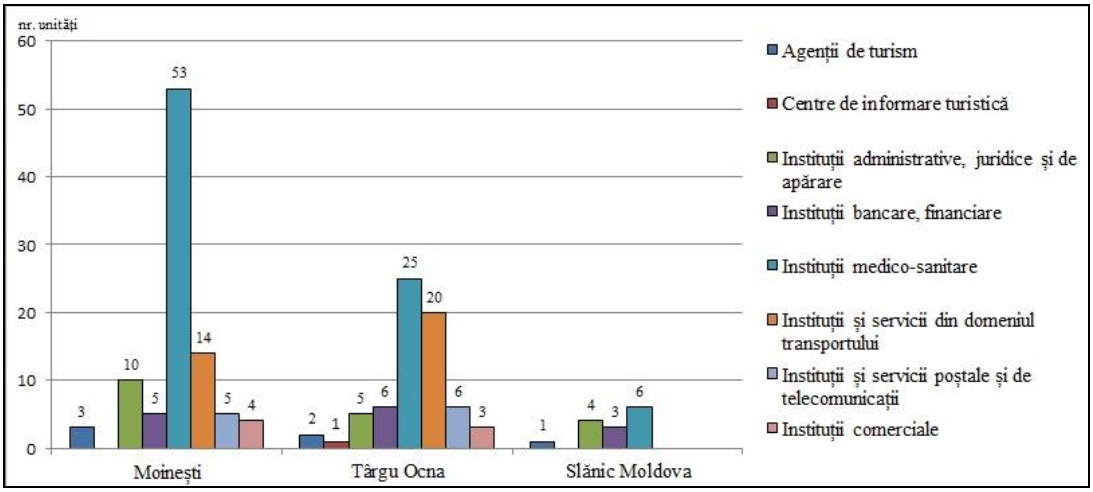


Fig. 4. Quantitative presentation of tourism-related institutions from Moineşti, Târgu Ocna, Slănic Moldova (2015)

### 4.7. The surrounding tourist attractions

In this regard we can enumerate Diaconeşti Monastery (Agăş commune, Preluci village), Cotumba Monastery (Agăş commune, in south-western part of Brusturoasa Depression), Caşin Monastery (Caşin Monastery commune), Bogdana Monastery (Ştefan cel Mare commune, near Trotuş river), Saint Sava Monastery (Berzunţi commune, Buda village), hermitage Saint Ilie (Berzunţi commune), Borzeşti Church (Oneşti city), Dealul Ghindarului archaeological site (Poduri commune, Rusăieşti village), Ruins of the Princely Court (Bacău city), Cultural Centre Rosetti Tescani- George Enescu (Bereşti-Tazlău commune, Tescani village), Memorial House of George Bacovia (Bacău city), Memorial House of Nicu Enea (Bacău city), Dimitrie Ghika Museum (Comăneşti city, central park), Comăneşti Railway Hall (Comăneşti city), Ştirbei family Castle (near Dărmăneşti city), Valea Uzului Dam (Valea Uzului village, between Nemira and Ciuc Mountains), Prăjeşti Botanical Garden (Prăjeşti commune), Dofteana Dendrological Park (Dofteana commune), Hemeiuşi Dentrological Park (Hemeiuşi commune), Perchiu Nartural Area (Oneşti city).

## 5. MOINEȘTI, TÂRGU OCNA AND SLĂNIC MOLDOVA'S TOURISM POTENTIAL

The next chapter highlights the tourism potential of localities that are included in the case study, in order to outline the precarious situation of tourism phenomenon in spite of the existing therapeutic factors and especially the need to diversify the tourist offer. Thus, elements of the natural, anthropic tourism potential, of the tourist infrastructure, of the general infrastructure and the situation of the tourist circulation are presented.

Any study that aims to analyse, evaluate and develop tourism potential has at its start the description of elements that make up the natural context of the case study. The natural tourism potential coincides with all the factors of attraction belonging to the natural framework and its components from a territory and represents that part of the tourism fund that prints a dominant note of tourist attractiveness.

From natural attractions point of view, Moinești is distinguished by the mineral waters of Băi Park, by the attractiveness of the hypsometric amplitude and the possession of a protected area of black pine, one of the few of this type in Romania.

Concerning the anthropic potential, the urban center in question boasts an archaeological site, a Jewish cemetery proving the existence of an important Jewish community, several commemorative monuments commemorating the Dada spirit, places of worship that have been declared historical monuments .

Târgu Ocna resort disposes by attractiveness among the natural potential of the Trotuş mine, seven mineral water springs at the foot of Magura Mountain and the Magura Ocna Nature Reserve.

In addition, it distinguishes itself from the other localities included in this study, in terms of anthropogenic attractions, the possession of two valuable archaeological sites, a monastic complex, a large number of places of worship declared historical monuments and a historzy museum.

Slănic Moldova is recognized for its mineral water springs, but the tourism potential is also remarkable for its material anthropic tourist attractions such as the Casino Culture House, the Roman Epitropy Building, the Central Park, the Commemorative Cemetery.

## 6. MOINEŞTI, TÂRGU OCNA AND SLĂNIC MOLDOVA's TOURIST FLOW

The successor of the fifth chapter is that one which presents the tourist flow, meaning the certain effects of tourism potential by presenting the situation of the arrivals, the overnight stays, the average duration of the tourist stay.

Despite the fact that Slănic Moldova is outdated by Târgu Ocna in terms diversified tourist offer, the Moldova's Pearl receives the largest number of tourists throughout the analysed time interval. The minimum number of 14,659 tourists registered in 2010 may be due to the echo of the economic crisis of 2008, but the retreat from 2011-2015 (except for 2014) is quite pronounced. The whole period under review shows large fluctuations, in just six years the number of tourists dropping by about 30,000. The lack of diversity of tourist services makes the springs especially used by people in transit. It is a fact that the mineral water is still well known on the Slănic Valley, which is used by many people (registered tourists and visitors in transit).

In the period of 2001-2015, Târgu Ocna resort registered a smaller number of tourist arrivals, their trend being slightly decreasing until 2013, and fluctuations were almost non-existent. Most tourists come to treat various diseases with the help of saline microclimate, with mineral waters less well known than those in Slanic Moldova. However, there is a large number of visitors in transit for recreation.

