

ROMANIAN ACADEMY – BRANCH OF IAȘI
“Gh. Zane” Institute for Economic and Social Research

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT
National Agency for Mountain Areas, Vatra Dornei

ROMANIAN ACADEMY
“Costin C. Kirițescu” National Institute for Economic Research
Centre of Mountain Economy, Vatra Dornei

25th International Conference

***TOURISM AND RURAL SPACE
IN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL
CONTEXT***



25 - 27 May 2023
Hybrid
Vatra Dornei
Romania

ACADEMIA ROMÂNĂ – FILIALA IAȘI
Institutul de Cercetări Economice și Sociale „Gh. Zane”

MINISTERUL AGRICULTURII ȘI DEZVOLTĂRII RURALE
Agenția Națională a Zonei Montane, Vatra Dornei

ACADEMIA ROMÂNĂ
Institutul Național de Cercetări Economice „Costin C. Kirițescu”
Centrul de Economie Montană, Vatra Dornei

Conferința științifică internațională

TURISM ȘI SPAȚIU RURAL
ÎN CONTEXT NAȚIONAL
ȘI INTERNAȚIONAL

Ediția a XXV-a

25 - 27 mai 2023
Vatra Dornei

Aim of the Conference

The International Conference on Tourism and Rural Space in National and International Context (TARS) aims to provide a platform for economists, social scientists, policy analysts, managers, and practitioners from all academic and professional backgrounds worldwide to present, discuss, and share new issues, research findings, and developments in the fields of tourism, hospitality, and rural studies.

TARS intends to explore some of the main concerns of both tourism researchers and practitioners, focusing on the following thematic areas: tourism management, tourism marketing, tourism policy, sustainable tourism, rural development, cultural tourism, nature-based tourism, health tourism, hospitality, digital tourism, cross-border cooperation, tourism economics.

Organizing Committee

Georgia-Daniela TACU HÂRȘAN

Researcher, Department of Economic Research, “Gh. Zane” Institute for Economic and Social Research, Romanian Academy - Branch of Iași

Alina-Petronela HALLER

Senior Researcher, Department of Economic Research, “Gh. Zane” Institute for Economic and Social Research, Romanian Academy - Branch of Iași

Dănuț UNGUREANU

Director, Centre of Training and Innovation for Development in the Carpathians - CEFIDEC, National Agency for Mountain Areas, Vatra Dornei, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Bucharest //
Researcher III, Centre of Mountain Economy, Vatra Dornei, “Costin C. Kirițescu” National Institute for Economic Research, Romanian Academy

Radu REY

Director, Centre of Mountain Economy - CE-MONT, Vatra Dornei, “Costin C. Kirițescu” National Institute for Economic Research, Romanian Academy //
Honorary Member, Romanian Academy, Bucharest //
Honorary Member, “Gheorghe Ionescu-Sișești” Academy of Agricultural and Forestry Sciences, Bucharest

Opening Ceremony

Speeches and Messages

Thursday, 25th May

10:00 - 10:30

National Agency for Mountain Areas - Aula Magna

[Connect online](#)

Chair

Dr. Cristina Emanuela DASCĂLU

Dragoş Costin TELEHUZ

State Secretary, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Bucharest, Romania

Alina-Petronela HALLER

Senior Researcher, Head of Department of Economic Research, “Gh. Zane” Institute for Economic and Social Research, Romanian Academy - Branch of Iaşi, Romania

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General Director, National Agency for Mountain Areas - ANZM, Vatra Dornei, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Romania

Dănuț UNGUREANU

Director, Centre of Training and Innovation for Development in the Carpathians - CEFIDEC, National Agency for Mountain Areas, Vatra Dornei, Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, Bucharest //

Researcher III, Centre of Mountain Economy, Vatra Dornei, “Costin C. Kirițescu” National Institute for Economic Research, Romanian Academy, Romania

Plenary Session

Keynote Speakers

Thursday, 25th May

10:45 - 11:45

National Agency for Mountain Areas - Aula Magna

[Connect online](#)

Chair

Dr. Cristina Emanuela DASCĂLU

Dr. Gül ERKOL BAYRAM

Associate Professor, Head of Department of Tour Guiding,
School of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Sinop
University, Sinop, Turkey

✧ *Rethinking Romanian Tourism for Sustainable and
Inclusive Growth*

Dr. Marco VALERI

Senior Lecturer in Organizational Behavior, Faculty of
Economics, Niccolò Cusano University, Rome, Italy // Lecturer
in Applied Organizational Behavior, Xenophon College, London,
United Kingdom // Associate Researcher in Strategy, Magellan
Research Center, School of Management, Jean Moulin
University, Lyon, France

✧ *Creativity and Tourism in Rural Context*

Parallel Sessions

Session 1

Thursday, 25th May

12:00 - 14:30

Room 1: Mountain Amphitheater

[Connect online](#)

Chair

Dr. Cristina Emanuela DASCĂLU

Fatih ÇATMA

The relationship between tourism and innovation: A conceptual study

Brîndușa COVACI, Mihai COVACI

Blue economy nexus mountain lakes: Following the path of European tourism

Cristina Emanuela DASCĂLU

Nurtured by nature: How stressful jobs and busy lives have a huge impact on the rise of rural tourism choice among academia members

Tribhuvan NATH

Analyzing the potential of GI tagged fruit in promoting agrotourism and rural development

Harun ÖZBEY

Comparison between Turkey and world countries in electronic sports development

Laura Joana PAPANIKOLOPOULOU ARCO

Volunteer tourism to create a sustainable tourism industry: Tourism in the service of different localities

Marius POPESCU

The cultural trail, an instrument for the promotion of rural tourism. Case study: Southern Dobrogea

Melike SAK, Gül ERKOL BAYRAM

Evaluation of consumer comments on virtual tours by content analysis

Hatice SARI GÖK

Tourism trends of millennials tourists

Hamidreza SOLAYMANI OSBOOEI

Biodiversity in the Iranian mountains

Simge ŞALVARCI, Hatice SARI GÖK

Examination of Pamukkale destination as a UNESCO natural and cultural heritage site from a visitor's perspective and overtourism perspective

Session 2

Thursday, 25th May

12:00 - 14:30

Online

(Room 2: Vasile Ardelean Amphitheater)

[Connect online](#)

Chair

Dr. Gül ERKOL BAYRAM

Bayram AKAY

Bibliometric analysis of sustainable tourism development (STD) research: Suggestions to Türkiye

Svetlana ARPINTE

The analysis of value chains: Tourism value chain in the Republic of Moldova

Evelina CEBOTARI

Analysis of the economic impact of tourism in the Republic of Moldova compared to other countries of the world

Mărioara IORDAN, Mihaela Nona CHILIAN, Gabriela CIURARIU

Resilience of the Romanian regions and counties: A medium-term view

Leonardo Mihai MĂRINCEAN

Social media and traditional advertising effects on customer behavioral intentions: Activation, intention and WOM intention

Jay MEHTA, Nishant SUTARE

Research into the potential of setting up an indian cultural theme park as a business in the United Kingdom

Pranab J. PATAR

The Relevance of low-carbon and climate-resilient tourism

Silvana PRODAN, Dan Cristian DABIJA, Leonardo MĂRINCEAN

Digital currency and the tourism industry: An analysis of digital payments in high GDP share countries

Harish SURYAWANSHI, Harshada SATGHARE

Assessment of the potential of Oktoberfest organised in Pune

Nishant SUTARE, Vilas RATHOD

Comprehending the difficulties encountered by visitors in Pune

Session 3

Thursday, 25th May

12:00 - 14:30

Room 3: Runc Hall

[Connect online](#)

Chair

Dr. habil. Constantin MANEA

Işıl ARIKAN SALTİK, Nur ÇELİK İLAL

Fostering rural tourism through aromatic plants

Nur ÇELİK İLAL, Işıl ARIKAN SALTİK

Evaluation of rural tourism potential of a Taurus Highlands: Case of Ağla, Köyceğiz

Emanuela Adina COCIŞ, Ioan SURDU, Viorel GLIGOR, Larisa Loredana DRAGOLEA, Matei DOMNIŢA, Adrian Daniel MUNTEAN, Diana Cerasela BAMBOI, Irina AIONESĂ, Vasile SURD, Alexandru Sabin NICULA

Revitalizing tourism through critical strategies: Smart specialization and diversification in Vatra Dornei, Romania

Laura DIACONU MAXIM

The impact of the remote work on employees: An empirical study

Laura DIACONU MAXIM, Cristian C. POPESCU

The future of EU airline sector on post-COVID-19 era

Ioan GÂF DEAC, Dan Constantin ȘUMOVSCI, Bogdan
NEGREA

*Digital transformation of mountain ecotourism industry: Good
practices and future challenges in Romanian mountain areas*

Darshana Kailas LAHOTI, Sandeep Rangnath KAPSE

*Women entrepreneurship in tourism: Comparative study of selected
developed and developing countries*

Mosam Vinod SHARMA, Sandeep Rangnath KAPSE

*An exploratory study of issues and challenges of caravan tourism in
Maharashtra*

Ligian TUDOROIU, Constantin MANEA

The Moșneni community in Nămăiești-Muscel, and rural tourism

Liliana VELEA, Silvia PUIU, Mihaela Tinca UDRIȘTIOIU,
Anișoara IRIMESCU, Alessandro GALLO

*Environmental features of interest for tourism in Romanian rural
destinations*

Session 4

Thursday, 25th May

12:00 - 14:30

Online

(Room 4: Council Room 1, Building B)

[Connect online](#)

Chair

Dr. Vimal Chandra VERMA

Veronica BULAT

The European programme for the resilience of the tourism industry in compliance with the Sustainable Development Goals designed by the World Tourism Organization

Monica Maria COROȘ, Cristina Ioana BALINT

Traditional architecture, a triggering factor for rural tourism development

Arun Kumar DESHMUKH

Impact of Namami Ganges Programme on spiritual tourism of Varanasi, India: A review

Deepak JAISWAL

Sustainable development of Buddhist circuit: Augmenting sustainable tourism management and indigenous livelihoods in eastern Uttar Pradesh

Neerja NIGAM

Impact of COVID-19 on ecotourism in Madhya Pradesh: A review

Pratibha PANDEY, Vimal Chandra VERMA

Factors influencing spiritual tourism in India

Petru ROȘCA, Irina CROTENCO, Elena ZHIGAREVA

Rural tourism as a component of the sustainable development of Moldova as a candidate for the EU

Gheorghe SĂVOIU, Sandra MATEI

New statistical instrument for tourism evolution/involution calculus, based on the ancient Plato's tetra-, and hexahedron and index numbers

Vimal Chandra VERMA

Trends and prospects of rural green tourism in India: A review

Session 5

Friday, 26th May

9:30 - 12:30

Room 5: Mountain Amphitheater

[Connect online](#)

Chair

Dr. habil. Alina-Petronela HALLER

Daniela ANTONESCU

*Romania's tourism supply and demand after COVID-19 pandemic:
A statistical overview*

Iuliana ANTONIE

*Apitourism, an important component of the sustainable development
of the Romanian village. Case in point: The locality of Sibiul
(Mărginimea Sibiului)*

Manuela APETREI

Marketing tools used to promote dark tourism in Romania

Camelia APETROAIE, Krisztina Melinda DOBAY

*Local Gastronomic Points, an innovative transition path towards
sustainable food systems*

Vasile AVĂDĂNEI, Ioan SURDU, Veronica ȚĂRAN BACIU
GEORGESCU, Lidia AVĂDĂNEI

*Local Gastronomic Points and the mountain product, vectors for
stimulating the entrepreneurial spirit in rural mountain tourism*

Mariana BĂLAN

Estimates of the regional disparities of Romanian tourism through statistical methods

Steluța BUDA

Tourism development, an important path to economic progress

Mirela CANDREA

Local Gastronomic Points as new components of gastronomic tourism

Elena CARP

Good practices for organizing green logistics in the tourism industry

Felicia CEAUȘU

The cultural tourism consumer

Alina-Petronela HALLER

Sustainable tourism in the world's top ten tourist destinations

Session 6

Friday, 26th May

9:30 - 12:30

Room 6: Vasile Ardelean Amphitheater

[Connect online](#)

Chair

Dr. habil. Gina Ionela BUTNARU

Dumitru CIOBANU, Lucia CIOBANU

*Fairy tale settlement and relaxation in the eastern Carpathians:
Sunători guesthouse*

Nicoleta CIUBOTĂ

Creative tourism: A new perspective in learning and development

Remus Petre CÎRSTEA, Cornel POPESCU

*Vintilă I. C. Brătianu and "Diplomatic and Economic Tourism"
going for the resources of "By ourselves!" country (1924-1929)*

