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DOCTORAL THESIS SUMMARY

TOURISM - ECONOMIC PROMOTER AT GLOBAL LEVEL

Doctoral Thesis Advisor:
Prof. Gheorghe Ciobanu, Ph.D.

Doctoral Candidate:
Oana Ruxandra BODE (TUNS)

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INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, traveling is no longer unusual. Travels of antique merchants, great medieval explorers, military troop movements over the millennia, business trips, or medical, educational trips etc. have contributed to the adaptation of mankind to travel. Although tourism is assimilated to recreational and leisure travel, today's components of this industry are not necessarily determined by these reasons (such as business tourism, medical tourism, conference tourism, etc.). The twentieth century has been marked by the rapid internationalization of tourism activity and the transformation of tourism into a real industry that produces effects in many fields of activity and economic branches. Tourism is both an economic phenomenon and a social phenomenon.

The field of tourism, due to its diversity, can undoubtedly be subject to many debates and polemics. Through a simple online search, using a few keywords, we can figure out the complexity of this area.

The evolution of tourism and of international tourism is characterized worldwide by a growth trend as a result of the influence of economic, social, demographic and political factors. People's desire to visit other countries/regions, to know other civilizations, as well as technical progress in the field of transport that allows faster and more comfortable journeys over longer distances, has led to a significant increase in international tourism worldwide. This development of international tourism, even in socially, economically and politically unfavorable times, has determined that tourism to be nowadays *one of the most dynamic economic sectors*.

The issue of international tourism is a topical concern of tourism specialists, and also of national, regional and global firms and institutions.

The theme of research - ***Tourism - Economic promoter at global level*** - as well as the field of interest - *Economics and International Affairs* - is argued by the fact that

the area of tourism research is growing and the relevance of research in this field can be considered as a priority in the development of the world economy and at the same time useful in raising awareness of the importance of tourism as one of the largest sectors, supporting around 292 million jobs worldwide, generating around 10% of world GDP, representing around 7% of exports and around 30% of global exports. The above mentioned aspects reveal the **<u>importance of research</u>**. Their list can also be complemented by the following: tourism has become the fourth industry in terms of global GDP contribution (after retail, financial services and construction) and the fourth industry in terms of employment contribution (after trade retail, agriculture and construction); for many countries, tourism is an important source of revenue; some countries have become dependent on tourism; tourism generates an element of stability in the economy, in the sense that it has managed to overcome natural disasters and economic and political crises always offering diversification alternatives. The scientific and practical importance, the insufficient degree of perceiving the dynamics of tourism and its importance on a world scale, determined us to opt for the research of the proposed theme.

The topic addressed is a very complex, current, useful and interesting one, the plurisdisciplinarity of this field being a challenge requiring a lot of research and devotion in order to achieve the proposed objectives of deepening the tourism themes. At the same time, Romania can take advantage of the experience of other states about how to develop its international tourism activity. Thus, comparative analyzes of well-known, attractive and competitive destinations, but also of less developed ones (which share to a lesser or greater extent the challenges of Romania) can constitute an important and valuable source of information for the Romanian tourism officials. The mere import of successful practices of other international destinations is not a viable solution for the development of Romanian tourism.

For a better understanding of the tourism phenomenon and its dynamics, our analysis is conducted at the following levels: global, regional and national (through examples or concrete study cases related to specific countries). The study aims to highlight the key elements that make tourism a global economic promoter and, in the same time, the fact that this industry must become a priority for both state institutions and economic operators in order to increase the role of tourism on a global, regional and national level.

The elaboration of the thesis involved a complex scientific approach, covering a thematic area that highlights the development of tourism theory and seeks to identify the role of the *travel and tourism industry as an economic promoter at global level*.

Therefore, the main purpose of the thesis is: to analyze the dynamics of tourism at global, regional and national level; to study the economic impact of tourism compared to other sectors of activity and the contribution of tourism to economic growth and employment; to analyze the economic and tourism competitiveness at global level.