Moinesti did not record any tourist arrivals until 2011. Once with the accreditation of some accommodation units, the promotion of tourist events of local and national interest, the tourist arrivals reached the historic value of 3539 in 2015. However, it is a very small number, compared to the other two resorts.

Although Slănic Moldova registers a higher number of tourist arrivals than Târgu Ocna resort, during the period 2010-2013, the number of tourist overnight stays is close, due to the decrease in the tourist stay and to a non-diversified tourist offer to encourage Longer stay of tourists. However, Slanic Moldova manages to detach in 2015 when certain accommodation structures are included again in the tourist circuit. Moineşti also has an increase in overnight stays due to the appearance of two accommodation units, but also due to the increase in tourist arrivals.

Regarding the average duration of tourist stay, the resort of Târgu Ocna advance Slănic Moldova, showing much higher values in this respect. Like the evolution of tourist overnight stays, only the situation of resort that is situated at the foot of the Nemira Mountains shows a descending curve in the period 2001-2015. Thanks to the existence of several therapeutic value factors, but especially to the recreational base offering multiple ways of spending leisure time, Târgu Ocna has an average stay for the analyzed period of 7.2 nights. From this point of view, Slanic Moldova has a value of 3.9 nights, and Moinesti is only limited to 1.4 nights, proof that the latter is visited especially by tourists interested in tourist events and not by the natural therapeutic factors.

The net use index of tourist accommodation capacity in operation coincides with the result of dividing the total number of overnight stays in tourist accommodation capacity that is in operation during that period. In this case, the Slănic Moldova resort is the leader until 2013, due to the number of overnight stays, despite the fluctuations registered in 2009-2010.

As in previous cases, the trend of both national interest resorts is slightly decreasing. Moinesti municipality has a slight increase at the end of the interval due to the accreditation of five accommodation units. The rate of the tourist function is the ratio between the number of accommodation places and the total population. The value of population in each case study is the one recorded in the 2011 census, but the number of accommodation places in 2014 was taken into account, as the values are experiencing major changes over the previous years. At the same time, the population did not experience significant fluctuations.

Moineşti resort's tourist function rate is 0.003, of Târgu Ocna is 0.03, and Slănic Moldova is around 0.15. The results do not exceed the expectations, which are directly proportional to the values of the quality indicators and the quantity of the accommodation base in each case study. The intensity of tourist traffic coincides with the ratio between the number of overnight stays and the number of inhabitants. Thus, the number of overnights in 2013 and the population recorded in the year of the last census (2011) were taken into account.

The results reveal the fact that Slănic Moldova holds the highest intensity of the tourist traffic with 21.31 overnight stays / place, a value located at a significant distance from Targu Ocna, which accumulates only 4.86 overnight stays / place. Moinesti has a tourist traffic intensity of only 0.08 overnight stays, which shows a very low tourist flow.

## 7. ESTIMATION METHOD OF THE IDEAL HEALTH RESORT'S TOURISM VALUE AND ITS CASE STUDIES IMPLEMENTATION

Concerning the natural attractions, were taken into account mineral water springs and were valued those features that make them usable in optimum conditions: chemical composition diversity (4,4 points), captured (1), sufficient flow (1), recognized therapeutic qualities (0,6), used in mixed cure (2), localized in a special planned area (0,5), localized near a spa sanatorium (0,5). The highest score was awarded to chemical composition diversity, because it is directly proportional with the number of affections cured, the same ideea being followed in case of thermal mineral water springs and moffetta emanations.

The first four features are availabe also for thermal mineral water springs, but these are differentiated by the existence of hypothermal water (1 point), mesothermal water (1) and hyperthermal water (1).

The third element within natural attractions is represented by moffetta emanations that were assessed by their gas content: CO2 (5 points), ammoniac (1), sulfur (1), helium (1), radon (1), sulfided hydrogen (1). The biggest value was given to CO2 element because this proved to be the most effective in many affections.

The saline microclimate was evaluated by its underground air quality: constant microclimate- confortable temperature and humidity, lack of stream air, reduced level of pulmonary and cutaneous, low hiperbarism (2 points), aeroionization, slowly positive (2), allergens and no pollutants (2), pure air from a microbiological view (2), high level of sodium, potasium, calcium and magnesium aerosols (2). The values given to these characteristics are the same because each one contribuites at the quality of this microclimate.

The therapeutic mud was analyzed through the type of mud: sapropelic mud (3,3 points), peat mud (3,3), mineral mud (3,3).

The therapeutic lakes were assessed by type of water: chlorosodic water (5 points) and magnesium sulphated water (5).

The local bioclimate represents the base of the second function of health resorts. Through this study were taken into account the types of bioclimate, in accordance with relief situation: Sedative-indifferent hills bioclimate (10 points), Solicitant exciting of seaside bioclimate (7,5), Incentive-tonic mountain bioclimate (5), Solicitant exciting plain bioclimate (2,5). The first type of bioclimate listed received the biggest score because it is indicated for all types of affections and it is the only lacking in contraindications.

The phytocenosis component was evaluated by type of forests: leaf forest (4 points), mixted forest (2), coniferous forest (1), protection forest (1), woodland park (1). The highest value is owned by leaf forest, because the ideal resort is situated between 300-700 m height.

The natural reserves were analyzed through the type of its natural components: forestier reserves (1), botanical reserves (1), faunistic reserves (1), geological reserves (1), mixted reserves (2,5), natural parks (3,5). The values were given considering the complexity of each type of reserve components

The hunting and fishing resources were assessed considering the type of faunistic elements: furry animals (2,5 points), flying animals (2,5), cervides (2,5), salmoniculture (2,5).

The hydrographic network was evaluated by its sport practicing and landscape attractivity: landscape impact and sport tourism suitability (10 points), landscape impact (5).

Regarding the landscape impact, was taken into account the relief energy: relief energy bigger than 1000 m (10 points), relief energy between700- 1000 m (8), relief energy between 500-700 m (6), relief energy between 250-500 m (4), relief energy under 250 m (2).

Regarding the anthropogenic resources, it was taken into account some indicators that have an important role in modern tourist satisfaction, in raising his awareness. In the first line, an anthropogenic attraction must present high level of accessibility, must have a considerable height, a large occupied area, should be old, must have a big novelty level. Moreover, the

attractivity level of an anthropogenic resource is higher if it forms a landscape attraction sketched with other environment components. The modern tourist is looking for novelty, amaizing and spectacular places, he wants to be a witness to something that he hasn't seen yet.