Raluca Irina CLIPA, Flavian CLIPA

*The influence of agglomeration economies and diseconomies on urban
tourism*

Melania COMAN, Rodica TRIFĂNESCU, Nadina
CREINICEAN

*The link between intermodal transport and the development of green
tourism as a premise of smart territorial development*

Ecaterina COSMETE, Ștefan DUMITRACHE

*The Palaeologan Renaissance in the St. Nicholas Princely Church in
Curtea de Argeș*

Ion CRISTEA

The role of romanian popular architecture in the support and development of rural tourism

Iustin DEJANU

The Golești Museum, a durable and sustainable tourist product

Valentin NIȚĂ, Gina Ionela BUTNARU, Mirela ȘTEFĂNICĂ,
Corneliu IAȚU

Nature-based tourist heritage: Case study on the natural heritage of the Danube Delta

Maria TĂTĂRUȘANU, Valentin NIȚĂ, Gina Ionela
BUTNARU, Elena Ramona CIORTESCU

Values, attitudes and motivations of Romanian tourists towards nature-based tourism: Implications for the interpretation of natural heritage

Session 7

Friday, 26th May

9:30 - 12:30

Room 7: Runc Hall

[Connect online](#)

Chairs

Dr. Daniela MATEI

Dr. Dănuț UNGUREANU

Rodica BOIER, Doina GURIȚĂ

The religious tourist potential of the Neamț Land: Development strategies

Veronica GARBUZ, Oleg PETELCĂ, Iurie BEȘLIU

Business development opportunities for rural tourism in the Republic of Moldova

Ioan GONTARIU, Ana-Maria GONTARIU, Amelia BUCULEI

Characterization of the concept and the factors that influence food security

Ioan GONTARIU, Dan HOFFMAN

Food safety and its role in the evolution of food trade

Doina GURIȚĂ

The importance of positioning a brand on the market

Mariana HERȚELIU

Sustainable development of mountain areas in world countries with extensive mountain areas

Ina ISAC

Suruceni Monastery, monument of history and architecture

Elena Manuela IȘTOC

Opportunities and challenges for Romanian rural destinations in the post-pandemic period towards their sustainable development

Daniela MATEI, Viorel CHIRIȚĂ

Mutations in the dynamics of the development of rural communities that have become local tourist resorts. Case study: Moldovița and Vatra Moldoviței, Suceava County

Dănuț UNGUREANU

A brief assessment at a quarter of a century: Rural tourism research in Romania in the international context

Dănuț UNGUREANU, Veronica ȚĂRAN BACIU
GEORGESCU

Recognizing the quality of agri-food products from mountain areas and identifying them: "Mountain product" quality scheme

Session 8

Friday, 26th May

9:30 - 12:30

Room 8: Council Room 1 (Building B)

[Connect online](#)

Chairs

Dr. Ovidiu GHERASIM

Dr. Ciprian Ionel ALECU

Ciprian Ionel ALECU

Dimensions of the analysis of religious cultural tourism potential in the North-East Development Region

Ovidiu GHERASIM

Construction of non-linear forecasts of tourism economic indicators

Gică MANOLE

Historical rural tourism in Moldova and Bucovina

Corina MATEI GHERMAN, Vasile MATEI

Managing the impact of multiple crises and the natural environment

Vasile MAXIM, Valentin CEBAN, Oleg BUGA

The location of religious edifices in the Republic of Moldova in relation to the natural and anthropic environment

Ion MĂRGINEANU

Rural tourism: Evidence from Canada

Ivan MOROZ

Ecotourism trails for cyclists in the Dniester Valley

Mihaela NEDELEA

Rural tourism in the Bistrița Aurie Valley

Alina Cristina NICULESCU, Cristi FRENȚ

Digital technologies and their use for the development of cultural heritage in Europe and Romania: Revealing some advantages and disadvantages

Luminița PANAIT

The charm of the Romanian village and the imminent danger of being lost

Session 9

Friday, 26th May

9:30 - 12:30

Room 9: Council Room 2 (Building A)

[Connect online](#)

Chairs

Dr. Ion TALABĂ

Dr. Vasile TODINĂ

Teodor PĂDURARU

The competitive potential of Romanian rural tourism in the European context

Mirela RUSALI

The industrial valorisation of Romanian agri-food products: Potential, evolutions, vulnerabilities

Gheorghe SĂVOIU, Angela KAPLINA

Some major aspects, related to already visible inadvertences in the future rural development of tourism in Romania

Alina Simona SIMION, Diana MOISUC

The perception of the value of traditional Maramureş architecture among the young population and its role for rural tourism

Mirela STANCIU

Analysis of the rural tourism potential of villages with fortified churches in Sibiu County (Romania)

Alina SUSLENCO, Marilena DONCEAN, Octavian COZNIUC

Information technologies implemented in the business environment, smart pillar for increasing organizational performance

Dan Constantin ȘUMOVȘCHI, Ioan GÂF DEAC

The importance of education for the integration of young people from mountain areas into the labour market

Georgia-Daniela TACU HÂRȘAN

Cultural tourist attractions in the City of Iași

Ion TALABĂ

Institutional approaches after 2018 of the terminology and definition of specific aspects of tourism

Vasile TODINCĂ, Maria Flavia POP, Andreea Maria POP, Florica Teodora HUS

Opportunities for the sustainable development of rural tourism and agritourism in Beiuș Land

Tatiana TOFAN, Ala GRECU

Trends in the development of medical tourism in the Republic of Moldova

Workshops

A Complementary Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) and Deep Artificial Neural Network (ANN) Approach

Thursday, 25th May

16:30 - 17:30

Room: Mountain Amphitheater

[Connect online](#)

Chair

Dr. Cristina Emanuela DASCĂLU

Dr. Alhamzah ALNOOR

Senior Lecturer, Management Technical College, Southern Technical University, Basrah, Iraq

How to Write a Scholarly Article

Friday, 26th May

15:30 - 17:00

Room: Mountain Amphitheater

[Connect online](#)

Chair

Dr. Vasile DINU

Dr. Vasile DINU

Professor Emeritus, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Bucharest, Romania // Editor-in-Chief of Amfiteatru Economic journal // Doctor Honoris Causa of "Aurel Vlaicu" University, Arad, Romania

Dr. Puiu NISTOREANU

Professor, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Bucharest,
Romania

Dr. habil. Dan Cristian DABIJA

Professor, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania //
Editor of Amfiteatru Economic journal, Romania

Dr. habil. Octavian Dragomir JORA

Professor, Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Bucharest,
Romania // Founder of The Market for Ideas journal, Romania

Petru Emil STANCIU

Founder, Union of Professional Journalists of Romania,
Bucharest, Romania

Book Launch

Friday, 26th May

17:15 - 18:15

Room: Mountain Amphitheater

[Connect online](#)

Chair

Dr. Alexandru Sabin NICULA

Dr. Vasile SURD

Professor Emeritus, Babeş-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca,
Romania // Honorary Member of Serbian Geographical Society,
Belgrade, Serbia

✧ *Așezările din Transilvania*, Terra Nostra Publishing
House, Iași, 2022

Visiting Tourist Attractions

Saturday, 27th May

9:00 - 16:00

Organizer

Dr. Dănuț UNGUREANU

- **La Izvorul Dornei**

A small-scale cheese factory in Prăleni village, Poiana Stampei, Suceava County.

- **"Tășuleasa Social" Association in Piatra Fântânelor village, Tiha Bîrgăului, Bistrița-Năsăud County**

The Association initiated and is carrying out the Via Transilvanica project, "The Road that Unites", a long-distance tourist route, from Putna to Drobeta Turnu-Severin (approx. 1,400 km), suitable for hiking, cycling or horseback riding.

- **Nativity of the Mother of God Monastery in Piatra Fântânelor village, Tiha Bîrgăului, Bistrița-Năsăud County**

- **Maria Bidian's Local Gastronomic Point, Bistrița Bîrgăului, Bistrița-Năsăud County**

Abstracts

Bayram AKAY

Bibliometric Analysis of Sustainable Tourism Development (STD)

Research: Suggestions to Türkiye

The concept of sustainable tourism development has emerged in order to prevent the negative economic, environmental and socio-cultural effects of tourism. The main purpose of the study is to explore the evolution, structure and limits of sustainable tourism development research in Web of Science (WoS) databases between 1993-2021. The sub-purpose of the research is to provide suggestions to Turkey for sustainable tourism development (STD). In the study, total 769 articles were examined, including 742 research and 27 review articles. In this context, productive authors and countries, publication years and journals, document types, affiliations, citation authors, co-occurrence and co-authorship-countries analyses were applied to achieve the purpose of the study. For this purpose, this paper seeks answers to the following questions: What are the development levels in sustainable tourism development studies?; Which are the prolific writers and countries?; In which journals are the researches published?; Who are the most cited authors?; How are the researches in terms of country/region co-authorship?; What are the themes of the studies according to keywords?; What research gaps are there and what are the recommendations for future studies?; What are the suggestions to Turkey for sustainable tourism development? As a result, sustainable tourism development research started in 1993 and has increased approximately 11 times from 2005 (13 articles) to 2021 (142 articles). In this area, Trišić, I. (7 articles), Jaafar, M. (7 articles) Rasoolimanesh, P. M. (6 articles) he is the most prolific writer. Lee (731), Hall (504), Byrd (411), Thapa (322), Jaafar (288) and Rasoolimanesh (283) are the most cited authors. This situation shows that there is no direct proportion between the number of publications and the number of citations. The authors have published the most in the journals Sustainability (93 articles), Journal of Sustainable Tourism (78 articles), Tourism Planning Development (30 articles) and Tourism Management (26 articles). China (97 articles), USA (89 articles),

Australia (63 articles), England (54 articles), Spain (46 articles), Italy (37 articles), Serbia (34 articles) and Turkey (34 articles) are the most productive countries. The degree of communication between countries (Liao et al., 2018), England, China, USA, Australia, Turkey, Canada and Malaysia are the countries where co-authorships have developed. There is a lot of cooperation between the UK and China (link 9), China and USA (link 7), Turkey and the UK (link 7), Australia and China (link 4). This shows that geographical advantage is not the primary factor influencing the cooperative relationship (Van Eck, & Waltman, 2010). According to the co-occurrence network analysis, eleven different themes emerged as sustainable tourism development, sustainable tourism, sustainable development, tourism development, sustainability, tourism, community-based tourism, rural tourism, cultural heritage, tourism planning and overtourism. In the bibliometric analysis on sustainability in tourism, ecotourism, sustainable tourism, climatic change, tourism management themes emerged (Niñerola et al., 2019). Bibliometric analysis on sustainability in marketing “sustainability in tourism”, “tourism”, “management”, “impact”, “satisfaction”, “model” and “sustainable tourism themes were identified. Finally, in the studies of STD on sustainable development (Merlin & Dolores, 2005), sustainability (Wan & Li, 2013), stakeholders (Byrd, 2007; Renfors, 2021), challenges (Tosun, 2001; Pratt, 2022), barriers (Altınay, 2007; Mahmoudzadeh, & Kourdi, 2018), residents' attitudes and support (Selçuk, 2021; Zhu et al., 2017; Lee, 2013, Cheng et al., 2019), some case destinations (Jung et al., 2014; Valdez et al., 2009; Faulkner, 1995) are discussed. The relationship between STD and entrepreneurship has been examined by only a few studies (Triantafillidou & Tsiaras, 2018; Moscardo, 2014; Akay, 2022). Entrepreneurship has been studied as tourism entrepreneurship (Fu et al., 2019; Medina et al., 2020; Koh, & Hatten, (2002), social entrepreneurship (Kline et al., 2014; Gunlu, 2015), lifestyle tourism Entrepreneurship (Dias & Silva, 2021; Zhang et al., 2021). Future research should provide more insight into how tourism entrepreneurship promotes STD. Suggestions to Türkiye for sustainable tourism development are as follows: Planning and managing tourism development in a way that does not lead to environmental, economic and sociocultural problems, making tourist arrangements

according to supply, giving priorities to local people, the spread of tourism activities over twelve months, prioritizing the use of clean energy.