Throughout the thesis, we highlight various tourism analyzes in some attractive countries as tourist destinations (in the top tourist destinations in the period 2000-2015, in Japan and in China); a comparative analysis of the impact of tourism in Spain, Turkey and Romania; analysis of Romania's economic and tourism competitiveness compared to that of its competitors in the field of tourism, as well as a case study related to the indirect impacts of tourism in the economy. This case study has been done using mathematical tools and generates useful results for firms belonging to tourism-related sectors (for example, the market for the production of passenger and cargo aircraft or the cruise shipbuilding market).

In the present research the existing studies in this field have been developed and completed, aiming the followings:

➢ to carry out an analysis for the period 2000-2015 on international tourism dynamics at global level, by geographic and administrative regions (Africa, East Asia and Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, Middle East and North Africa, South Asia and the Americas - South America, North America and Central America), as well as in the top destination countries, in Japan and in China (the world's number one tourist destination), simultaneously with the factors that determined this dynamics;

➢ assessing the size and dynamics of the travel and tourism industry compared to other industries/sectors of activity and the impact of tourism on economic growth and employment;

➢ studying the dynamics of the top tourist destinations and of the main source markets in the total international tourism arrivals and revenues from international tourism, respectively in the international tourism departures and expenses;

➢ the analytical investigation for the period 2000-2015 of the intensity of the impact of tourism on the evolution of world GDP and employment;

➢ calculating the global tourism multiplier and national tourism efficiency (in Spain, Turkey and Romania);

➢ identification of the most relevant tourist destinations in terms of basic statistical indicators;

➢ analysis of the economic competitiveness, respectively of the tourism competitiveness, at global and regional level;

➢ the analysis of Romania's economic and tourism competitiveness compared to that of its competitors in the field of tourism;

➢ conducting a case study, using the mathematical tools relevant to companies from the auxiliary sectors of the travel and tourism industry, regarding the indirect impact of tourism (licensing);

➢ highlight future trends with regard to the coordinates highlighted above.

Research methodology is one of the key elements to any study. Kothari (2004: 1, 2) considers that *research is an original contribution to the existing literature that contributes to its development*. Thus, the research methods are chosen according to the studied topic, in the attempt to describe, explain and interpret the events from the perspective of the authors. As **methods of scientific research** we used the bibliographic synthesis for the theoretical foundation of the paper, namely data collection and processing, comparative analysis and description of data from studies identified and collected from specialized institutions, official reports, statistics etc. All these have been used to highlight, in a structured and documented way, the evolution and impact of international tourism at global level, but also at regional and local levels.

As **future research directions** we emphasize the development perspectives of Romania's tourist activity at national and international level.

In order to achieve the proposed objectives, we have structured the paper into five chapters (which present an elaborate analysis of tourism and of travel and tourism industry in a concise manner, having a logical succession and a continuity aspect), preceded by an *Introduction*, related to the importance of the depth analysis of the subject chosen, and followed by a *Bibliography* that includes numerous references from the literature. This research ends with the presentation of the *Conclusions* resulting from the investigations made, highlighting the limits of the study and the future prospects for research.

Chapter 1, called **Tourism, Tourism industry and Tourism market**, is devoted to the conceptual delimitation of tourism (etymological and historical

coordinates) and tourist; to the stages of tourism development over time and aspects of future tourism (spatial tourism and underwater tourism); to the vulnerability sources/factors of tourism and of the travel and tourism industry; to the travel and tourism industry; to the tourist market, all followed by preliminary conclusions. The theoretical approach in this chapter refers to what represented, what represents today and what will represent in the future the tourism and the travel and tourism industry.

Chapter II, called **The Development of International Tourism**, is dedicated to analyzing the dynamics of the touristic phenomenon from 2000 to 2016 on a global, respectively regional level, and, also, in some attractive countries as tourist destinations (in the top tourist destinations, in Japan and in China), as well as highlighting the forecasts in the coming years on the dynamics of the travel and tourism industry. Thus, the structure on subchapters derives from the typology of the analysis performed. We start with the presentation of some conceptual benchmarks on the statistical indicators on the basis of which tourism development can be analyzed over time. The historical and theoretical considerations in this chapter outline in quantitative and qualitative terms the evolution of international tourism, reflected by international tourism, number of arrivals and number of departures, as well as by the level of international tourism receipts and international tourism expenditures reported worldwide.