The derived tourist offer is composed of accommodation, alimentation, treatment, tourist transport infrastructures and tourist attraction events (Ciangă & Dezsi, 2007).

Concerning the accommodation infrastructure, were taken into account features like accommodation places, comfort category and accommodation structures typology.

The accommodation places feature was assessed by comparing the number of places available at the number of tourists: over 10% from total number of tourists who arrived in the last year (10 points), between 8-10% (8), between 6-7,9% (6), between 4-5,9% (4), under 4% (2). These percentages were chosen because, in a health resort, all accommodation units should be capable to receive all tourists who arrive in an entire month. The maximum percentage is 10% and not 12% because it was taken into account the seasonality that occurs especially during the cold season.

The comfort category was evaluated by taking into account the share of units with different classifications: if more than 25% from accommodation units number have 3 or 4 stars (10 points), between 15-25% (8), between 10-14,9% (6), between 5-9,9% (4), under 5% (2).

*The accommodation structures typology was analyzed through the level of units diversity:* if within a resort exists hotels, guest houses, villas, hostels, bungalows, campings, apartments for rent (10 points), if there exists 4 of those upper listed (8), if there exists 3 of those upper listed (6), if there exists 2 of those upper listed (4), if there exists 1 of those upper listed (2).

Concerning the alimentation infrastructure, were taken into account features like number of total places and typology.

The number of total places was assessed by comparing the number of places available at the the number of tourists: over 20% from total number of tourists who arrived in the last year (10 points), between 15-20% (8), between 10-14,9 % (6), between 5- 9,9% (4), under 4,9% (2). The percentage taken into consideration differs from that of accommodation, because in this case, the demand is more sensitive; during his journey a tourist choose one accommodation unit, but, for sure, he will choose more catering units.

The typology evaluation took into account the the diversity of this kind of infrastructure: if within a resort exist classic, hunted meat, fisherman's, pension, dietary, lacto-vegetarian, local specific, national specific restaurants, cellar, brasserie, beerhouse, pubs, cocktail bar, pizzeria, coffee house, teahouse (10 points), if there exist a classic and dietary restaurant and other 8 types of alimentation units (8), if there exist a classic and dietary restaurant and other 6 types of alimentation units (7), if there exist a classic or dietary restaurant and other 8 types of alimentation units (6), if there exist classic or dietary restaurant and other 4 types of alimentation units (5), if there exist only a classic and dietary restaurant (4), if there exist ony a classic restaurant or dietary one (2), if there don't exist a classical or a dietary restaurant the situation is analyzed with less one point and if there don't exist both of its, the upper situations are analyzed with less two points.

The recreation infrastructure was evaluated by diversity level of its typology: if within the resort exist football field on natural and synthetic grass or, handball, basketball, tennis field, swimming pool, mechanical games, billiard, bowling hall, sky slope, diving, boating, snorkeling, underwater shooting base, fitness, bodybuilding hall, fighting techniques hall (10 points), if there exist 12-14 types of upper recreation infrastructure typology (8), if there exist 9-11 (6), if there exist 4-8 (4), if there exist 1- 3 (2).

The features analyzed within treatment infrastructure are more detailed represented, because were taken into consideration all types of treatment possibilities.

The units based on mineral and thermal water were evaluated by the level of equipment and treatment possibilities: if within the resort exist balnear pool, individual tubs, physiotherapy basins, solarium pool-basins, medicinal irigations cabins (10 points), if there exist 4 types of

mineral and thermal water treatment elements (8), if there exist 3 types (6), if there exist 2 types (4), if there exist one type (2).

The same type of evaluation was used for units based on therapeutic mud (if within the resort exists the possibility of cold onctions effectuation, warm wraps, applications with extracts form (10 points), if there exists the possibility of two types of treatment effectuation (6), if there exists the possibility of one types of treatment effectuation (2)), on therapeutic values of local bioclimate (if aerotherapy, heliotheray and terrain cure are assured (10 points), if only 2 types of treatment are assured (6), if only one type of treatment is assured (2)).

The *saline's microclimate* was assessed by number of facilties*:* if the saline has alimentation, recreation and rest base for patient-tourists (10 points), if the saline has only two of upper facilities (6 points), if the saline has only one of upper facilities (2).

The post-volcanic emanations were evaluated by the quality of gas used for treatment: moffetas on source (10 points), powered moffetas with storage and distribution tanks (6), bottled industrial CO2 powered moffettes (2).

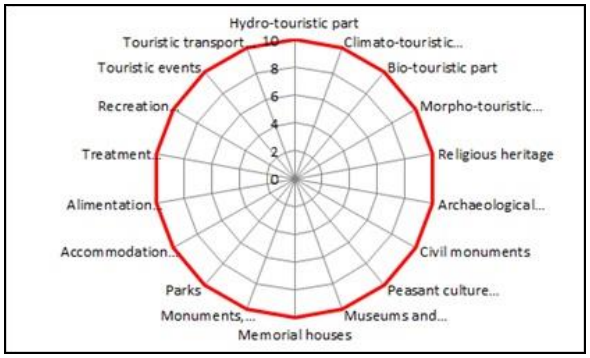

Fig. 5. The touristic value graph of an ideal health resort

The tourist transport infrastructure was analyzed through the number of transportation means on this sense: if within the resort exist cable cars, gondolas, chairlifts, skylifts (10 points), if there exist only 3 types of upper presented (7,5), if there exist only 2 types of upper presented (5), if there exist only 1 type of upper presented (2,5).

The tourist attraction events were assessed by type diversity: if within the resort exist cultural, scientific, sports, artistic events (10 points), if there exist only 3 types of upper tourist events (7,5), if there exist only 2 types of upper tourist events (5), if there exist only one type of upper tourist events (2,5).

The key word of the ideal health resort is *diversity*, because this method of touristc value estimation is closely linked to modern patient-tourist motivations, preferences, demandings. He is looking to diversify his program of holiday, because the treatment schedule lasts only one-two hours, and for the rest of the day he wants to enjoy his free time by doing sport activities, visiting new places, participating at touristic events etc. Inside his staying, the modern tourist wants to spend differently each day.