Ciprian Ionel ALECU

Dimensions of the Analysis of Religious Cultural Tourism Potential in the North-East Development Region

The North-East Development Region is endowed with a particularly complex and valuable religious tourism potential, but poorly exploited compared to other similar destinations. The association of two such complex notions in the concept of "religious cultural tourism" calls for a quantitative and qualitative analysis from the most comprehensive perspective. The paper begins with the delimitation of the theoretical framework regarding the potential of religious cultural tourism, and then analyzes, for the first time, the main features of the North-East Development Region that influence religious tourism. In the second stage, the authors carry out the descriptive analysis of the main components of the religious tourism potential in the North-East Development Region based on a logical inventory scheme. In order to integrate the qualitative and quantitative dimensions in the evaluation, a model with triangular fuzzy numbers was built for a long-term theoretical and practical evaluation. It can be used in the foundation of future sustainable development strategies at the regional level.

Daniela ANTONESCU

Romania's Tourism Supply and Demand after COVID-19 Pandemic: A Statistical Overview

The purpose of the paper is to analyze Romanian tourism after the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, to quantify the gaps compared to the highest performance achieved in 2019 and to see to what extent tourism resists and recovers. The main indicators studied were tourist offer expressed in units with a tourist function, accommodation, i.e. number, structure and evolution, the number of places and their dynamics by type of accommodation, as well as the demand in terms of arrivals and overnight stays both at the national level and in rural tourism, the index of net use of accommodation capacity, incoming

and outgoing tourism. We used fixed base and structural indices and comparison methods.

Iuliana ANTONIE

Apitourism, an Important Component of the Sustainable Development of the Romanian Village. Case in Point: The Locality of Sibiel (Mărginimea Sibiului)

The ever-accelerating dynamics of the evolution of human civilization requires that the role of beekeeping be accentuated and diversified in proportion to the needs of man and the environment. Bees provide a wide range of ecosystem services and human well-being, contributing greatly to sustaining life on Earth. Currently, in the context of globalization, beekeeping takes on new values, with a role in biology, ecology, economy, social life and, finally, in maintaining the health of the population. In this context, apitourism, as a niche tourism, appears as a new phenomenon, supporting the culture and traditions of rural communities in a sustainable way. Apitourism, as an innovative form of tourism, plays an important role in maintaining the health of human society, starting from the consumption of beehive products to the prevention and amelioration of human diseases. The purpose of the work is to promote the village of Sibiel, as a locality conducive to the practice and expansion of beekeeping, with the stimulation of apitourism. Its geographical location, floristic biodiversity, with the famous orchards of fruit trees with local varieties, deciduous and resinous forests, special spontaneous flora support the practice of beekeeping at the local level. The beekeeping in the area combines harmoniously and profitably with the agritourism activities carried out in the dozens of guesthouses in the village of Sibiel, where the local honey has a place of honour.

Manuela APETREI

Marketing Tools Used to Promote Dark Tourism in Romania

Our scientific approach follows a new tourist trend, namely dark tourism in Romania, as well as the marketing tools used to popularize this trend among consumers. Our study includes the analysis of the concept of dark tourism, the mapping of dark tourism points in

Romania, the motivations of consumers to choose this type of tourism as well as the appropriate marketing tools that can be used to promote dark tourism destinations. The great momentum experienced by tourism in the last century led some tour operators to exploit and capitalize on people's curiosity related to death, suffering, atrocities or natural disasters. Given that it is a niche tourism and the motivations of dark tourism consumers are different from those of consecrated tourism consumers, tour operators must be very careful in choosing marketing tools to promote these destinations, so that the message is correctly received by consumers of dark tourism, taking care at the same time to preserve the authenticity of the respective area. Even if for most of us this type of tourism is considered "macabre", for dark tourism consumers there is a moral and spiritual motivation when they want to visit the place where a tragedy happened or a place where a lot of suffering occurred, wanting to show empathy with the victims and commemorate them.

Camelia APETROAIE, Krisztina Melinda DOBAY

Local Gastronomic Points, an Innovative Transition Path towards Sustainable Food Systems

Local Gastronomic Points are units represented by the private kitchens located in the premises of rural homes, which can operate in permanent or seasonal households, in agricultural farms, animal farms, stables, fish farms, wineries, wine farms, fruit farms, hunting grounds, monasteries, etc., where culinary products are prepared according to recipes specific to the area and served directly to the final consumer, for a maximum number of 12 people. The raw materials come, predominantly, from units in the area that are authorized from a sanitary-veterinary and food safety point of view. Thus, a multitude of short food chains and healthier and more sustainable local agri-food systems are created, by promoting and selling food products directly from the agricultural holding, especially from the peasant household, close to the primary production source. These local agri-food systems are considered to be an immeasurable asset to the development of communities with healthy people because they are the primary source of fresh agri-food products for local stores, farmers' markets and restaurants. Since traditional food depends to a large extent on agriculture, hunting and fishing, the

specific development of links with tourism can lead to the stimulation of the activities of local entrepreneurs, at the same time being able to boost the development of communities. Tourism can not only constitute a market for agri-food products in their final form, but can also provide a source of future income by developing the experience offered by gastronomic tourism and through Local Gastronomic Points. Established relatively recently, in 2016, at the initiative of the "Ivan Patzaichin – Mila 23" Association, and supported by an adequate legal and institutional framework, the Local Gastronomic Points began to develop in various rural areas in Romania, reaching a number of 242 (as of March 20, 2023) units and representing true models of social innovation from the perspective of the interconnections they create between different actors of local agri-food systems.

Işıl ARIKAN SALTİK, Nur ÇELİK İLAL

Fostering Rural Tourism through Aromatic Plants

Aromatic plants, which have been used to improve the taste, flavor, aroma and appearance of food throughout history, have been an important part of human nutrition. Aromatic plants, of which herbs and spices are dominant, are used for nutritional purposes as well as for medical purposes such as protective, preventive, therapeutic etc. and/or as supplementary food. In societies with various beliefs and rituals, using aromatic plants in their fresh or dry form as fragrance, frankincense, etc. also adds a socio-cultural value to aromatic plants. Rural tourism is a type of tourism that is carried out with people living in rural settlements, in which many intangible and tangible rural attractions form touristic products, and its development in accordance with sustainability principles is at the forefront. In this context, this study was carried out with the idea that aromatic plants can be used as a tool in the development of rural tourism with different dimensions. In the study, secondary data on aromatic plants and rural tourism activities were used. As a result of the research, it was seen that the COVID-19 pandemic and the new normal perception after it has increased the orientation towards rural tourism and aromatic plants simultaneously. Research results indicated that aromatic plants can be used as an accelerating tool in the development of rural tourism.

Svetlana ARPINTE

The Analysis of Value Chains: Tourism Value Chain in the Republic of Moldova

The article presents the situation of the tourism sector on the entire value chain from beginning to final consumer. In order to describe the whole chain of tourism in the article, the situation of the sector in the Republic of Moldova will be briefly analyzed. The production of high value sector connected with agriculture and cultural sector offers the best potential for increasing profits and incomes in rural areas. Investments in tourism is as a result or even a motivation to invest in rural development and in a sustainable economy. The tourism in rural area will offer an opportunity to the local inhabitants to develop their manufactures and an extra income to local and family budgets. The tourism will accelerate social and economic reorganization of rural areas. As a consequence, many younger people will be attracted by nature and many teenagers will be involved in hospitality chain. As a most important result, this trend can transform an overview on whole development of economy in Republic of Moldova.

**Vasile AVĂDĂNEI, Ioan SURDU, Veronica ȚĂRAN BACIU
GEORGESCU, Lidia AVĂDĂNEI**

Local Gastronomic Points and the Mountain Product, Vectors for Stimulating the Entrepreneurial Spirit in Rural Mountain Tourism

Over time, rural mountain tourism has had a winding and narrow path, especially in localities known at national and international levels for ethnocultural events regularly organized. Starting with the year 2017 with the establishment of the legislative framework for the valorization of the Mountain Product and traditional mountain food through the Local Gastronomic Points, rural mountain tourism has acquired new valences, attracting more and more followers of the uniqueness and food refinement passed down from generation to generation in these communities. The paper presents a synthesis of the results obtained within the national project ADER 17.1.2., in which it was highlighted that the Mountain Product and the Local Gastronomic Points had created a distinct entrepreneurial niche, with particular impact for capitalizing on local opportunities through tourism and public catering.

The Mountain Product and Local Gastronomic Points reveal particularities regarding place identity, cultural unity, and socio-historical interferences that highlight millennial practices used to exploit mountain food resources. Worthy hosts with an innate entrepreneurial spirit have identified and created these points of attraction generating connections between suppliers and consumers of mountain tourism, based on: experiences, the "Surprise Your Customer" principle, communication, and emotional involvement. Therefore, the local gastronomic points and the Mountain Product have become vectors for stimulating the entrepreneurial spirit in rural mountain tourism and a means of revitalizing mountain communities. The paper describes 6 tourist itineraries, in which the ethno-gastronomic potential was integrated with elements of tourist attraction, leisure solutions, knowledge of natural beauties, the resuscitation of local and national patriotism and has contributed to the well-being of communities, generating successful models with applicability to the entire mountainous area of Romania. The analysis of the supply chains, value chains, and food chains identified during the 6 itineraries shows that they ensure the sustainability of the mountain product, valued as a national gastronomic treasure including in the Local Gastronomic Points, where pastoralism plays the role of an integrating factor in the formation of the attribute of unity and diversity ethnocultural in mountain tourism.

Mariana BĂLAN

Estimates of the Regional Disparities of Romanian Tourism through Statistical Methods

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the tourism industry as a result of travel restrictions, along with a collapse in demand from potential tourists. The analysis of the evolution of tourism at the regional and national level in Romania highlights the fact that the values in 2020 were over 50% lower compared to 2019, with slight returns in 2021 and with increases of 20% in 2022 compared to 2021. Regarding the destinations, Bucharest is in first place, followed by the counties of Braşov, Cluj and Sibiu. The socio-economic differences between Romania's regions also leave their mark on the development of tourism at their level. Although Romania as a

whole has a GDP/capita (relative to purchasing power parity (PPS)) of 38.89% of the 2021 EU average, only one region approaches this average: Bucharest-Ilfov by 87.35%, while three of its Regions of Development, North-East, South-West Oltenia and South-Muntenia, are among the poorest eleven regions of the European Union. The process of mitigating regional disparities in Romanian tourism, as in all regions of the European Union, has been interrupted by the recent health crisis. The paper showcases a brief analysis of the level and dynamics of some regional inequalities in Romanian tourism between 2019-2022. Various statistical methods were used to quantify regional disparities: the relative distances method, the Gini coefficient and the Theil index. The obtained results confirm the negative tendencies regarding the increase of regional disparities in Romanian tourism and allow highlighting of their determining factors.

Rodica BOIER, Doina GURIȚĂ

The Religious Tourist Potential of the Neamț Land: Development Strategies

The paper deals with the religious tourism potential of the Neamț area. This territory has countless monasteries and sites, all located in a wonderful geographical setting. The attractions of religious tourism are all the objectives and manifestations of a religious nature in the area, which are of interest to the promoters of tourism development. Tourism infrastructure and services around religious sites constitute an adjacent tourism product, as all visitors are very interested in transportation, accommodation, food, leisure and additional services. The three main entities of tourism are individualized: attractive resources, tourist infrastructure and tourist flow. Thus, the tourist activity is ensured by directing the flow of visitors to the attractions, making use of the general and specific tourist infrastructure elements. In the second part of the paper, ways to develop tourism in the area are presented through the development of the transport infrastructure, which is essential in the consumption of the tourist product because it ensures the mobility of tourist flows. This segmentation facilitates good road connectivity with the northern, southern and eastern part of the country, in contrast to the western part of the county where the density of public roads and railways is low.

Steluța BUDA

Tourism Development, an Important Path to Economic Progress

The ancient Greek philosophers understood by progress a progressive advancement of science and technology. Later, there were many authors who identified economic progress with economic growth. However, there is an important difference between the two concepts. Economic growth refers to the quantity of products, while economic progress refers to their quality. Developed economies have increasing levels of income through economic growth; however, a more important component of economic progress is the range of new and improved goods and services that progress brings with it. Economic progress, while including growth, is primarily due to new and improved goods and services, not just more of the same output it was producing before. Tourism plays a fundamental role in the development of various destinations around the world. But can tourism lead to something more than economic growth, can it lead to progress? We believe that, through its social dimension, through its fundamental virtue, that of bringing into contact essentially different paradigms of understanding the world, tourism can represent a catalyst for the desire for innovation and, therefore, can be seen as a premise for social progress in general and economic progress in particular.