In order to carry out a complex quantitative analysis of the touristic phenomenon, we took as a starting point the data provided by World Bank for the period 2000-2015, the document of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) entitled "Tourism - Vision 2017" which includes assessments on tourism development in 2016, as well as UNWTO documents entitled "Tourism - Vision 2020" and "Tourism - Vision 2030", which include long-term assessments and forecasts on tourism development. We considered the evolution of the basic indicators of tourist activity, mentioned above, relevant to the understanding of the global dimension of the touristic phenomenon. This leads to a dynamic table of tourism circulation internally and internationally, which shows the main tourist flows worldwide, by regions and destinations. In the evolution of these indicators, there are many common determinants to all regions, given that over time, many countries/regions have focused on the development of domestic and international tourism through investments in this sector, promotional activities, developed infrastructure, facilities granted, in order to attract an increasing number of domestic and international tourists annually.

Chapter III is called **Economic impact of tourism** and aims to identify the size and dynamics of this industry compared to other industries/sectors of activity and the economic effects of tourism. In the final part of the chapter we draw attention to a study case based on a comparative analysis for the period 2000-2016 regarding the economic impact of tourism in Romania, Spain and Turkey.

In order to identify the size and dynamics of the travel and tourism industry compared to other sectors of activity, we analyzed the direct and total contribution of travel and tourism industry to world GDP and job creation in the world economy compared to the other sectors of activity related to the following years: 2011, 2013, 2014 and 2016.

In order to determine the economic impacts of tourism, we analyzed the effects of this industry on the trade balance and balance of payments of Romania for the period 2014-2016, we studied the effects of international tourism in terms of international tourism, number of arrivals, trade balance and balance of payments in the case of the Top Destination Countries between 2000 and 2015, and we identified the contribution of the travel and tourism industry to economic growth and employment for the period 2000-2016, simultaneously with the future highlights for the next 10 years.

The proposed study case aims to analyze the direct, indirect and induced contributions of the travel and tourism industry to GDP of these states, to determine the impact of domestic tourism consumption on GDP growth, namely the calculation of the tourism multiplier and tourism efficiency indicator.

Chapter IV, called **Competitiveness in Tourism**, has as main objectives the analysis of the economic and tourism competitiveness on a global level, as well as in the case of Romania compared to that of its competitors in the tourism field: Italy, Austria, Greece, Croatia, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria and Albania. At the same time, this chapter proposes a study case for companies' belonging to the sectors adjacent to the travel and tourism industry, regarding the indirect impacts of tourism: licensing, one of the most popular methods used for technology transfer between firms. This study is done using mathematical tools.

Chapter V - Conclusions, groups the own considerations resulting from the testing of the working hypothesis presented at the beginning of the research. These conclusions complete the scientific content of the thesis by highlighting the most important aspects revealed by the research carried out.

The paper is intended to be a radiography of the dynamics and impact of international tourism, of the impact of the travel and tourism industry on economic growth and of the global economic and tourist competitiveness, all of which have as their primary purpose to underline the importance of the travel and tourism industry such that to be perceived as an important economic promoter worldwide.

The contributions of our research refer to:

➢ complex characterization of the touristic phenomenon and its dynamics both at global and regional level, as well as in some representative countries, for the period 2000-2016;

➢ highlighting the economic impact of tourism worldwide and at regional level or in some countries for the period 2000-2016;

➢ identifying the factors that determine the competitiveness of the main tourist destinations and the economic and tourist competitiveness of Romania compared to that of its competitors in the field of tourism;

➢ carrying out a study case with utility in sectors adjacent to tourism, such as cruise ship industry or aircraft manufacturing industry.

Regarding the scientific substantiation of the paper, it is focused on a comprehensive and representative bibliography, containing academic and non-academic sources. The data and information underlying the analysis are based on the international and national literature, with the purpose of carrying out the work, studying representative bibliographic titles: reference books in the field and other related subjects, articles and studies from specialized journals published in the country, and including specialized dictionaries, as well as a complex series of electronic sources, from official websites of national and international tourism organizations, to scientific papers and official statistics that we have consulted in the electronic environment.