Moineşti municipality, regarding the natural resources, distinguishes by its mineral springs diversity, its local bioclimate (indifferent-sedative), its phytocenosis (the biggest surface of leaf forest) and its landscape impact (big relief energy and many belle-view point possibilities).

Regarding the anthropogenic attractions, Moineşti municipality obtained the biggest marks on civil monuments, historical, archaeological vestiges and religious heritage.

Moreover, being the most developed urban center, Moineşti has a well defined alimentation and accommodation infrastructure and a large number of authentic tourist events. The accomplished graph shows that Moineşti needs real investments in touris transport and, especially, in recreation and treatment infrastructure if the local authorities are planning to achieve again the „health resort" title.

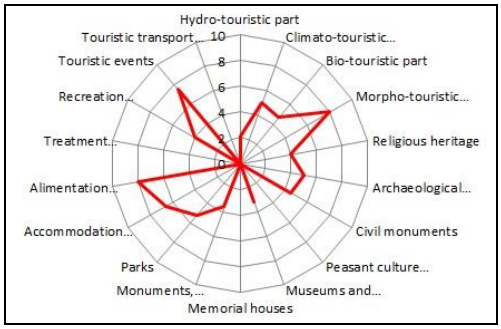

Fig. 6. The touristic value graph of Moineşti

Târgu Ocna, concerning the natural resources, distinguishes expecially by its local bioclimate (indifferent-sedative) which is the most friendly with patient-tourists, its saline microclimate that increase the climatotherapy possibilities, its bio-touristic part due to the existence of Măgura Natural Reserve, and by its morpho-touristic part due its surroundings.

Following the analysis of anthropic attractions from Târgu Ocna, was obtained a graph that highlighted the importance of religious heritage, archaeological vestiges, monuments, statues, busts and civil monuments. Like in Moinești's case, memorial houses, peasant culture and civilization are missing, but regarding the indicators taken for measuring the attractiveness, this resort's anthropic resources distinguishes by accessibility and landscape attraction.

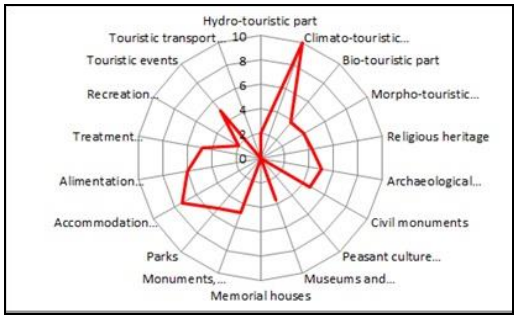

Fig. 7. The touristic value graph of Târgu Ocna health resort

As a well-known SPA resort, Târgu Ocna disposes by a large accommodation (especially hotels and pensions), alimentation and treatment infrastructure (Măgura Complex, Saline Complex). However, the recreation and tourist transport infrastructure, respectively the palette of tourist events need improvements because, under these conditions, the patient-tourist doesn't have many opportunities for spending his free time during a treatment day. Therefore, Târgu Ocna presents a more contoured touristic offer than Moinești, because it satisfies the primary need of patient-tourist: the need of treatment.

Slănic Moldova distinguishes by its 21 mineral water springs representing a unique situation on Romania's territory due to large concentration of these resources in a such small area. Besides these therapeutic treasures, the "pearl of Moldavia" disposes of moffetta emanations, highlighting one of the most completed tourist health offer from Romania.

Regarding anthropic resources, Slănic Moldova, doesn't present such diversification like other resorts (memorial houses, museum and collections, peasant culture and civilization, archaeological vestiges are missing) but it is authentic by the existence of some special civil monuments and religious buildings. Regarding the indicators, Slănic Moldova's anthropic resources are attractive especially by high level of accessibility, landscape attraction and area occupied.

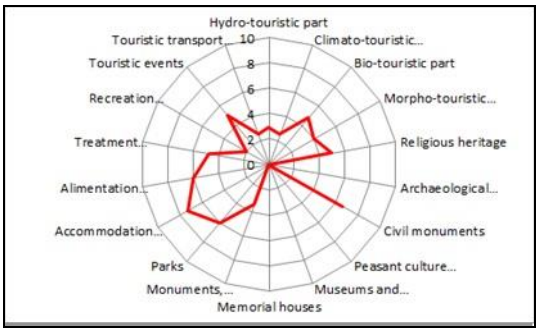

Fig. 8. The touristic value graph of Slănic Moldova health resort

Slănic Moldova distinguishes from other two case studies by disposing of tourist transport infrastructure, but the lack of recreation infrastructure puts its mark on tourist flow circulation, long stays not being preferred by tourists, excepting those who choose this resort for treatment. However, this health resort meets the needs of patient-tourists, having a performed treatment infrastructure and disposing by a quality accommodation and alimentation base.

## 8. PATIENT-TOURIST MOTIVATIONS AND PREFERENCES IDENTIFICATION. IMPLEMENTATION PREMISES OF MOINEȘTI-TÂRGU OCNA-SLĂNIC MOLDOVA TOURISM CLUSTER

In order to perform this study was used the survey method based on questionnaire that aimed to highlight the familiarity level potential patient tourists regarding the concept of health tourism, their preferences and motivations, the level of confidence upon natural therapeutic factors, but also their expectations regarding the tourist offer that is provided by a health resort.

This survey covered 393 respondents, of which 189 are from Moinești, 102 are from Târgu Ocna and 102 belong to Slănic Moldova.

Because certain preferences of respondents which largely depended on their age, three age groups were established. The first one contained those interviewees aged up to 25 years (age from which they enter in the labor market, especially after university studies), the second one included those respondents aged between 26 and 64 (the period in which normally, a person can be found in labor market, 64 years representing the retirement age for men), the the third group covered the surveyed persons people aged equal or greater 65. The youngest questioned person was 17 years old, and the oldest one was 77 years old, both of them being from Moinești city.

In what concerns Moinești, the survey covered 45 people aged between 15 and 25 years, 124 people from second age group and 14 respondents who belonged to third group. Regarding Târgu Ocna's situation, the results enumerated 15 surveyed persons aged betweem 17-25 years, 79 interviewees that belonged to the second age group and 7 people that belonged to the third one. The survey conducted in Slănic Moldova included 2 people aged up to 25 years old, 87 respondents which belonged to second age group and 12 interviewees ages between 65 and 69 years.