Veronica BULAT

The European Programme for the Resilience of the Tourism Industry in Compliance with the Sustainable Development Goals Designed by the World Tourism Organization

Tourism is one of the most affected sectors by the COVID-19 pandemic. Around 27 million people were trained in this sector before the pandemic, which accounted for around 10% of the EU's gross domestic product. Six million jobs were threatened in Europe, which was a top global tourist destination, with capacity for 66% fewer international tourists in the first half of 2020 and 97% fewer in the second half. The directives for survival in crisis situations as well as the resilience plan of the tourism industry in the countries of the European Union represent the subject addressed in this article. The research methodology comprises the synthesis and narrative analysis of the

measures to maintain the short-term financial support granted for the survival of this sector. At the same time, the work reflects the tasks of the commitment assumed by the European Union regarding the development of environmentally friendly tourism. The World Tourism Organization has already signed a commitment for sustainable tourism in the last three years, which manifests itself through certain codes of conduct, better waste management, more efficient use of energy, more decent wages.

Mirela CANDREA

Local Gastronomic Points as New Components of Gastronomic Tourism

Local Gastronomic Points are units represented by private kitchens within the premises of rural homes, where are prepared and served culinary products, according to recipes specific to the area, directly to the final consumer, for a maximum number of 12 people; the culinary products must be prepared from raw materials predominantly coming from primary production at the level of own farming, as well as from local producers or from authorized/registered sanitary-veterinary and food safety units. This type of organization supports those who produce basic food and want to offer public food services in complete safety for the consumer, without owning tourist guesthouses or other organized forms of tourism. It is a facility for family-type units that want to provide small-scale tourism (gastronomic tourism, agritourism, rural tourism, ecotourism, cultural tourism and others). Local Gastronomic Points are represented by small, private kitchens where traditional cooking is done by ordinary people with culinary talent, people who know local recipes handed down from generation to generation.

Elena CARP

Good Practices for Organizing Green Logistics in the Tourism Industry

With the tourism industry leaving a global ecological footprint, sustainable and flexible solutions are needed to "develop environmentally friendly tourism". Applied in the development of sustainable tourism, green logistics offers innovative measures to reduce

the sector's climate and environmental impact by developing more sustainable forms of tourism, diversifying the offer, stimulating new cooperation initiatives and developing new digital services. This paper investigates the methodological foundations of ecotourism logistics and defines its development tasks, as well as the list of logistics operations associated with flow circulation. The aim of the paper is to comprehensively review green logistics solutions for sustainable tourism, which would determine a balance between context (the right to a clean environment), challenge (climate change) and solutions (green logistics solutions). The paper essentially highlights some of the practices of organizing green logistics in the tourism industry with respect to environmental safety requirements, but also underlines the need for further research on the role of green logistics in ecotourism in order to ensure green tourism internationally.

Fatih ÇATMA

The Relationship between Tourism and Innovation: A Conceptual Study

Tourism is a rapidly growing industry that plays a crucial role in the global economy. According to the World Tourism Organization, international tourist arrivals reached 1.5 billion in 2019, and the sector accounted for 10% of global GDP. With the increasing competition in the tourism industry, innovation has become a critical factor in enhancing the competitiveness of tourism destinations and businesses. Innovation can take many forms, including the development of new products and services, the adoption of new technologies, and the implementation of new business models. The purpose of this academic paper is to explore the relationship between tourism and innovation. The paper examines the importance of innovation in tourism and the various ways in which innovation can be applied to enhance the tourism industry. The paper also presents a comprehensive review of the literature on tourism and innovation, highlighting the major theoretical perspectives and empirical findings in this area. The paper concludes with recommendations for policymakers and industry players on how to promote innovation in the tourism sector. The method of this research will be a literature review, one of the qualitative study methods. Turkish tourism literature will be examined. TR Dizin will be

used as a data collection tool. The purpose of this academic paper is to explore the relationship between tourism and innovation. The paper examines the importance of innovation in tourism and the various ways in which innovation can be applied to enhance the tourism industry. In the context of the results of the research, it will be an example for future studies and suggestions will be made to complete various deficiencies in the tourism sector of innovation.

Felicia CEAUȘU

The Cultural Tourism Consumer

Tourism depends to a large extent on the "image" created and addressed directly to tourists. The consumers of this image who have their own identity worth appreciating are forced to look for it and finally pay a sum of money in exchange for it. The tourism industry is run on the marketing of such images. Brochures and advertising campaigns increasingly invoke attractive descriptions of various tourist destinations. By creating these images culture is "sold". The cultural tourism motivation is different from the others because the destination is exact, precise, cannot be changed and presents itself in three forms: educational, self-discovery and obtaining or preserving a social prestige. Obviously, the most important is the educational motivation, because the purpose of the tourist is information. Acquiring cultural capital is both a necessity for effective participation in cultural tourism and a tourist motivation. Regarding self-discovery, the motivation involves contact with another culture, a natural or philosophical element, as a source of spiritual renewal. It is an extremely important motivation and is most often manifested in the case of pilgrimage tourism. The third motivation, that of obtaining a social prestige by which a social class is distinguished from all others by education, occupation, place of residence and by the consumption of goods. The acquisition of new cultural capital provides an important source of distinction. In this study we will analyze the types of cultural motivation that move people who want to travel.

Evelina CEBOTARI

Analysis of the Economic Impact of Tourism in the Republic of Moldova Compared to Other Countries of the World

This article deals with the comparative analysis of the impact of travel and tourism on economy of the Republic of Moldova and the world economy. This research comes to fill the theoretical-methodological gap in order to apply the theoretical model and indicators measuring an economic impact of travel and tourism in Moldova. A fundamental question guiding the research is the fact whether and under which dimensions the economic impacts of tourism in a small emerging country like Moldova may differ from the global economic impacts. Based on specific indicators that measure the economic impact of tourism, was identified the contribution of travel and tourism to gross domestic product (GDP), to employment and income in Moldova in comparison with the world. As a result, are identified the differences and similarities of the economic impacts of tourism between Moldova and the world. The differences by years in the size of total contribution of the tourism give the evidence that Moldova has a low-developed tourism industry compare with the average global tourism. At the same time, Moldova has a little bit higher level of employment in tourism industry. However, in spite of the differences and similarities in the size of contributions to GDP and employees in Moldova versus the world, tourism also has an important positive economic impact in Moldova.

Nur ÇELİK İLAL, Işıl ARIKAN SALTİK

Evaluation of Rural Tourism Potential of a Taurus Highlands: Case of Ağla, Köyceğiz

Tourism is a sector that is given importance in developed and developing countries thanks to its positive economic effects. However, the negative environmental and socio-cultural effects of mass tourism cause the search for different types of tourism. In this context, rural tourism, which is more suitable for rural settlements and more advantageous in terms of environmental sustainability, is one of the prominent tourism types. Ağla is a highland with an altitude of 800 meters, which preserves the typical characteristics of rural settlements on the Taurus Mountains. In addition to the natural beauties of the

plateau, whose history dates back to the First Age, its socio-cultural features make Aĝla one of the authentic rural areas of Muĝla. The aim of this study is to examine the current situation and potential of rural tourism in Aĝla Plateau in Muĝla. The data of the research, which has a qualitative research design, were collected by on-site observation and interview techniques. The data were examined through SWOT Analysis to reveal strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in terms of rural tourism. The findings were examined from the perspective of sustainable rural tourism development. It has been evaluated that the limitation of rural tourism entrepreneurship of the local people is one of the weaknesses, while original cultural events, especially the Mahya festival held in Aĝla Highlands, have the potential to create significant opportunities for the development of rural tourism. The study was concluded with the suggestion to similar destinations and practioners who give importance the sustainable development of rural tourism.

Dumitru CIOBANU, Lucia CIOBANU

Fairy Tale Settlement and Relaxation in the Eastern Carpathians: Sunători Guesthouse

The heart of the Eastern Carpathians hides a treasure, an oasis of peace and natural beauty, the Sunători Guesthouse. Picturesquely situated on the Bistrița Valley, in the Vatra Dornei area, at the foot of Pietrosu Mountain, from where you can see Pietrele Doamnei and Giumalău Peak, this guesthouse is surrounded by a spectacular mountain landscape. A beautiful forest of proud fir trees, raspberry bushes, ferns, and blueberries envelop the guesthouse, creating a scenery worthy of artistic paintings. Behind the guesthouse, the Sunători stream flows clear and peaceful, adding a touch of freshness and relaxation. One of the main attractions of the Sunători Guesthouse is the curative sulfur water spring, this water being known for its therapeutic properties. This fairytale refuge is located in the village of Sunători, Dorna Arini commune, just a few steps from the former border between the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the Kingdom of Romania, reminding of the tumultuous history of the area. Once you arrive at this guesthouse, you will be enchanted by the surrounding natural beauty and the rustic charm of the place. Sunători Guesthouse offers comfortable and

welcoming accommodation, with rooms decorated in a traditional style. Each room is equipped with modern facilities, ensuring a pleasant and relaxing stay. The freedom to hike and admire the Bistrița River is another attraction of the area. With numerous mountain trails and paths, guests can enjoy nature, explore the surroundings, and discover remarkable places. Along the Bistrița River, you will encounter picturesque landscapes, waterfalls, and tranquil stretches, perfect for spending quality time amidst nature. We invite you to discover the Sunători Guesthouse, a fairytale place in the heart of the Eastern Carpathians, where you can recharge your batteries in a stunning natural setting and enjoy an unforgettable vacation.

Nicoleta CIUBOTĂ

Creative Tourism: A New Perspective in Learning and Development

Borca, place of purity and tranquility connected to the sky. When you arrive at Borca, you are immediately overwhelmed by the feeling of a new time, without the pressure of a future change or the worry of something waiting to be resolved. The feeling that time has a different value for man, for his earthly and heavenly nature, for the purpose that each one defines in his mission. Of course, the experience of time in Borca is enhanced by the scent of the fir trees and the coolness of the air, by the damp earth and the rapid streams, by the places that still carry in them the echo of a time that shone in people, in deeds, in monuments. By the Law of June 10, 1884, entered into force on October 1, 1884, the Crown Domains were established, consisting of 12 estates belonging to Brăila, Dolj, Ilfov, Prahova, Râmnicu Sărat, Vaslui, Suceava and Neamț counties. Thus, Borca is part of the Crown Domains, and to talk about the activity carried out by the administration of the domain, about how the inhabitants lived within its radius, about the exploitation of forests and other riches, about factories, installations, machines, schools and settlements cultural are only some of the challenges of those who still look meditatively today, traces of a fallen civilization.

Remus Petre CÎRSTEA, Cornel POPESCU

Vintilă I. C. Brătianu and "Diplomatic and Economic Tourism" Going for the Resources of "By ourselves!" Country (1924-1929)

The oil resources of the Romanian subsoil were in the attention of the international oil companies, and the actions of the Romanian state for the application of a policy according to its own interests met the resistance of those who dominated the world black gold market. A "come-go", a diplomatic, banking, economic "tourism" is preserved in official and private epistles, now, unknown and silent. The launch of the real Romanian tourism in the interwar period depends largely on the effects of this "diplomatic and economic tourism" after the resources in the country "By ourselves!", as we could call Romania of those years from the point of view of the predominant economic policy, initiated and built by Vintilă I. C. Brătianu. The era from 1900 to 1930 should bear his name, because, in economic and financial matters, Romania's economic history was dominated by its great personality bearing the destiny of modernizing the country. His activity, directed towards consolidating the management of economic resources for the national benefit, based on liberal European democratic principles, in the first three decades of the XXth century, took into account that geopolitical factors have contributed substantially to the achievement of Romanian national state unity. In particular, the Romanian state needed instruments of national assimilation of the new political-economic reality and of programmatic, official expression of the responsibilities of the Romanian state towards its citizens, in the context of the post-war recovery of Europe in an age of contrasts during the world economic life of the contemporary world.

Raluca Irina CLIPA, Flavian CLIPA

The Influence of Agglomeration Economies and Diseconomies on Urban Tourism

Agglomeration economies are the benefits that firms and individuals obtain as a result of locating in agglomerated areas. They are generated in industrial agglomerations, when firms are attracted to locations as a result of the presence of a skilled labor pool, links with specialized suppliers and the vast market, or in urban agglomerations, where

people are attracted by employment opportunities, the existence of a varied ranges of consumer goods, as well as numerous opportunities to spend leisure time. Along with the gains due to location in agglomerations, agglomeration diseconomies also appear, which represent costs such as pollution, congestion, housing price increases, a more expensive life. Urban tourism has grown exponentially in recent decades, with a decline during the pandemic lockdown period, but with a revival in the last year. The paper aims to analyze the impact of agglomeration economies and diseconomies on urban tourism in large cities. Along with the theoretical evaluation of the mentioned influence, we proceed to an empirical analysis on the example of a Western European metropolis. We study both the centripetal forces of attraction in agglomeration and the centrifugal forces of dispersion. The conclusion of the study is that urban tourism has developed largely as a result of economies of agglomeration and, despite some costs of increasing agglomeration, the forces of dispersal do not outweigh those of agglomeration so as to contribute to the reduction of urban tourism. The results of the study are valuable for regional development policies.