CHAPTER I - SYNTHESIS. TOURISM, TOURISM INDUSTRY AND TOURISM MARKET

"The world is a book and those who do not travel read only a page."

Saint Augustine

The main objective in the first chapter of this thesis is to present some conceptual aspects of approaching tourism, tourism industry and tourism market.

In the first part of the chapter we referred to the etymological and historical coordinates of tourism and we reviewed the conceptual framework of tourism and tourist. The study of tourism-related literature reminds us of the existence of an eternal dispute over the etymological roots of the term tourism (they are hard to locate). We appreciate that each of the mentioned etymological coordinates is essential for delimiting the notion of *tourism* and *tourism as an economic activity*. Each definition clarifies certain aspects related to this delimitation, but in a small way such that to be considered complete. In the literature there is an extensive terminology referring to the term tourist.

Further, we identified the evolution of the tourist phenomenon from the historical perspective (presenting the four stages of tourism development over time), along with the future evolution of the tourism phenomenon from the perspective of the future tourism concept (spatial tourism and underwater tourism). From the study of the specialized literature it should be noted that the development of tourism over time has been made in close correlation with the development and the extension of the means of transport, this observation being applied also in the case of the spatial tourism.

Simultaneously with the development of this sector, we identify in this first chapter the political, economic and social environment, which significantly influence tourism, especially nowadays more than ever. Numerous natural disasters, more and more frequent terrorist attacks, and the economic crisis since the end of the first decade of the 21st century, are important factors that have negatively influenced touristic demand in various tourist destinations. We are aware of the fact that tourism also has a number of unfavorable factors affecting touristic flows in various regions of the world, either as a result of man-made terrorist attacks or as a result of natural calamities.

In the second part of this chapter we realize the conceptual delimitation of the notions of travel and tourism industry, respectively tourism market. To meet all the demands of consumers, tourism has to offer a multitude of services that together form the so-called tourism industry. Over time, we can see an almost continuous evolution of tourism, with the increasing diversification of tourist destinations, products and services as well as consumers. Major transformations have made their mark on the classical tourist markets, the result being their growth in complexity and geographic area, becoming from national, international. Therefore, nowadays, in the context of the unprecedented development of the Internet and online reservation system and of the infrastructure, we can discuss about *a world tourism market*.

CHAPTER II - SYNTHESIS. THE DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL TOURISM

The second chapter of the thesis aims to analyze the dynamics of the touristic phenomenon on a global, respectively regional level and in some attractive countries as tourist destinations, as well as to highlight the trends concerning the evolution of tourism for the next years. After highlighting the conceptual indicators related to the statistical indicators on the basis of which the dynamics of tourism can be analyzed over time (international tourism, number of arrivals; international tourism, number of departures; international tourism expenses and international tourism, receipts), the researches materialized in a dynamic table of international tourist traffic, which generates the main tourist flows and revenues generated by it worldwide, in different regions and in some destinations.

For the analyzed period (2000-2015), there is a continuous increase in the number of arrivals of international tourists as well as international tourists' departures, with small periods of growth slowing in 2003 and 2009 respectively. It is worth mentioning that the international tourism, number of departures indicator shows a much higher growth compared to the international tourism, number of arrivals. The global gap between arrivals and departures of international tourists is due to the different method of measuring these two indicators across the different countries. This is due to the fact that over time many countries have been focusing on attracting a significant number of tourists and turning tourism into a source of wealth.

The same conclusion can be highlighted in relation to the international tourism receipts, namely to the international tourism expenditures: the continuous increase of these two statistical indicators, of which the highest increase is faced by the international tourism receipts, with a slowing period of growth in the years 2001, 2009 and 2015 respectively. The increase of the international tourism receipts is due to the inflationary phenomenon, the increase in the number of arrivals of international tourists, the travel distances and the increase in the duration of holidays.