Regarding the questionnaire's structure, the first question aimed to introduce the interviewed into the subject through highlighting his knowledge regarding health tourism. The second one proposed to dignify the degree of familiarity with this concept, holding health tourism characteristics as answer options. All of these must be chosen, because all are correct.

The third interrogation propounded to verify, inside of studied area, the credibility of global trend with respect to trust loss of medicamenary treatment, according to World Health Organization. Moreover, it can be clarified if respondents choose to carry out a treatment in a health resort based on natural or anthropic factors. Here, can be also highlighted the non-curative stays in a health resort.

The next question aimed to reveal the diversity level of natural therapeutic factors that patient-tourist, with or without the guidance of a specialist doctor, opted to treat the health problem.

The follower question targeted the identification of that element that underlies the choise of a health destination, but also the level of trust in medical recommendation.

The sixth one proposed to highlight the purpose for which the interviewed person would choose or chose to have a stay in a health resort, whereas the actual trend provides stays especially for rest and recreation.

The next question aimed to underline the interviewed preferences regarding tourist services from a health resorts, except treatment ones. According to global trend, the patient tourist offers less comfort attention, but he is increasingly more concerned on catering services and additional activities which help him to achieve an active stay.

The eighth interrogation seeked the justification for the choise of particular accommodation services. Thereby, it is verified if the comfort or the unit's position in territory towards tourist attractions represents a large interest for respondents.

The ninth question centers its attention on catering services, checking, in case there is no limitation from the doctor, if local interviewed's preferences coincide with modern patient-tourist's ones, namely the interest in growing consumption of healthy food.

The next interrogation aims to underline the diversity level and the type of additional activities that patient tourist could take part, and the successor one intends to highlight the stay's activity planning in a health resort, given that the specialized literature claims that the modern tourist doesn't plan his activities in advance.

Analyzing the responses given by age groups, during a health stay, beside treatment services, the young respondents from all settlements taken into study prefer/would prefer giving attention to additional activities, and at least, to accommodation ones.

For those respondents that are situated in the average age group, the main importance is given to accommodation services (Moineşti- 48%, Târgu Ocna- 46%, Slănic Moldova- 44%), in order of preferences, these being followed by additional services. In all three cases, the catering ones come last.

The accommodation services are the most important also for elderly surveyed people from Moineşti (71%) and Slănic Moldova (67%), but the respondents from Târgu Ocna the additional activities prevail (57%), being followed by catering ones (29%).

The answers registered at next question merely reinforce the assumption that respondents prefer the comfort and the offered accommodation services. The price and the position towards main tourist attraction matter too little, the emerged results moving away from the idea of an active stay in all cases.

The situation of chosen responses by group age shows that the young interviewees from Moinești chose the accommodation services relying on comfort level (58%). The young respondents from Târgu Ocna prefer/would prefer those accommodation units where prices are acceptable (47%), meanwhile the surveyed people from Slănic Moldova chose these services if the level of comfort and prices are equally satisfying.

The respondents who belong to the average group age prefer/would prefer the comfort in order to select an accommodation unit in all cases (Moineşti- 61%, Târgu Ocna- 56%, Slănic Moldova- 54%).

The elderly surveyed people from Moineşti and Slănic Moldova select/would select the level comfort (57%, respectively 58%), but those from Târgu Ocna give/would give a special attention to the prices of accommodation units (57%).

The afferent answers of ninth question reflected that most of questioned residents prefer to consume the daily food menu during a stay in a health resort. The fact is that almost all respondents that had a stay in a health resort for treatment performing preferred the health food.

Thus, only those patient-tourists who spend a stay with curative tinge pay more attention to health food, because the treatment based on natural factors is closely related to nutrition. Conclusive is the fact that the reality given by answers did not flaunt to global trend, according to which patient-tourists are very careful with food consumption.

The situation of chosen responses by group age regarding nutritional consumption shows that the young interviewees from Moinești and Târgu Ocna prefer to have a usual menu through a health stay, meanwhile the young people from Slănic Moldova prefer both organic and resort's specific nutritional consumption.

The middle aged interviewees give attention to the daily menu in all three cases (Moineşti- 52%, Târgu Ocna- 61%, Slănic Moldova- 49%), the organic one being in the second plan.

The elderly respondents also prefer the usual menu in Moineşti and Târgu Ocna's case (71%, respectively 57%). In the meantime, those from Slănic Moldova prefer the organic one (50%).

On the subject of unwound activities, excepting treatment ones, Moineşti's respondents clarified that in a health stay, they prefer to rest, followed by walking and hiking as a way of leisure.

The respondents of Târgu Ocna prefer the rest as well, followed by sport activities and visits to new places.

Meanwhile, the Slănic Moldova interviewees opted for rest, hiking and sport activities.

In all cases, the respondents preferred the rest (non-active stay), followed by movement activities (walking and hiking /sport activities). Conversely, the scientific, creative ones and the entertainment are not in respondents' preferences, proving that Romanian health resorts suffer from lack of tourist supply diversity. Moreover, the preferences regarding certain recreational activities do not presuppose the existence of a well planned tourist base material.

According to the responses given by age groups, the young surveyed people from Moineşti (71%) and Târgu Ocna (53%) prefer sport activities, but those from Slănic Moldova give attention to both sport activities and rest ones.

The respondents that are aged between 26 and 64 years chose almost the same answer options, excepting the interviewees from Slănic Moldova that prefer both rest and sport (61%).

The elderly ones from Moineşti opt for rest and sport (71%), from Târgu Ocna for sport activities (57%), but the respondents from Slănic Moldova chose the rest (50%).

The chosen answers of eleventh question highlight the fact that interviewees do not prefer a default schedule during the stay, but to plan it on the spot, being the only preference which correlates with global trend. The reflected situation by lower figures confirms the assumption that Romanian health resorts are chosen especially for rest. Although this represent the single feature that corresponds with global trend, taking into account the previous answers' analysis, the desire to plan the activities on the spot is based on the comfort desire.

The respondents that are aged up to 25 years from Moineşti (53%) and Târgu Ocna (93%) don't want to plan in advance their stay, while the situation in Slănic Moldova is balanced.