**Emanuela Adina COCIȘ, Ioan SURDU, Viorel GLIGOR,
Larisa Loredana DRAGOLEA, Matei DOMNIȚA, Adrian
Daniel MUNTEAN, Diana Cerasela BAMBOI, Irina
AIONESĂ, Vasile SURD, Alexandru Sabin NICULA**

*Revitalizing Tourism through Critical Strategies: Smart
Specialization and Diversification in Vatra Dornei, Romania*

Our research explores the potential of smart specialization and diversification strategies in revitalizing tourism in Vatra Dornei town, Romania. The paper discusses the challenges faced by the tourism industry and proposes a framework for sustainable tourism development through the integration of smart specialization and diversification strategies. Furthermore, we highlighted the importance of stakeholder's engagement and collaboration in the successful implementation of these strategies. The research draws on quantitative data collected from relevant institutions to provide clear insights into the potential of smart specialization and diversification to boost the tourism industry in the Vatra Dornei. Overall, the paper argues that the

integration of these strategies can help promote sustainable economic development and improve the quality of life for residents and tourists alike.

Melania COMAN, Rodica TRIFĂNESCU, Nadina CREINICEAN

The Link between Intermodal Transport and the Development of Green Tourism as a Premise of Smart Territorial Development

The article shows how the connection between transport and tourism leads to the development of both industries, both separately and together. It also discusses how the two industries complement and develop each other, supporting each other, especially in the context of sustainable development. Green tourism is based on varied and ecological modes of transport, but also on how to combine them to develop and evolve. At the same time, tourism is also a catalyst for increasing mobility and tourist circulation. Tourist demand for certain products and services, which can have a deep green component, can play an important role in the option for new modes of transport or in the evolution of existing ones. The contribution that some forms of mobility, more compatible with environmental requirements, can bring to the tourism industry is reflected in the growing interest of the propulsion industry in "green engines" to "zero emissions", with the aim of improving efficiency rather than "car addiction". At the same time, there is a need for decision-makers to support sustainable transport methods: improved infrastructures, charging stations for electric vehicles, access to non-polluting means of transport, etc. At the same time, sustainable mobility also has an impact on the decisions of the authorities responsible for intelligent territorial development, regarding the adoption of sustainable mobility as a daily element and the development of all the premises for its integration in the future infrastructures that serve the locals, tourists and visitors, both in the urban environment and in the rural.

Monica Maria COROȘ, Cristina Ioana BALINT

Traditional Architecture, a Triggering Factor for Rural Tourism Development

Rural tourism has been identified as one of the most attractive types of tourism among Romania's international visitors. Furthermore, the entire context generated by the COVID-19 pandemic has led to the orientation of Romanian tourists towards remote destinations and small lodgings, located especially in rural destinations. Thus, new opportunities have been identified and capitalized upon by entrepreneurs in the hospitality sector. This paper is a research note that aims to highlight the development of a new niche on the Romanian rural tourism market. Namely, employing desk research methods, this paper focuses on identifying the destinations where new lodgings were developed making use of traditional houses, which were moved and rebuilt there. The main research question can be formulated as it follows: Does rural authentic architecture contribute to the development of a qualitative offer of lodging services in rural areas?

Ecaterina COSMETE, Ștefan DUMITRACHE

The Palaeologan Renaissance in the St. Nicholas Princely Church in Curtea de Argeș

The Saint Nicholas Princely Church, located in a rectangular close east of the Princely Court, from which it was separated by a river boulder wall made before 1828, is situated on a plateau that oversees the place where the Târgu River flows into the Argeș River. The Princely Church preserves the ancient tradition of building on a sacred place, as it was built over an earlier, more antique and more mysterious edifice. In the Princely Church three layers of painting were identified: the initial painting, probably made in the period 1352-1369 (a dating put forward by Nicolae Constantinescu) in the style of the Palaiologus Renaissance, which was brought back to the surface by the painter Dumitru Noroceă (whom C.M.I. sent to study to Ravenna, Rome, Florence and Athos), Radu Zugravu's painting made in 1751 at the request of Metropolitan Nifon, and Pantelimon the Painter's painting, made in the period 1827-1828. Undoubtedly, the most important painting is that made in the fourteenth century, as the Palaiologus

Renaissance for the first time brought the proportions of the human body from the 11-to-1 ratio to the much more natural 8-to-1 ratio, which gives consistency to the human body. The painting on the north wall is the best preserved from the 14th century painting. The fresco titled *The Rich Man Who Built Himself a Tower* draws attention in a particular way. One can immediately notice that the rich man is a prince or a king who wears a fleur-du-lys crown on his head, and his features are strikingly similar to those of the Deisis founder (i.e. the great voivode Nicholas Alexander). The painting in the altar was made on three successive levels having the sacred number 12 as a leitmotif. On the upper level, the Old Law is represented by the twelve tribes of Israel bringing gifts to the Tabernacle of Testimony, where Moses and Aaron officiate. Under that picture, in a true biblical dialogue, the New Law is presented to us in a picture where Jesus Christ giving the Eucharist to the twelve apostles during the Last Supper. In the picture Jesus appears to the viewer dually, with six apostles to his left and six to his right.

Brîndușa COVACI, Mihai COVACI

Blue Economy Nexus Mountain Lakes: Following the Path of European Tourism

Mountain lakes - parts of the blue deal, and support for the blue economy - represent a tourism segment insufficiently used. The potential of these areas is huge and should be one of the major keys of the European mountain area. Throughout Europe are important mountain chains, as Scandinavian (1762 km), Carpathian (1500 km), Alps (1200 km), Caucasus (1100 km), and Apennine (1000 km). The European mountain lakes present a high diversity, from natural lakes to artificial and from glacial lakes to current ones. Mountain lakes tourism is well-developed in the Alps and some Scandinavian and Apennine areas, but in the rest of the European area investments and entrepreneurship represent an imperative. The infrastructure of the European mountain area does not favor the development of mountain lakes tourism. However, more and more tourists, visitors of the European mountain area, prefer mountain lakes tourism than any other form of tourism. In this context, the European Commission proposes plans and investments for the blue deal and blue economy. The

research methods have been qualitative through exploration of the existent scientific literature and official website regarding tourism and mountain entrepreneurship throughout Europe. The public and private governance from all over Europe must concentrate the efforts for project proposals and attract funds in order to sustain the European mountain area, especially lakes tourism. The paper presents some successful tourism models of the mountain lakes to be followed by the other regions.

Ion CRISTEA

The Role of Romanian Popular Architecture in the Support and Development of Rural Tourism

Popular Romanian architecture places an emphasis on artistry and uses local materials that lose their identity when removed from their context. It maintains intact its essence and character to inhabit. It is increasingly important, necessary and urgent to protect this heritage, where there are precious lessons to be learnt from coherent and harmonious villages, with a functional simplicity, framed in the landscapes that surround them. It is associated with tradition, historical continuity, sense of place, and belonging. The idea of building for a place, together with the popular architecture, allows and requires the understanding of the essence of each location, projecting the best and respecting the circumstances that surround it. The study addresses the broad issue of popular architecture and places special emphasis on its role in supporting, promoting and developing Romanian rural tourism.

Cristina Emanuela DASCĂLU

Nurtured by Nature: How Stressful Jobs and Busy Lives Have a Huge Impact on the Rise of Rural Tourism Choice among Academia Members

Rural development policy creation should consider recent significant changes in emerging sectors such as rural tourism. This study conducts a choice experiment (CE) in 3 (three) Romanian universities to examine two things: urban residents' willingness to pay (WTP) and their heterogeneous preferences for rural attributes. Results indicate that respondents are willing to pay for the attributes such as friendly

and personalized service, traditional culture, local style accommodations, and exposure to nature, with those having higher income also exhibiting a higher WTP. Using the latent class model (LCM), respondents were initially divided into "rural-comfort seekers" and "rural culture and amusement lovers", findings suggesting the transformation of rural areas into diversified consumption spaces with a heightened emphasis on rurality conservation, the heterogeneity not being as heightened as initially thought.

Iustin DEJANU

The Golești Museum, a Durable and Sustainable Tourist Product

The continuous development of mass tourism has an increasing impact on nature, gradually transforming from a categorical opportunity into a melange of benefits and threats, starting from the excesses resulting from mass tourism from an ecological, economic and social. The concentration of visitor flows results in the general overloading of the ecosystems and the problem of ensuring the needs of the present generations, without compromising those of the future generations, is becoming increasingly important. As a result, there is a worldwide trend to modify tourism production practices, a trend in which village museums or specifically ethnographic museums could represent a strong link in the construction and sustainable development of tourism. These categories of museums represent by what they are a pole of rural or agro-type tourist development, starting from the built heritage at their disposal, the economic and social practices of the traditional village that they value and pass on to present and future generations and up to the human wealth that they can set in motion to create models of ecological tourism in their spaces, to be part of the national tourist routes and engine of rural development. The existence of a natural park, a kind of avant-garde of sustainable tourism, of the representation of the Romanian village and the households of fruit growers and viticulturists, the ability to organize and run folk creation camps, traditional handicrafts and folk art, of culinary workshops, of festivals of traditional products and many other such manifestations that complement sustainable tourism, make the Golești Museum a center of routes for rural tourism and agrotourism.

Arun Kumar DESHMUKH

Impact of Namami Ganges Programme on Spiritual Tourism of Varanasi, India: A Review

Varanasi is well known for spiritual tourism in India. It attracted around three million tourists visits in 2021. River Ganga has a key place in the attraction of spiritual tourists in Varanasi. In order to rejuvenate the pious river, Government of India has introduced Namami Ganges Programme to clean and beautify its banks. The purpose of this research study is to analyse the impact of this programme on spiritual tourism of Varanasi.

Laura DIACONU MAXIM

The Impact of the Remote Work on Employees: An Empirical Study

In the context of COVID-19 pandemic, labor markets all around the world had to cope with the national lockdowns that were meant to stop the spread of the virus. Therefore, in most of the cases, it was decided the transition to the remote work. Even if initially it was considered a short-term situation, working remotely has remained the norm in some areas even after the crisis. Despite the fact that many organizations are keen for the workforce to return to the office, others consider the benefits of remote or hybrid working. Since the remote work continues to characterize the post-crisis world and, as it was noticed, the shift towards remote work during the COVID-19 pandemic was particularly pronounced among the knowledge workers, it is necessary to understand how the employees adjust to the remote work. While some studies showed both increases and decreases in employees' engagement, other reports noticed a great resignation of the workers. Considering that employees' engagement is closely related to the high levels of productivity and performance, the purpose of our study is to identify the impact of the remote work imposed by COVID-19 on the employees' wellbeing. In order to achieve our goal, we have conducted an online survey on a sample of 267 remote workers. The survey was based on a questionnaire that was structured on four major aspects related to employees' jobs: productivity and creativity, meaning and interest, general stress and health challenges.

Laura DIACONU MAXIM, Cristian C. POPESCU

The Future of EU Airline Sector on Post-COVID-19 Era

During the COVID-19 pandemic, passengers' demand for air transportation declined drastically. Unfortunately, despite the small improvements from the last months, it is expected a slower rate of growth. A possible explanation could be related to the fact that, unlike other economic and financial crises which weakened the purchasing power, the COVID-19 changed consumers' behaviour. Apart from the financial problems the pandemic created to the aviation sector, another impact was felt in the business travellers' segment: a large part of these passengers either diminished or stopped travelling in the context of the remote work. Moreover, since the responses of many airlines to the pandemic involved reduction of fleet, layoffs and even exit from certain markets, the post-COVID-19 period raises another issue: the shortage of aircrafts, personnel and destinations. Considering all these aspects, the aim of the present study is to analyse the possible future evolution of the EU airline sector by taking into account the demand that was observed during the pandemic and the demand that was forecast based on the pre-pandemic trend. In order to achieve this purpose we have used several research methods. One of them was related to the seasonality indicators and involved quarterly data for the period 2015–2022. Another one consisted in a binary logit method, used to model the airline-market level decisions for two time periods: during normal operating conditions (before the pandemic) and after a major crisis (after the beginning of the pandemic).