Among the factors that have led to the aforementioned factors are: increasing world population incomes, changing consumer preferences for tourist destinations and expanding travel habits, increasing the number of countries and geographical areas included in the tourist circuit, strong demand growth and tourist offer in areas such as Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, New Zealand and Australia, improving national legislation in many countries to stimulate tourism, ensuring continued professional training for tourism staff, educating people on consumption, and tourism products, increasing the average duration of the stay.

Based on the annual evolution of the values of the indicators analyzed over the period 2000-2015, we conclude that tourism was one of the economic sectors facing the global economic crisis, with a moderate annual growth in 2010-2015.

To deepen the analysis, we considered it necessary to address tourism dynamics also on a regional scale. We considered four out of the six major tourist regions to be relevant according to the geographic region classification criterion (selected according to World Bank administrative goals and including all economies): East Asia and the Pacific; Europe and Central Asia; Latin America and the Caribbean; respectively South Asia. We then deepened the analysis of the dynamics of the tourist phenomenon in the Americas (North America, South America and Central America). A brief analysis of the basic statistical indicators of the evolution of the tourism phenomenon at regional level allows us to draw some conclusions: the explosion of the tourism phenomenon is felt both at the level of international tourism number of arrivals, respectively departures, as well as of international tourism receipts; of all regions, Europe and Central Asia occupied a peak spot throughout the analysis period, representing the largest, most mature and favourite tourist destination in the world; until the economic crisis at the end of the first decade of the 21st century is noticeable that all four indicators have steadily increased, but its effects have been felt significantly in 2009 (as a percentage of annual variation negative values are recorded for each region for each base indicator); with

regard to international tourism departures, international tourism receipts, and international tourism expenitures, in the period following the economic crisis, the oscillation in Europe and Central Asia can be observed, while the rest of the regions enjoying a steady and sustained growth trend, a small number of visitors, or more modest tourists, compared to Europe and Central Asia. In contrast, with regard to international tourism arrivals, all the analyzed regions enjoy a steady growth, albeit moderate; during the analyzed period, it is important to note the consolidation of Asian destinations concerning the international tourism arrivals and departures.

In order to give a note of diversity to the study in this chapter, we also study the followings:

a) we analyzed the evolution of the tourist phenomenon in the top tourist destinations countries 2000-2015 from the point of view of international tourism arrivals and departures, international tourism receipts and international tourism expenditures, highlighting their share at global level;

b) we analyzed the strategies adopted by Japan in order to promote the country as a tourist destination, the desired result being attracting as many international tourists as possible. As a result of studying the literature and statistical data, we can conclude that Japan, during the period under review, has strongly fought to promote the country as a top tourist destination. In this regard, we highlight:

➢ the brand strategy "Yōkoso! Japan" launched in 2003 by the Prime Minister of Japan, due to Japan's need for aggressive tourism promotion and regional revitalization; the "Visit Japan" (2003-2010) campaign promoted nationally and internationally through television, mass-media, direct marketing, outdoor advertising, discounts and welcome cards for foreign tourists, Japan's participation in international fairs tourism, the conclusion of partnerships with different countries with which they have traditional tourism relations to promote the mutual exchange of tourists;

➢ the introduction by the Government of Japan of measures aimed at simplifying visa procedures; authorization of tourist guides; the creation in 2013 of a promotion office to stimulate entry tourism;

➢ the celebrity effect strategy, as well as the advertising implantation strategy adopted by many hotels and restaurants in Japan to attract more customers/tourists.

c) we made an analysis of China's tourism situation (the world's main tourist destination by 2020), its prospects and the role of the Chinese tourist perceived as a gold mine for all the world's countries. Based on UNWTO statistics, China is the world's No. 1 tourist