The surveyed people that belong to middle age group do not prefer predetermined schedule in all cases (Moineşti- 53%, Târgu Ocna- 67%, Slănic Moldova- 76%). The situation is similar and among respondents over 65 years.

Despite the inadequacies of the answers, according to the analysis of applied questionnaires were identified three categories of (possible) patient-tourists in relation to their preferences and motivations: rest, treatment and recreation seekers.

The first category includes those respondents who chose a health resort especially for rest. They focus on accommodation services and its level of comfort and because they don't aim for treatment, they don't give attention to catering services, preferring a regular daily menu. The respondents included in this category don't want to respect a possibly schedule.

The second category named treatment seekers is divided into two subcategories. The first one covers those respondents who choose a health resort more fore health recover than health maintaining, because they advocate for high level of comfort with respect to accommodation, and for a healthy menu. Excepting the treatment they are only for rest. Moreover they prefer an organized schedule, this being the ultimate proof of medical prescriptions compliance.

The second subcategory aims for treatment also, but according to their preferences, they choose a health resort especially for health maintaining. Like those mentioned above, the attention is centered on high lever of comfort but they prefer to have a regular daily menu. Considering the additional activities, they choose those ones that involve minimal exertion such as cultural activities and visiting new places.

The third category encloses people who aim to recreation. This kind of tourists are looking for a stay that is packed with additional activities such as hiking, new places visits, different sports practice. They don't heed for accommodation like others because they choose an accommodation unit according to the price and to the position towards tourist attractions. Likewise, regarding the catering services, they prefer to discover the specific food of health resort's zone.

Regarding Romania's situation, the main role of a health resort stopped having well-defined traits because, in the context of survey's results, there are tourist who choose these destinations especially for rest. The lack of confidence on natural therapeutic factors decreased the number of tourists who visit a health resort for treatment proceedings, but in the same time, increased the number of those who need to rest, taking advantage of attractive landscape and less traffic and noise.

It is understood that tourists who chose a health resort for health recovery they also need to rest, but the number of those who come only to rest it is quite high. Moreover, these resorts became as well targets for tourists who want to enjoy recreation services.

Therefore, in order to increase the number of tourist arrivals, Romanian health resorts are forced to provide facilities and services that are capable to satisfy the preferences of all previously mentioned categories. Thus, it is stringent for a health resort to have accommodation units characterized by different comfort levels, catering units that can offer a diversified menu, but also healthy food and specific food of resort's zone, the existence of tourist operator who can provide to tourists the opportunity to participate in cultural, scientific, sport activities and to visit the surroundings.

After analyzing the questionnaires' results, it can be concluded that Romanian patient-tourist proves to be different than tourists with other nationalities. The single common point refers to the fact that they dislike planning in advance the stay's schedule.

Even if all of respondents belong to ex-health and health resorts, and a high percentage of them were in a patient-tourist's situation, they do not seemed to be familiar with the characteristics of health tourism. Though they used natural therapeutic factors, the medicamentary treatment is by far the most reliable.

The utopia is the fact that respondents have greater confident in kin's recommendation that doctor's one. Moreover, the main aim for this kind of stay is resting, not treatment performing. That's why the respondents pay attention especially to accommodation services. Therefore, the patient-tourists have not yet renounced on the idea of comfort.

Even if the majority prefers resting, the side that chose sport and hiking activities should not be neglected.

The respondents who chose the treatment as main aim for a health stay, preferred to benefit by healthy eating, because the treatment is closely related to nutrition.

The interviewed residents who pleaded for additional services, followed not the comfort of accommodation units, but its position towards tourist attractions.

Those who are not comfort adepts prefer additional activities as hiking, visits to new places, but they do not represent the majority. On the other side, the respondents that are looking for rest, they do not want to leave the usual lifestyle patterns.

Hence, the results showed that the preferences and motivations of respondents do not match with global trend's ones that are specified by specialized literature. The health resorts are chosen especially for rest because there is no confidence in the effectiveness of natural therapeutic factors.

Analyzing the responses given by age groups, can be concluded that the young respondents do not choose a health resort for its specificity (treatment services), but for rest. They associate this type of resort with a quiet zone, noiselessly, a perfect place only for resting.

However, the young surveyed people prefer to give attention to additional activities, but no to accommodation ones, as it emerged from answers of sixth question. The notion of rest differs among the young respondents, they associating it with any other activity that does not involve intellectual and physical effort, except sports activities. This aspect was verified using the eleventh question, where it emerged that they prefer additional activities which involves sport.

The issue that young population do not choose a health resort especially for treatment, is reinforced by the fact that the accommodation services are chosen relying on comfort level and prices. Moreover, the young people prefer to consume an usual menu. Likewise, they do not want to plan in advance their stay, the idea of following a medical prescription being completely eliminated.

Like young respondents, those belonging to the middle age group hold the same goal for a stay in a health resort. Treatment is the second most important, because they care about the accommodation services and its level of comfort. The idea of performing a treatment through a health stay is rebutted by the fact that they prefer a daily menu and they do not want to respect a

schedule. Although they chose the rest as a goal for a health stay, they prefer prefer activities that involve movement (walking / hiking, visiting new places).
The majority of elderly respondents prefer to rest in a health tourist stay, excepting those from Târgu Ocna, where the existence of a saline microclimate make them firstly think to treatment services. Moreover these respondents are the only ones that pay attention to cultural activities and not for comfortable ones. They prove to be the most active persons due to the fact that they chose accommodation services relying on prices and not on comfort.

## 9. MOINEŞTI-TÂRGU OCNA-SLĂNIC MOLDOVA TOURISM CLUSTER ESTABLISHMENT ON THE BASIS OF A POLYCENTRIC DEVELOPMENT MODEL. STRUCTURE OF DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN APPLIANCE

După analiza problematicii turismului curativ la nivel național, după analiza în vederea stabilirii compatibilității dintre cele trei localități și a opiniei rezidenților cu privire la fenomenul turistic local, urmează cel mai important capitol din actuala lucrare stiințifică unde se urmărește implementarea și optimizarea dezvoltării policentrice prin turism adaptată după structura unui plan de management al destinației care conține o analiză a condiționărilor exogene turismului, o evaluare pe scurt a potențialului turistic al destinațiilor, trendurile și preferințele pieței, industriile conexe și cele cu rol de suport pentru turism, analiza competitorilor, stabilirea unei viziuni, a unor scopuri, obiective și a unor strategii interne ce au rolul de a specializa din punct de vedere al turismului curativ fiecare stațiune și de a fi compatibilă și complementară cu celelalte, urmând ca apoi toate acestea sa fie integrate într-un cluster turistic.