Veronica GARBUZ, Oleg PETELCĂ, Iurie BEȘLIU

Business Development Opportunities for Rural Tourism in the Republic of Moldova

Economic activity in tourism is a safe and effective means of developing local communities in economic, social and cultural terms. Following the COVID-19 pandemic, the HoReCa sector in the Republic of Moldova was severely affected, which contributed to the reduction of rural tourism business revenues by up to 70-80%. The sector continues to be affected by recent crises, including price increases and Russia's war against Ukraine. Low economic activity with few alternatives, as

well as poverty and skills shortages reported in the countryside, are leading to depopulation and the exodus of young people from villages. Many small and medium-sized enterprises in Moldova struggle with low productivity and competitiveness. In these situations, it is absolutely necessary to provide support for tourism, particularly in rural areas. This article analyses the situation of rural businesses in the tourism sector in the Republic of Moldova and the obstacles they face. The article also presents several financing opportunities for small and medium-sized tourism businesses and the estimated impact of such financing on tourism and rural revitalisation. The main estimated benefits are the following: development and strengthening of the alternative economic activity that is rural tourism; job creation; investment in infrastructure supported by rural tourism; enhancement of local and regional attractiveness for domestic and foreign tourists.

Ioan GÂF DEAC, Dan Constantin ȘUMOVSCI, Bogdan NEGREA

Digital Transformation of Mountain Ecotourism Industry: Good Practices and Future Challenges in Romanian Mountain Areas

Digital transformation has the potential to significantly impact the ecotourism industry in the mountain areas by improving the efficiency, sustainability, and accessibility of ecotourism experiences. Here are some ways in which digital transformation is already impacting the ecotourism industry. In the paper there is an analysis of a few elements of high impact such as online booking and reservations, since digital platforms have made it easier for tourists to book ecotourism experiences online, which has improved the efficiency of the booking process and made it easier for ecotourism operators to manage their bookings, virtual tours, because virtual reality (VR) technology allows ecotourism operators to offer virtual tours of their destinations, giving potential visitors a taste of what they can expect from their ecotourism experience. This has the potential to increase interest and bookings, as well as reduce the environmental impact of physical travel. Also, we have to address the need for sustainable tourism practices and digital platforms can also be used to promote and educate visitors on sustainable tourism practices, such as reducing waste, supporting local

communities, and protecting natural resources. Former challenges about the mobility aspects are being solved by mobile apps. Mobile apps can provide visitors with real-time information about ecotourism destinations, including weather updates, trail conditions, and wildlife sightings. This can improve the visitor experience and reduce the impact on the environment by helping visitors make informed decisions about their activities. The paper also provides information about data analysis, since digital platforms can be used to collect and analyze data on visitor behavior, which can help ecotourism operators better understand their visitors and make data-driven decisions to improve the visitor experience and sustainability of their operations. Overall, digital transformation has the potential to make ecotourism more accessible, sustainable, and efficient, while also enhancing the visitor experience. However, it is important to ensure that digital transformation is implemented in a way that prioritizes environmental sustainability and cultural preservation.

Ovidiu GHERASIM

Construction of Non-Linear Forecasts of Tourism Economic Indicators

The selection of the most appropriate mathematical model for forecasting an economic (or other) touristic indicator involves complex, laborious and quite difficult actions. The curves corresponding to the non-linear forecasts obtained by using Törnqvist and logarithmic models have very close paths. Therefore, an analysis must be carried out that allows the choice between the two types of forecasts. The paper deals with a hypothetical case study (with computer-generated input data). Thus, for 30 tourism indicator values, generated (values considered consecutive achievements), the most suitable forecast is the logarithmic one. The chosen mathematical model is the one to which the highest Pearson coefficient corresponds. The main purpose of the paper is to present concisely and completely the way of calculation by which the two different types (Törnqvist type and logarithmic type) of forecasts are obtained.

Ioan GONTARIU, Ana-Maria GONTARIU, Amelia BUCULEI

Characterization of the Concept and the Factors that Influence Food Security

The problem of food security and the supply of the population with basic agri-food products of appropriate quality is a major concern that all countries face, to a greater or lesser extent, especially underdeveloped or developing ones. Food security is driven by decisive elements that concern human society, being marked by the presence and evolution of different factors, in the stages of development of human society. Regarding the forms of application, food security can be analyzed, depending on the levels of application through the prism of the individual, the family, the state (national), regional or global. The state of comfort accompanies the usual consumption of vegetable and animal food necessary for human existence. So, certain sciences must address the interdependence between them and the natural environment, as well as the evolution of the human economy and the natural environment in time and space. As a result of the multiple implications, both food security and food safety can be analyzed at levels of global, regional, national and local interest.

Ioan GONTARIU, Dan HOFFMAN

Food Safety and Its Role in the Evolution of Food Trade

The problem of food safety acquires new values against the background of the manifestation of the phenomenon of globalization, in the conditions of the unprecedented development of trade in agri-food products. According to the European Union and the World Health Organization, food safety is everyone's responsibility, starting from its origin until the moment it reaches the final consumer. We must also be aware of the special role of trade in food safety given the fact that sometimes food products are found for a significant period in recent years, there has also been an awareness of a significant number of consumers regarding the issue of food safety, they are becoming more and more interested not only in the quality, but also in the origin of the agri-food products consumed. It is necessary to eliminate any deficiency or weak point in the circuit traveled by agri-food products, from the

farm gate to the consumer's table. Solving the problems that have arisen requires, among other things, a careful management of the resources and factors used in agricultural and food production, regardless of their nature.

Doina GURIȚĂ

The Importance of Positioning a Brand on the Market

The paper deals with the importance of a brand and the psychological impact on the consumer. Specialists have anticipated that a strong organization will be one that focuses on the needs and wants of the consumer. This information will be obtained through market analysis, and the obtained results will represent the "voice of the consumer". Today, the brand and its positioning represent more than simple marketing concepts, they play an important role in the life of organizations. Experts believed that marketing was moving towards a brand war, and the evidence was not long in coming. Companies have understood that the importance of long-term image is an asset and that is why the products and services they offer are oriented towards consumers and their needs. The importance of the brand in marketing strategies for a certain type of product has led to the creation of a process of brand support called brand management or branding. Branding is the methods a company uses for a product, to communicate with its target audience and to identify its competitive advantages over the competition.

Alina Petronela HALLER

Sustainable Tourism in the World's Top Ten Tourist Destinations

Economic and social development has made tourism a booming industry worldwide. Despite this performance, tourism activity is associated with a lack of sustainability, so we analysed the extent to which a series of tourism attractiveness factors are sustainable or not in the case of the world's top ten tourist destinations. Following the application of multiple regression on some variables taken from various databases, mainly World Bank, which describe the period 2000-2020, we found that the main factors of tourist attractiveness are divided, from their sustainable character perspective, into three groups. The

increase in the number of tourists, in the number of residents pursuing higher education and in their average number of schooling years, the industrial and construction sector development, the economic and social instability are unsustainable. The increase in renewable energy consumption, economic growth and digitisation are sustainable, while residents' primary and secondary education, transport services and airport passenger flows are not statistically significant. The analysis highlights the sustainable and unsustainable tourism attractiveness factors in the case of the top ten most visited destinations and constitutes a decision basis for practitioners in the countries of the target group and those who aspire to a higher status in the tourism hierarchy of the world so that this sector becomes more sustainable.

Mariana HERȚELIU

Sustainable Development of Mountain Areas in World Countries with Extensive Mountain Areas

Promoting and developing the new international concepts regarding smart sustainable well-being and smart and integrated sustainable development of mankind, in a globalized world based on democracy, social progress and knowledge, this is the basic objective of the contemporary world. Since ancient times, working the land, raising animals and processing the products obtained have been the activities that ensured subsistence. Each area has its specifics in exploitation, the mountain area being unfavorable for agriculture, and that is why man had to innovate in the mountain agricultural activity, to ensure the stability and development of the mountain areas. Mountains are home to part of the world's population and, at the same time, offer a very large part of the solutions to modern problems, such as biodiversity, water and many other factors.

Mărioara IORDAN, Mihaela Nona CHILIAN, Gabriela CIURARIU

Resilience of the Romanian Regions and Counties: A Medium-Term View

The topic of resilience was found for decades among the hot issues that have animated the scientific and political debates in the area of

economic growth and economic development, especially in the European Union, but also worldwide. More specifically, the resilience of countries and regions in relation to the impact of the 2008 economic crisis and the post-COVID-19 crisis became quite recently of high interest to the economic specialists and practitioners as well. While neither a universally accepted definition of economic resilience nor a broadly accepted assessment methodology may be found in the literature, and differences of opinion among experts regarding the content, specificity, and area of coverage are also noticeable, recent researches have moved towards combining the joint dynamic response of many selected variables to crisis, at different time horizons, and towards a "system view" of the conceptual frameworks to evaluate the national and/or regional economic resilience. Considering the above-mentioned ideas, the authors display a brief analysis of the resilience of the Romanian regions and counties over a longer time span (2000-2019), with the view to outline a broader framework of analysis. The results reveal different resilience patterns among, especially, the economies of the counties, and different adjustment and recovery paths over the analysed period.

Ina ISAC

Suruceni Monastery, Monument of History and Architecture

The monastery is located 25 km from the capital of the Republic of Moldova, Kishinev, in the village of Suruceni. In 1785, a small hermitage of nuns was established here, on the land of the nobleman Casian Suruceanu. In 1794, a summer church made of wood and dedicated to Saint George was built. Between 1825-1828 the wooden church was replaced by a stone one. In 1860, the winter church dedicated to Saint Nicholas was built. Bishop Ismail of Argeş, Dionisie Erhan, who was the abbot of the monastery between 1908-1934, was buried here. Unfortunately, his tomb was vandalized. In 1959 the monastery was closed, and most of the monks went to the Noul Neamţ monastery. A narcology hospital, a warehouse and a club were opened in place of the monastery. Due to its deplorable state, at the end of the 2000s the monastery was demolished from the ground up. In 1991, this holy place was reopened as a nunnery, and it is currently completely restored. The Suruceni Monastery Church is the only one

in Moldova lined with Armenian pink tuff, which gives it a special elegance and originality. Part of the relics of Pious Antipa from Caldopești, donated in 1999 by the Varlaam Monastery from Russia, are kept here. There are also two famous icons here: The Savior Blessing with the Gospel and The Mother of God with the Child from Suruceni.

Elena Manuela IȘTOC

Opportunities and Challenges for Romanian Rural Destinations in the Post-Pandemic Period Towards Their Sustainable Development

The global and rapid spread of the coronavirus that emerged in China at the end of 2019 led the world into an unprecedented crisis. As a dependent industry and very sensitive to safety, economic, environmental, and socio-political events that influence people's willingness to travel, tourism was one of the sectors most strongly affected by the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic proved to be one of the biggest challenges in the history of the global and local tourism industry. In times of crisis, it became imperative for rural destinations to develop strategic approaches that can generate a competitive advantage. Consequently, Romanian rural tourism stakeholders have to work in new circumstances and find suitable solutions for increasing resilience and sustainable development of destinations. This study aims to identify opportunities and challenges for Romanian rural destinations in order to reinvent and increase competitiveness and resilience in the face of crises and their sustainable development in the post-pandemic period. To achieve this objective, both secondary, desk research, and direct research were carried out through surveys conducted among stakeholders (residents, visitors, tourism operators and enterprises, etc.). The results of this study can provide useful information to those who manage Romanian rural tourist destinations, to tourism companies, and to all those interested.

Deepak JAISWAL

Sustainable Development of Buddhist Circuit: Augmenting Sustainable Tourism Management and Indigenous Livelihoods in Eastern Uttar Pradesh

The spiritual heritage of India is receiving widely reasonable attention particularly for the Buddhism, popular for the spiritual and sustainable tourism opportunity. Spiritual and ecotourism is a niche segment in the Indian tourism industry. In fact, Buddhist tourism is thriving in Asia, particularly in India, Nepal, South Korea, and Thailand, as a form of religious tourism. Social, political, and cultural life in these countries has been profoundly affected. In this premise, the Buddha circuit which can play a pivotal role in the Indian backdrop of sustainable tourism development. The Buddhist circuit is a route that follows in the footsteps of the Buddha from Lumbini to Kapilvastu, Sarnath and Kushinagar, including Bodhgaya, are well-known for heritage, spiritual and religious centers and attributes (Dhyan, Vipassana, etc.). However, the cites such as Kapilvastu, Lumbini (Buddhist circuit) were not paid attention profusely by stakeholders parallel with Sarnath and Bodhgaya, even not much explored by foreign and national tourists towards sustainable tourism. Therefore, the Buddhist circuit needs to be promoted via augmenting indigenous spiritual tourism management which may contribute as one of principal sources of local livelihoods and sustainability due to the heritage and eco-friendly environment. The main purpose of this proposed project is to augment the promotion of the Buddhist Circuit with managing the equilibrium between spiritual and ecotourism, and indigenous livelihoods towards sustainable development in eastern Uttar Pradesh with special reference to Siddharth Nagar district. The Siddharth University can perform as a catalyst in enhancing sustainable tourism niche opportunity through promoting local tourism communities such as developing small tourism help groups (STHGs) with aided cognitive and research support centers of Dhyan (Vipassana Kendra) and so on in the various cites of the Buddha Circuit. Thus, the proposed work would contribute in the niche of indigenous spiritual tourism development and local livelihoods advancement, aiming to be proposed a policy roadmap for sustainable tourism align with the UNDP's sustainable development goals (SDGs) from the explicit viewpoint of sustainable transportation.