destination in 2016 in terms of international tourism departures and international tourism expenditures; is the world's fourth tourist destination in terms of international tourism arrivals and international tourism receipts. The World Tourism Organization predicts that by 2020 China will become the world's leading tourism destination. China decided a few years ago that tourism must become one of the pillars of the economy. The strategies adopted in this respect are: openness towards the West, while relaxing the policy of free movement of the Chinese population; the development of air transport infrastructure to cope with the rhythm of increasing tourist traffic (by allocating funds or adopting an opening policy for foreign-developed investments); promoting domestic tourism; improving public hygiene facilities (by 2020 the authorities promise to build/renovate up to 100,000 public toilets); promoting tourism in industrial and rural areas; the development of the rail network and the high-speed rail network; increasing the number of products and services included in the country's tourism offer. By 2020, China plans to invest $290 billion in tourism, which would represent an annual increase of over 14% in direct investment in this sector. These investments would cause the tourism sector in China to contribute 1-2% more to annual growth than the current contribution in 2020. The research findings highlight the fact that the tourism industry is an important point of China's economy, an element that will gain an increasingly significant role in the coming years, when revenues and the number of foreign visitors will double.

Highlighting the trends for the travel and tourism industry for 2030, it is anticipated that domestic tourism will grow, at the same time as the increase in international tourism circulation, this phenomenon mainly affecting developing countries in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America, as well as the industrialized countries where the population will practice various forms of domestic tourism. There is still considerable potential for expansion in the next period. New destinations can benefit from this trend, provided they adopt appropriate policies in terms of business environment, infrastructure, marketing, and human resources. In order to continue to support this upward trend, the World Tourism Organization further encourages local governments to make numerous efforts to facilitate travel, simplify visa application and processing formalities, improve information and communication technologies with consumers.

CHAPTER III - SYNTHESIS. ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TOURISM

If we prefer to have a perspective on the comparative advantages of the travel and tourism industry, then it is important to understand its dynamics in relation to other sectors of activity. This is addressed at the beginning of the third chapter of the paper. If we report growth in tourism over time in other sectors of the economy, then tourism is one of the industries that have recorded the most sustained increases over time. The result of this tourism development is a beneficial contribution to global economic growth. On the other hand, it is important to emphasize that the positive evolutions of the global economic environment have been a cause of the increase in activity in the tourism industry. So, there is a relationship of direct proportionality between the global economic environment and tourism.

At global level, in 2016, tourism has become the fourth industry in terms of global GDP (after retail, financial services and construction) and the fourth industry in terms of employment contribution (after trade retail, agriculture and construction). The analysis of the direct and total contribution of the travel an tourism industry to GDP and employment in the world economy compared to other sectors of activity in the years 2011, 2013, 2014 and 2016, highlights that this industry contributes more to GDP than the automotive industry in each region of the world; directly engages six times more people than the automotive industry, five times more than the chemicals industry, four times more than the mining industry; supports more jobs than the automotive industry, financial services, communications, mining and chemical industry in every region of the world. For every dollar spent on travel and tourism, $3.2 is generated in the economy across the economy (based on the tourism multiplier) and every million dollars earned from tourism sales generate twice as many jobs as the same 1 million USD received from sales in financial services, communications and automotive.

The analysis of the economic impacts of travel and tourism industry on the trade balance and the balance of payments of Romania in the period 2014-2016 indicates that Romania's international tourism has a negative effect on the country's trade balance and payments. Our country is not (yet) an internationally recognized tourist destination and, from a touristic point of view, it is rather a transmitting country than tourist receivers. In the case of some of the Top Tourist Destinations in the period 2000-2015 (such as

Greece, Turkey, Thailand, Spain), international tourism, in terms of arrivals, is a significant source of exports.

The contribution of the travel and tourism industry for the period 2000-2016 to global economic growth is highlighted on the basis of its total, direct, indirect and induced contribution to world GDP.

In the analyzed period, we conclude that the travel and tourism industry average total contribution to global GDP was $5,752.28 billion (representing, on average, 10.08% of GDP). We can see a downward trend over the period 2000-2010, followed by a continuous increase in the travel and tourism total contribution to global GDP in the period 2000-2016. At the same time, industry's direct contribution to world GDP was $1,783.73 billion (as average, 3.14% of GDP), its indirect and induced contribution to world GDP was 43,968.55 billion (as average, 6.94% of global GDP). Thus, travel and tourism industry becomes one of the world's major growth promoters.