A tourism cluster involves at least two settlements/resorts which are characterised by a relative high tourist value, an uniform distribution across a territory, a good accessibility. The tourism phenomenon must be seen as one of the most prolific economic branches for present and future, and for an efficient polycentric development, it is necessary to not be identified notable differences regarding the distances or travel times between settlements/resorts taken into study. The tourist decision to benefit from services of another destination, should not be conditioned by these mentioned variables or by a low level of transport accessibility.

All settlements/resorts, or at least most of them, are situated at similar tourist attractiveness levels or have certain tourism development premises. Similar to the first feature, is recommended to eliminate the major differences between tourist values of each settlement/resort taken into study. Though, the minor inaccuracies appeared from this point of view could be eliminated through the proposals session. If one element of case study is totally surpassed by other, the polycentric development through tourism cannot be possible. The tourist must choose a destination from other considerations than those which focus on quality tourist services.

All settlements/resorts taken into account form a general tourism supply based on a single type of tourism (health tourism, recreational tourism etc), but in order display a pertinent case study the sub-supplies must be different. For example, if we were to imagine a scenario within which the general supply of three settlements relies on event tourism, then each of the examined settlements should specialise in one of the following forms: cultural, scientific, or sports events. It is strongly recommended respecting this principle so as to inhibit, competition and to enhance compatibility and co-operation.

The general tourism supply includes services from all settlements/resorts, in order to complement each other. Each member of a case study must equally participate to establish the general tourism supply.

Each settlement/resort has a specialised primary tourism supply, but the secondary ones are diversified. For example, if three health resort are specialized on climatotherapy, salt mine microclimate therapy, respectively hydrotherapy, the secondary services must be multiple in order to offer to patient tourist a diversified stay, regardless the chosen treatment: recreational activities, tourist attraction events etc.

All settlements/resorts are interrelationed and have a common goal, being marketed into a single destination. All tourist destinations within a polycentric development through tourism process action as a system with interacting parts that aim to create and develop a general tourism supply. In this way, more destinations are marketed into a single one. For example, the promotional materials include the settlements/resorts taken as a whole and not differentiated.

A single stay can include tourist services from each settlement/resort. Exemplifying, within a health resort case study, the patient-tourist, according to medical prescription, can

benefit by several treatment methods from a destination, or can use one type of treatment, but can profit by tourist services from another destination.

The distance factor must represent the last vicissitude for travelling between settlements/resorts. If there are more destinations that form a general tourism supply, certainly the tourist will choose to benefit by services from more destinations, this aspect implying movement, which should represent an convenient factor in terms of time and comfort to not influence the tourist decision from this point of view.

In order to build an operational general supply, several interrelations must be established between the elements of the tourism infrastructure belonging to each settlement/resort. The interaction process between the triple-pole destinations within the two case studies is not achieved on the basis of natural and anthropic attractions, but on the basis of the tourism material base related components such as accommodation, catering, recreational, treatment, information and promotion units, thus aiming for a functional polycentric development gained through tourism.

As a continuance of the above information, relating to the accommodation segment are necessary interrelations between all types of accommodation units: hotels, villas, guesthouses, camping, cottages, bungalows etc. Firstly, each unit should hold information materials about the others, supposing that tourists require other services whether the actual accommodation unit can not offer, or it is fully occupied.

The most efficient solution for keeping interconnected all accommodation units from all settlements/resorts chosen is to implement a software program that connects all this kind of structures through a network (Gaman, 2014). By means of this software, each accommodation unit should acquaint oneself with the entire situation of others, regarding the occupancy rate, number of clean rooms number of tourists, their age and nationality, booking situation in near or distant future, and on general information of others like comfort level, total number and type of rooms, number of beds in each room, details regarding catering, recreational services, auxiliary services (conference room, laundries) and other facilities like parking places, wireless etc.

Hence, if an accommodation unit is fully occupied or cannot offer certain services whereon a tourist wants to benefit from the respective unit should recommend another accommodation structure in the same or another co-destination that folds on tourists preferences.

Referring to interrelations between travel agencies, tourist information centres, the sine-qua-non condition of this aspect is mutual promotion. For example, a travel agency from Slănic Moldova should offer informational and promotional materials of all co-destinations (general characteristics, natural and athropic attractions, accommodation, catering, recreation, treatment base) (Gaman, 2014).

Furthermore, each agency staff must provide its services in all destinations, by case (reception officer, tourist guide, entertainer). For instance, if a tourist arrives in a settlement/resort from a case study and he has to spend his stay in other destination, the reception officer should wait the tourist exactly in the place where he reaches.

Whereas, each travel agency should have a tourist guide who is specialised on one or more destinations from the tourist co-operation team.

Likewise, if a travel agency does not have an entertainer in a given moment, another unit should provide the necesarry staff for a certain period of time, irrespective of destination.

Moreover, is required a collaboration between travel agencies and local accommodation units.

Can be also established interrelations between travel agency and transport companies, the latter having the posibility to employ a tourist guide on routes between destinations.

On the other hand, each tourist information center from all tourist destinations should provide information regarding the tourist attractions and routes, accommodation units, catering units, treatment units, tourist events and other services from each settlement/resort, should edit in main international languages and share for free tourist maps and guidebooks of each destination.

The transport connection is the most important element in orice polycentric development and, in accordance with the global trend, this kind of services is holding an increasing

importance within tourist product. To ensure the collaboration between these settlements/resorts, must be established a functional transport system by means of which tourists can travel when they need or want from a destination to another.

To enusure a functional polycentric development through tourism, must be assured links between destinations at an interval of at least 30 minutes, in order to effectively direct tourist flows and to keep a fluency of tourist's stay (Gaman, 2014).

In respect of transport means, these services need to be ensured by minibuses and buses in case of larger number of tourists (summer season).