Darshana Kailas LAHOTI, Sandeep Rangnath KAPSE

Women Entrepreneurship in Tourism: Comparative Study of Selected Developed and Developing Countries

Tourism has been recognized as a key driver of economic growth and development in both developing and developed countries. In recent years, there has been growing interest in promoting women's entrepreneurship in tourism, as a means of fostering gender equality and women's economic empowerment. This study examines tourism policies aimed at promoting women entrepreneurship in the tourism industry in developing and developed countries. It will compare the tourism policies regarding women entrepreneurship of developing countries like India, Zimbabwe, Brazil, Indonesia, and Turkey to developed countries like the U.S.A, Japan, Germany, Canada, and Australia. The study aims to identify and analyze the similarities and differences in policies between these two groups of countries. This proposes that there is no significant relevance in tourism policies of developing and developed countries. The paper reviews the literature on women's entrepreneurship in tourism and analyzes the policies and strategies that have been implemented in different countries to support and promote women entrepreneurs. The study highlights the importance of women entrepreneurship in the tourism sector, the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs, and the role of tourism policies in supporting and promoting women's entrepreneurship. The study also provides recommendations for policymakers to enhance their policies and practices to support women entrepreneurship in the tourism industry. This study concludes, tourism policies that focus on women entrepreneurship can contribute to economic growth, social development, and sustainability in both developing and developed countries. These policies should be designed and implemented with the aim of promoting gender equality and inclusivity, and with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders.

Gică MANOLE

Historical Rural Tourism in Moldova and Bucovina

The lands of Moldova and Bucovina have a wide variety of cultural, historical values, folk art, ethnography and folklore, traditions,

historical vestiges, a harmonious natural setting, with a varied and picturesque landscape and historical background. The rural settlements in Moldova and Bucovina appeared and developed on the most varied forms of relief since the time of the Thraco-Dacians. They still preserve unaltered the specificity, the ancient traditions and customs, a rich and varied folklore, original elements of ethnography and handicrafts, monasteries and hermitages, which can be exploited for tourism as part of a strategy for the organization and development of rural tourism.

Corina MATEI GHERMAN, Vasile MATEI

Managing the Impact of Multiple Crises and the Natural Environment

Today's world must be aware of the real dangers and their possibility to manifest themselves due to human actions on the environment and due to crises. The natural environment is a complex and nuanced concept in sciences such as geography, geology, biology and ecology. Scientists understand by natural environment the earth's ecosphere, composed of the troposphere, which includes everything that supports life, and the biosphere, composed of everything that is alive, including the relationships between them. The change should lead to the policies of result-oriented strategies through modern communication tools.

Daniela MATEI, Viorel CHIRIȚĂ

Mutations in the Dynamics of the Development of Rural Communities that Have Become Local Tourist Resorts. Case Study: Moldovița and Vatra Moldoviței, Suceava County

Bucovina's tourist offer, well represented in terms of natural and cultural heritage, has been enriched in recent years with new tourist destinations. The status of tourist resort of local interest (granted to a number of 16 municipalities in Suceava county) reorganizes the resources available to rural communities through the emergence of a new vector of local development: tourism and leisure activities. Although tourist activities have already taken place in these localities, the new statute resizes their economic and social life by recognizing tourism as a vector of local economic development. The paper focuses on the opportunities for the development of tourist activities in two

tourist resorts of local interest that have evolved over time into a complex territorial system: Moldovița and Vatra Moldoviței. Between the two communities, which have had a polarizing role for each other, today there is an important relationship also in terms of tourism: the tourist offer of the two municipalities is, to an equal extent, individualized and complementary. This means that tourism can be approached unitarily, also from the perspective of establishing a future destination management organization that will attract and capitalize on funds specific to rural development. The local public administrations that manage the two tourist resorts should have a common vision, to include this development vector in the medium and long-term strategies, with the aim of multiplying the directions for obtaining an increase in the quality of life of the population in the rural areas to which they belong.

Vasile MAXIM, Valentin CEBAN, Oleg BUGA

The Location of Religious Edifices in the Republic of Moldova in Relation to the Natural and Anthropic Environment

This article highlights the most important characteristics of neighborly relationships, as a geographical principle of research of natural and anthropogenic components, in relation with the location of religious relics, with an impact on the quantitative and qualitative change of religious tourism potential. The natural components that highlight the relief, the hydrographic network, the vegetation as well as the anthropic factors are highlighted by the retrospective-historical analysis of the increase of the number of religious buildings with the highlighting of the most important builders and founders of the most significant places of worship. The subject proposed for analysis is of current importance in order to know the relations of organization, arrangement and sustainable development of some geographical areas in order to avoid certain imbalances of a natural or anthropic nature.

Ion MĂRGINEANU

Rural Tourism: Evidence from Canada

Canada's tourism industry is a major contributor to the country's economic growth, as tourism is one of the few sectors found in every

Canadian local economy. Here, the most popular types of tourism are nature-based and culture-based tourism. Many Canadian, resource-based communities facing an economic crisis turn to tourism for economic diversification. Tourism has become a development tool for many rural and more isolated areas to supplement traditional industries that are often in decline. The paper analyzes Canadian rural tourism from three perspectives: stage of development, ways of manifestation and types of organization.

Leonardo Mihai MĂRINCEAN

Social Media and Traditional Advertising Effects on Customer Behavioral Intentions: Activation, Intention and WOM Intention

The advent of social media has forever changed the landscape of marketing communications, especially in tourism, as tourism destination content is of inspirational interest for many consumers. Little is still known however about the interaction effects of social media influencer content and traditional advertising content on tourism motivation (Customer Inspiration - Activation) and tourism consumption (Customer Inspiration - Intention), as well as the relation between these phenomena and WOM Intention. This paper will bridge this gap with an experimental design which measures the effect of different types of content exposure on Activation, Customer Intention and WOM Intention. Both direct relations (between type of content and activation, intention and WOM) and moderation relations (between PFC customer characteristics) will be investigated. The relationship is tested based on an experimental design with 3 groups exposed to various visual marketing communications about a touristic destination from Apuseni (advertisements, influencer content and mixed content). After exposure, each group receives a questionnaire with the established scales of the variables of interest. The research is still a work in progress.

Jay MEHTA, Nishant SUTARE

Research into the Potential of Setting Up an Indian Cultural Theme Park as a Business in the United Kingdom

India is a multireligious country with many distinct faiths. India is a diverse nation in terms of its linguistic communities, geographical regions, religious beliefs, and socioeconomic classes. In recognition of the diverse population makeup. However, there are some basic themes and tenets that run through all of the dominant society's values, attitudes, beliefs, and conventions. India is frequently visited by tourists from around the globe who want to experience its culture and participate in its events. Researchers seek to find out the potential for establishing an Indian Cultural Theme Park as a business in the United Kingdom. According to a study performed by Grant Thornton and FICCI in February 2020, a flair for entrepreneurship sees Indian Diaspora-run businesses making an increasingly important contribution to the UK economy. The authors showed that in the UK there were more than 65,000 Indian diaspora-owned companies. Of these, the 654 companies they researched had a combined turnover of more than £36.84 billion and paid over £1 billion in tax. This success means some Indian diaspora business leaders are among the wealthiest people in the UK. This conclusion suggests greater business opportunities in the UK. The purpose of this research paper is to find out the potential for establishing an Indian Cultural Theme Park as a business in the United Kingdom, also want to focus about the Awareness of Indian Culture in UK and also want to understand the interest of UK residents for an Indian culture. The questionnaire was the main method the authors used to gather data. Additionally, for those seeking to start a business in the UK, researchers have provided guidance and recommendations.

Ivan MOROZ

Ecotourism Trails for Cyclists in the Dniester Valley

Adventure tourism is a perfect solution for both tourists and the environment. On the one hand, there are those who practice an active and sporty style of travel, and on the other, those who develop sustainably and ecologically. The Dniester River is the longest water course in the country, with a lot of ecotourism resources, having a

major tourist and recreational attraction. These routes are unique to the region, with long, medium or short distances depending on several factors. They include segments and circuits around tourist destinations in the Dniester valley region. The routes offer unique tourist experiences at state-protected natural areas, wineries, guesthouses, museums and local monuments, thus increasing their appeal.

Tribhuvan NATH

Analyzing the Potential of GI Tagged Fruit in Promoting Agrotourism and Rural Development

The study analyses the potential of Guava fruit crop labeled with GI (Geographical Indication) can promote agrotourism and also contribute to the development of rural areas. This study employs a mixed-methods approach, using both qualitative and quantitative research methods to gather data from guava orchard owners in two selected districts. A total 45 guava orchard owners from the GI tagged Guava belt of two districts in the state of Uttar Pradesh (India) were approached for the survey using a structured questionnaire. Findings indicate that the majority of farmers are interested in exploring the potential benefits of agrotourism. They also understand that promotion of agrotourism will lead to the development of the rural areas. However, there are many problems associated with promotion of agrotourism in the area which needs to be addressed by the Government. The research findings have great policy implications for promoting sustainable agrotourism and rural development in a developing country context.

Mihaela NEDELEA

Rural Tourism in the Bistrița Aurie Valley

Built and developed on the most varied forms of relief since the time of the Thraco-Dacians, Romanian rural settlements preserve ancient traditions and customs, a rich and varied folklore, original artisan elements, which can help the development of rural tourism. Rural tourism has always been practiced in Romania, but spontaneously, sporadically, randomly and unorganized. The most frequent form is hosting occasional visitors in the houses of the inhabitants of a rural settlement. Rural tourism means returning to nature and returning to

origins. It is increasingly appreciated and requested by people who live and work in increasingly stressful conditions, a fact demonstrated in recent years. Quality rural tourism implies quality services and benefits. The village is the expression of man's connection with nature, and nature has been very well preserved in the Bistrița Aurie Valley. Natural healing factors also matter: climatic factors, air ionization, medicinal plants. The organization of rural tourism in activities such as recreational (dancing, excursions, shows), sports (horse riding, fishing, sledding, skiing) or cultural (traditional museums, trips to artisans and folk craftsmen) ones represents the way of economic revitalization of this area. Daily activities under accelerated social, economic and technological transformations generate stress, an increasingly powerful weapon against inner balance. People wish to escape from the daily routine in unpolluted, quiet places, suitable for rest and outdoor movement. Rural tourism takes place in relatively unpolluted spaces, with communities that have preserved their traditions, which ensure the maintenance or restoration of health and offer the chance to "escape" to reduce tensions. The development of sustainable rural tourism is also based on the market niche formed by people of the third age who have free time, but a smaller budget and greater needs to recover and recreate. The most frequent motivations for rural tourism are the following: increased level of education; picturesque landscapes, clean air, organic food; return to nature, curiosity, creativity, relaxation, desire for knowledge and escape; inexpensive recreational activities: sports, hiking, walking, fishing, cycling, etc.; discovering and participating in local traditions and customs; more time for recreation; improving transport and telecommunications; more and more personalized tourist offers; local rural authenticity; peace and mental comfort; increased number of pensioners; gradual increase in the interest of local and county administrations.