In the period 2000-2016, it is impressive the increase of total travel and tourism contribution to GDP in countries such as China, India, the Philippines, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Sri Lanka, Peru and Romania. Increases of more than two or three times in 2016 compared to 2000 were recorded in Singapore, Spain, Brazil, Australia and Turkey. Although ranked the world's top 5 in 2016, Japan has faced a decline in travel and tourism total contribution to world GDP over the period 2000-2016. Iran faced also the same situation. In 2016, Maldives is the country with the most significant growth in terms of the total contribution of the travel and tourism industry to GDP (% of GDP) at global level. This contribution in the Maldives was about 79%. It was followed by Antigua and Barbuda (about 60%), Seychelles (about 58%), Macau (about 57%) and the Bahamas (about 45%).

From the point of view of travel and tourism's direct contribution to world GDP in the period under review, it is impressive the growth in countries such as China, India, the Philippines, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar. Increases of more than two or three times in 2016 compared to 2000 were recorded in Brazil, South Korea, Portugal, Spain and Turkey. Decreases in travel and tourism's direct contribution to world GDP were recorded in Japan, Iran and Austria.

Research related to the positive economic effect of tourism activity on the world economy reveals that, at global level, each dollar spent by a tourist during the period under review has generated added value of $3.21 (which is added to GDP at global level).

Tourism plays an important role in the economy and in creating new jobs, being a great "living consumer". The large number of employees in the tourism sector is explained by the fact that the technology of tourism operations is limited. The significant impact of tourism on employment refers primarily to the intensive use of labor as compared to other sectors, which contributes to the mitigation of unemployment and to attracting labor surpluses from other sectors of activity. On the other hand, tourism facilitates access to the labor market of a very diverse category of people as well as a large number of people with different levels of qualification and professional training. Tourism has both direct and indirect effects on the labor market. Tourism has generated an average of 260,197,000 jobs in the period 2000-2016 (9.52% of total employment).

Between 2000 and 2016, it is impressive the increase of travel and tourism's total contribution to employment in countries such as the Philippines, Cambodia, Morocco, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar. Decline in the travel and tourism's total contribution to employment at global level in the period 2000-2016 was registered in India, Egypt, the Russian Federation, the Czech Republic, the USA and Germany. At the same time, it is impressive the increase of travel and tourism's direct contribution to employment in countries such as Bangladesh, Cambodia, Morocco, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar. Among the countries that have faced a decline in travel and tourism's direct contribution to employment, we mention: Egypt, Turkey, France, Japan, the Russian Federation and Indonesia.

In the final part of this chapter, we draw attention to a study case based on a comparative analysis in Romania, Spain and Turkey during 2000-2016. The objectives of the analysis are: first - to analyze the direct, indirect and induced contributions of travel and tourism to GDP in these countries; the second - to determine the impact of domestic tourism consumption on GDP growth in these countries; the third - to measure the tourism multiplier and the tourism efficiency in these countries. One of the main conclusions that can be deduced from the study is that during the period 2000-2016 the total contribution of travel and tourism to GDP in Romania was 5.17%, which means a rather low impact on the economy compared to Spain (14.12 %), as well as to Turkey (12.94%). In the case of Romania and Spain, we have identified a positive correlation between the domestic consumption (%) and GDP growth (%), while for Turkey the correlation coefficient does not indicate a correlation or a very weak correlation. The limits of our research are given by the qualitative factors that are not included in our

study, such as political conflicts and instability (especially in the case of Turkey). The tourism multiplier has shown that Romania has registered a higher growth for the entire analyzed period. On the other hand, the total contribution of travel and tourism to GDP in Romania is almost four times higher than its direct contribution, while in Spain and Turkey it is almost three times higher. This multiplier effect highlights the fact that, in the case of Romania, the money spent by a tourist circulates through the economy of the country four times, while in Spain and Turkey almost three times. From the point of view of tourism efficiency, according to our results, Turkey is identified as the most efficient country in the analyzed countries. In the case of Romania, we came to the conclusion that tourism has a more positive impact on employment than on the economy in terms of value added and the impact on GDP. In the case of Romania, we believe that the government should increasingly recognize tourism as an important activity with the ability to stimulate the economy, due to the fact that there is a direct correlation between the growth of the tourism sector and economic growth: tourism has frequently demonstrated the ability to create jobs, stimulate capital markets, attract foreign investment, win foreign currency, and add value at local, regional and national level. A governmental policy that could be implemented is the orientation to travel facilities and the attraction, respectively expansion, of financial programs for tourism capacities.