Concerning the interrelations regarding tourist attraction events, the most efficient measure corresponds with the emplacement of display panels in public locations which can display essential information like type of event (cultural, sporting, scientific), its significance (local, national, international), its periodicity (daily/monthly) (Gaman, 2014).

Before taking these actions, must be established a monthly common calendar of events for each destination without overlapping upon international or national ranked events that occur in the same time.

The interrelations regarding promotion activities sights chiefly tourists, but, in several situations, regards scientists also, especially in a health resort case. In this circumstance, an important role is given to doctors, medical science associations, researchers from related fields of study, where promotion materials contain scientific information regarding the therapeutic values of different natural sources like mineral water springs, local bioclimate, salt mine microclimate, other natural resources (Gaman, 2014).

As regards the promotion activities for tourists, the containing information should be characterised by an inferior level of science and a common language because they are interested in information purchasing about natural, anthropic attractions and ways of leisure spending (Gaman, 2014).

The promotional materials should be made "all in one" and published in national and international languages such as English, German, Norwegian, Swedish: posters, brochures, video presentations, book-guides, tourist maps, albums. Likewise, the local authorities must participate at national and foreign conferences, international medical reunions (health resorts case), and they should organise regular local conferences where to invite international medical personalities, travel agencies, foreign journalists (Gaman, 2014).

The selection of case studies is based on the previous concept features evaluation. Then, are highlighted several proposals that aim to reduce qualitative and quantitative disparities of tourism, in order to ensure an efficient collaboration. The next step coincides with the establishment of aforementioned interrelations.

On the strength of the main features related to tourism sector, transport connection, and territorial distribution of destinations in the balneary area of Bacău County, the idea of developing a general tourism supply based on the contribution of all settlements/resorts involved, encountered favourable circumstances.

Hence, by having in common the possession of mineral water springs, the three destinations within this case study brings into question health tourism, as a dominant tourism type. While Târgu Ocna detaches itself through the saline equipped with a treatment base, Slănic Moldova stands out due to the internationally recognised therapeutic value of mineral water springs.

Implementing the proposed concept, would imply that each destination creates a health-based supply relying on different therapeutic factors. Thereby, given the quality and the diversity of the mineral water springs in Slănic Moldova, the best solution for this health resort is to focus on the hydrotherapy component, whereas Târgu Ocna should contribute to the general supply with the salt mine microclimate component.

Concurrently, although the mineral water springs from Moinești are recommended for the treatment of numerous affections, due to their high concentration of sulphur, compared to the mineral water springs in Slănic Moldova, they are not competitive enough to stand out.

Therefore Moinești should create an health supply based on climatotherapy, the more so as both the hypsometric level and the local bioclimate provide proper conditions.

Regarding the proposals for the balneary area of Bacău, most of them refer to the tourism infrastracture, where the largest gaps exist.

According to the comparative quantitative analysis (Fig. 3), Slănic Moldova has a leading position within both accommodation and catering ~~units~~ sector, while within the treatment one. Târgu Ocna comes first because of the two units.

Despite the fact that Moinești Municipality holds the largest number of reacreational units, Târgu Ocna has a higher level of notoriety conferred by supplementary swimming pools with saltwater and freshwater, along with the recreational base inside the salt mine. In the same train of thought Slănic Moldova's recreational infrastructure also incorporates a ski slope, but its notoriety is quite low due to high seasonality level.

Moinești Municipality hosts the largest number of tourist events, generated by: settlement's status of first locality where oil extraction was documentary attested, Tristan Tzara's local spirit, local crafts, rallies and bike competitions supported by an optimal territory planning, local winter customs and traditions.

The first proposal reffers to the specialisation of Moinești Municipality on climatotherapy in order to complete the general health tourism supply within this case study. The main reason in shaping this proposal is represented by the existence of hills bioclimate, the only one known for lacking contraindications, recommended for both healthy and sick people. In this line, the related objectives dealt with the identification of suitable areas for climatotherapy, followed by the planning process of paths, terraces, solariums that enables terrain cures, aerotherapy, and heliotherapy.

The second proposal concerns the diversification of the accommodation sector in Moinești Municipality. In this manner, in the absence of hotels, building of this kind of units with treatment base is fully recommended.

The next proposal is centred upon recreational base, the element that has the largest influence on the diversity level of a tourist stay, targeting all destinations from this case study. In this conditions not only the planning of multipurpose halls that allow different sports activities (football, handball, basketball, table tennis, field tennis, billiards etc) is recommended, but also the planning of outdoor units. The most favourable situation coincides with the largest level of activities diversification.

The fourth proposal recommends the planning of specialised catering units providing specific food and beverage, health catering units, in all destinations. This can be very usefull especially for those pacient tourists who have medical prescription and need to combine their treatment based on natural factors with dietary restrictions.

Other proposals sights new tourist information centres in Moinești and Slănic Moldova, and a museum establishment to evoke the tumultuous history of the health resort situated on Slănic river valley.

An evidence of co-operation, compatibility and interdependence between Moinești, Târgu Ocna and Slănic Moldova is a five-day program of a pacient-tourist's usual stay that includes a cronological progress in a logical meaning of medical and tourist services from each destination.

## CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the proposed tourist cluster, which is intended to operate on the principles of polycentric development, from the point of view of the undersigned, is able to satisfy a wide range of tourists due to the diversity of its tourist offer. First, there are several treatment options based on natural therapies that cover a variety of diseases.

Even if the health tourism offer of each case study bases on a distinctive treatment modality, both Moineşti, and Târgu Ocna can offer hydrotherapy services. For all that, the tourism cluster functionality won't suffer because the mineral water springs' therapeutic values of these two resorts cannot heal diseases as Slănic Moldova's ones. So, it is for sure that a tourist pacient who will arrive in this cluster for hydrotherapy, will choose the last resort mentioned.

In the second train of thoughts, the proposed tourism cluster is capable of offering numerous services for tourists to enjoy recreation, relaxation, new experiences. Thus, it can attract and thank tourists with different preferences and motivations than those with regard to treatment: hiking, cultural, scientific events participation, various sports practicing, visiting the surroundings.

From my point of view, taking into account the actual socio-economic conditions of Romania, the idea of conceiving a tourism cluster based on polycentric development principles represents one of the few chances for a tourist destination, which focuses on curative tourism, to hold such a diversified tourist offer that can internationally be asserted.

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