CHAPTER IV - SYNTHESIS. COMPETITIVENESS IN TOURISM

Worldwide, competition between tourist destinations continues to increase. A destination is considered to be competitive if it can attract and satisfy potential tourists and its competitiveness is determined by both tourism-specific factors and a much wider range of factors that influence tourism service providers.

The fourth chapter of the thesis highlights the following significant aspects of global tourism competitiveness: tourism competitiveness is improving especially in developing countries, especially in the Asia-Pacific region where more and more attractive destinations are emerging; the travel and tourism industry continues to create bridges rather than walls between people, as evidenced by the increase in the number of people traveling cross-border and global trends towards more restrictive visa policies; connectivity has increasingly become a necessity for countries that are developing their digital strategy; travel and tourism industry faces the challenges of sustainable

development as natural degradation processes take place on several fronts; the travel an tourism industry has risen faster than the world economy as a whole; the development of the industry provides opportunities for growth and social benefits for all countries, regardless of their well-being.

Romania's modest economic competitiveness also has a visible impact on tourism: from the point of view of global economic competitiveness, our country occupies a rather poor position (it is ranked in the middle of the ranking, it surpasses only a few countries such as Albania, Greece, Croatia), which also has an impact on the situation in the middle area in the ranking of travel and tourism competitiveness.

In the context of a national economy, tourism implies a specific demand for goods and services, which causes an increase in their production. In the same time, the tourism demand generates an adaptation of the tourist offer, which materializes directly in the development of the tourist structures, and indirectly in the increase of the production of branches related to the construction of new means of transport, recreational facilities for various types of sports (for example, winter or nautical sports). Thus, the development of tourism leads to a significant increase in production. Therefore, the study case proposed in this chapter is related to the indirect impacts of tourism in the economy: licensing analysis, one of the most widely used methods for technology transfer between firms. We conclude that the degree of product differentiation plays an important role in our analysis. The results indicate that in the case of the Stackelberg duopoly, when the innovative firm is the follower, a per-unit royalty agreement dominates no-licensing (it is more advantageous for both firms to enter into such a contract because they gain larger profits compared to the situation where, as a result of innovation, there is no technological transfer between them).

CONCLUSIONS

Through our research, our main objective was to develop and deepen the knowledge gained in the field of tourism issues and to link them with the results obtained in the research on the importance and impact of tourism in the global economy. Based on the research we have done so far, we can assume that the global travel and tourism industry has been and is strongly influenced by major economic, political and social phenomena, which is particularly noticeable during the global economic crisis at the end of the first decade of the 21st century and the increasingly

frequent terrorist attacks nowadays. Nevertheless, it has been noticed that the regeneration power of the sector has been above expectations even under the respective conditions, leading to the evolution of the tourist phenomenon on a world scale.

Tourism is related to social and environmental impacts, but it is known that the closest links are economic. During the world economic crisis or in other political and social disturbing periods, tourism has proved to be the best promoter of the economy in many countries. In the Caribbean, Pacific, East Africa, and underdeveloped (or developing) countries, tourism is one of the main branches of the economy or even the main economic promoter. Small or economically underdeveloped countries with natural potential and few natural resources have, as an alternative to economic growth, tourism. Compared with other sectors of activity, tourism has a great advantage, namely that it does not involve a production cycle and large material investments. Only tourist potential is needed (natural, cultural, ecological, etc.) and infrastructure (access roads to the tourist destination), besides the intermediary and the merchant, i.e. the active element of the tourism system (travel agency, government, hotels, spaces accommodation, etc.).

The studied field is inexhaustible, with many directions to continue the research undertaken.

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