Alina Cristina NICULESCU, Cristi FRENȚ

Digital Technologies and Their Use for the Development of Cultural Heritage in Europe and Romania: Revealing Some Advantages and Disadvantages

The Internet and digital applications are now part of our daily lives. Digital technologies have become essential to work, to learn, to socialize, to be able to access various products and services (i.e. business, entertainment, cultural tourism, education, health, etc.). The evolution of new technologies has generated significant changes in all fields, which has led to an increasing awareness of the importance of technological progress in today's economy. Similarly, technological developments have opened up new possibilities for digitization of cultural heritage, especially for the purpose of its conservation, restoration, research, but also for the purpose of expanding the online access and for its reuse by tourists. In response to the current digital challenge, this article aims to tackle the issue of the use of digital technologies pertaining to cultural tourism (at European and national level), by analyzing some recent statistics in the field. At the same time, the ways in which digital tools can contribute or not to the development of cultural heritage will be researched, in order to identify the advantages and disadvantages that may arise from the online exposure of cultural resources. In this way, the data presented will capture both positive characteristics and, at the same time, the existing vulnerabilities and risks, in order to be able to evaluate the consequences of technological progress in the field of cultural tourism.

Neerja NIGAM

Impact of COVID-19 on Ecotourism in Madhya Pradesh: A Review

Tourism in Madhya Pradesh is known for its beautiful wildlife, world heritage sites and religious sites. In 2017, the number of tourists from abroad reached approx. 0.36 million, while domestic tourists were 78.04 million. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the impact of COVID-19 on ecotourism in the state of Madhya Pradesh. An extensive literature review was conducted to assess the impact.

Valentin NIȚĂ, Gina Ionela BUTNARU, Mirela ȘTEFĂNICĂ, Corneliu IATU

Nature-Based Tourist Heritage: Case Study on the Natural Heritage of the Danube Delta

In recent years, increased attention has been paid to nature-based tourism, which has led theorists and practitioners to be increasingly interested in the analysis of various aspects related to natural heritage in order to capitalize on it. Value through the interpretation of natural heritage has a beneficial impact both for tourists and for the sustainable development of nature-based tourism. This paper analyzes the factors that influence the interpretation of the delta-type natural heritage through examples of good practices regarding the protection of natural areas. The interpretation methods and techniques refer to the Danube Delta as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Our results will contribute to the development of a guidebook on the interpretation of the natural heritage of the Danube Delta. We have also identified some benefits of practicing nature-based tourism. The study is relevant for researchers, managers and students interested in the interpretation of natural heritage, in general, and the heritage of the Danube Delta, in particular. It has an important theoretical contribution to the improvement and conservation of natural heritage.

Harun ÖZBEY

Comparison between Turkey and World Countries in Electronic Sports Development

Today, technology is a concept that we use in many areas of our lives and is an important part of our lives. The concept of electronic sports is seen as another important concept in developing technological events. Countries and cities that host electronic sports events can take important steps in cultural, economic, socialization and branding with these events. At this point, the aim of this study is to compare electronic sports developments between Turkey and the countries of the world. Since this research is a comparison study, document analysis was used in the research. The research is a qualitative study and secondary data were used in the collection of data. As a result, the similarities and differences of the development of electronic sports between Turkey and

the countries of the world were examined. It was thought that it would contribute to the researches to be carried out later and it was proposed to develop various researches on a similar subject.

Luminița PANAIT

The Charm of the Romanian Village and the Imminent Danger of Being Lost

The subject of the present paper, that the Romanian village is in danger of extinction, is not only very important, but also very topical. The idea must be taken into account as soon as possible by those directly responsible for the current state of the Romanian village. From the highest forums of the country to the local communities, everyone must be concerned, with maximum involvement, to discover what can be done so that the Romanian village does not disappear. The term *village* comes from the Latin *fossātum*, a ditch, especially in earthwork fortifications. Rightfully so, the village must be protected and fortified.

Pratibha PANDEY, Vimal Chandra VERMA

Factors Influencing Spiritual Tourism in India

Since ancient times, travel and tourism for spiritual and religious reasons have been an integral part of individual and social life. Spiritual tourism is becoming more and more important nowadays due to the rapid annual increase in the frequency of commuters from all over the world. Spiritual tourism is known as the travel to spiritually significant places with the intention of gaining spiritual experience, destination determination and its associated benefits. Several factors such as inspiration, perceived motivation, service quality, safety levels, need for transformation play an important role in influencing tourists to travel to spiritually important places. Existing research on spiritual tourism has mainly focused on classifying factors superficially. By reviewing the literature in the field, this paper attempts to explore in depth the factors that influence spiritual tourism and suggests ways to improve the experience and attract the spiritually motivated tourist.

Laura Joana PAPANIKOLOPOULOU ARCO

Volunteer Tourism to Create a Sustainable Tourism Industry: Tourism in the Service of Different Localities

Tourism is an important source of income for states and companies. However, despite the economic benefits it provides, it can negatively affect sustainable development. In this sense, it is interesting to give rise to ways of traveling that instead of subtracting contribute to the sustainability and development of the town. In this context, volunteer tourism emerges. This type of tourism can be an interesting alternative to replace part of traditional tourism. In this way of traveling, each individual carries out activities to help society or the environment on their vacation trip. In this way, the tourism industry can contribute not only in an economic sense but also with various activities. In the present work the advantages and disadvantages of volunteer tourism in response to a disastrous situation are studied. The methodology used is based on the bibliographic review referring to the aspects of interest.

Pranab J. PATAR

The Relevance of Low-Carbon and Climate-Resilient Tourism

Tourism is a highly complex industry which is dependent on several other associated sectors that may have low to serious environmental implications. On the wake of the increasing severity of climate change, which is directly impacting the entire tourism sector, it becomes highly significant to look at measures that will help overcome these growing challenges. While tourism is affected by changing climate, it is also a major contributor to this environmental change through its high carbon footprint. In view of the same, it is imperative to explore ways to minimize growing carbon emission and counter potential negative environmental impacts resulting from tourism activities through a holistic approach. Achieving net-zero in tourism industry may look challenging, however there is ray of hope. Obviously, the best possible route is to adopt low carbon to zero carbon measures that will lead to a net-zero tourism industry. Though a multi-stakeholder and collaborative approach and in combination of various measures such as combining traditional and sustainable practices with modern technologies including renewable energy sources, it is possible to

mitigate climate change and make tourism a sustainable affair. This paper explores various aspects and examples of low carbon practices in tourism as well as easily adaptable carbon offsetting mechanism to create a climate resilient version of tourism.

Teodor PĂDURARU

The Competitive Potential of Romanian Rural Tourism in the European Context

Tourist activity as a whole can be synthetically expressed by the global tourist traffic indicator. Romania, with a rich and varied tourist potential, is one of the countries with a tourist tradition. The economic-social situation and political regimes have influenced both Romania's position on the international tourist market, as well as the place of tourism in people's preferences and in the structure of the economy. Therefore, Romania's domestic and international tourist traffic fluctuated, determined by the major changes in the global and domestic economy, as well as by the degree of receptivity to these changes. Romania's international tourist traffic after 1990 is characterized by a contradictory evolution, which confirms its responsiveness to the economic, social and political transformations of the contemporary world. The conclusion of the study is that the competitive potential of Romanian rural tourism, as well as Romanian tourism in general, shows a slow upward trend.

Marius POPESCU

The Cultural Trail, an Instrument for the Promotion of Rural Tourism. Case Study: Southern Dobrogea

The rural environment of Southern Dobrogea is a space enjoying beautiful nature and great history. This region is a multicultural geographic area with many cultural attractions and traditions that can be used for rural tourism. The aim of this study is to define the specific activity of rural tourism, as a solution for sustainable development of the local communities in this area. Research methodology consisted in bibliographic documentation and field research to discover the local resources and traditional activities, and to identify capitalizing opportunities for rural tourism. By associating the local natural and

cultural heritage with others socio-economic factors, the study proposes forms of cultural tourism (ethnic, historical, religious, scientific) can be developed individually, but also thematic cultural trails. The valuation of these cultural resources is an opportunity for the sustainable tourism development in rural area of Southern Dobrogea, but also it is an alternative to the classic seaside tourism from the Black Sea Coast, which, in fact, has a seasonal character.

Silvana PRODAN, Dan Cristian DABIJA, Leonardo MĂRINCEAN

Digital Currency and the Tourism Industry: An Analysis of Digital Payments in High GDP Share Countries

In many nations, especially those with large tourism GDP shares, the tourism sector is a crucial component of the economy. However, accessing services in foreign nations can be difficult for tourists due to the complexity, expense, and length of international transactions. Cryptocurrencies, or digital currencies, present a possible solution to this issue, as well as digital platforms such as Revolut or Wise, that provide users with a range of financial services. With a focus on nations with a large share of tourism in their GDP, this article examines the effects of digital currency and digital platforms on the travel and tourism sector. According to statistics from the World Tourism Organization (WTO), the Maldives, British Virgin Islands, Macao SAR, Saint Lucia, Seychelles, Turks and Caicos Islands, Aruba, Anguilla, Vanuatu, and Bahamas have the greatest proportion of tourism in their GDP. The article looks into the degree to which the central banks of these nations have put a plan in place to make it easier for foreign tourists to obtain services there. These nations have adopted digital currencies slowly because many of them still use conventional banking methods. Digital currencies, on the other hand, provide a low-cost alternative with competitive exchange rates and no additional fees, making them a desirable choice for travelers who want to reduce their spending on financial activities. The article's conclusion is that in order to enable and ease foreign tourists' access to services in those countries, central banks of nations with high tourism-to-GDP ratios need to

embrace digital currencies, but also to facilitate digital payment platforms.

Petru ROȘCA, Irina CROTENCO, Elena ZHIGAREVA

Rural Tourism as a Component of the Sustainable Development of Moldova as a Candidate for the EU

In today's context of the global tourism market, market segments are becoming even more differentiated to meet tourist specific needs. One of the special types of tourism is tourism outside urban agglomerations. The need to communicate with nature, to escape from the hustle and bustle of the city is important in the choice of destination by modern travellers. Rural tourism is particularly important because of its focus on a wide range of consumers of tourism services, regardless of age, gender, religion, language and race. This type of tourism is also important because it makes possible a deeper knowledge of the culture, art, history, traditions, and gastronomy of the destination. This study highlights the importance of rural tourism in national and international tourism. Theoretical aspects of rural tourism activities are highlighted. Approaches in the state regulation of rural tourism and its development trends in the Republic of Moldova are described. Examples of tourism industry activities in European Union countries that can be replicated in Moldova are presented. The Republic of Moldova is going through a difficult period of its transformation into a market economic system that not only shares the goals, values and ideals of the European Union, but also implements them in all fields, with a view to joining the EU. That is why a set of measures must be developed to improve rural tourism in Moldova, a candidate country for the EU.

Mirela RUSALI

The Industrial Valorisation of Romanian Agri-Food Products: Potential, Evolutions, Vulnerabilities

Improving the production structure of the agri-food industry is a determining factor for increasing performance in the food value chain, increasing farmers' earnings and sustainable growth of the rural economy, through better valorisation of primary products and functioning of the internal agricultural market. The paper presents the

results of research on the potential for industrial exploitation of Romanian agri-food products, reflected in the structure of the added value of the food value chain. The productive capacity and recent developments of the main economic indicators at sector and subsector level, C10-C11-C12 according to the classification of economic activities CAEN Rev.2, were analysed. The degree of industrial exploitation of agri-food products was evaluated by estimating some relevant indicators, i.e. the degree of self-supply, the degree of industrial processing and the share of imports in the available self-supply (consumption). The results highlight disparities in the structure of the value added to the food chain in Romania through the high share of primary production, respectively of agricultural products compared to the food industry, as a factor of imbalance in the food chain and of weakening competitiveness. Assessments show that in the real domestic economy the food chain frequently stops at primary production, fragmenting connections with downstream links such as food processing and manufacturing, food services, further reflecting in the performance and product categories of import flows and export.

Melike SAK, Gül ERKOL BAYRAM

Evaluation of Consumer Comments on Virtual Tours by Content Analysis

Today, many sectors and service areas have changed and entered into a transformation process. Virtual tours are a concept that has become more popular in this process. We can visit the whole world with virtual tours and well-equipped guides, and we can see the details of a destination down to the smallest detail. In this context, it is aimed to reveal the current situation of the professional and technical competencies of the tourist guides, which is an important factor in the virtual tour experiences that the visitors will obtain, and to determine the satisfaction level of the visitors from the guided tours. In this context, electronic comments made in virtual environment for virtual tours were examined. Electronic comments on virtual tours were evaluated with the help of data obtained from web pages such as TripAdvisor, The Tour Guy, Get Your Guide, which are an important source of information. Content analysis method, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the study. Research results show that

visitors generally have a positive experience and their satisfaction levels are high. In the positive themes that emerged as a result of the evaluation. In general, it was determined that the most frequently repeated themes were to make a wonderful/amazing/excellent/detailed narration/to give the feeling of living at that time and to make the area lively/to have an unforgettable tour experience. Among the negative themes, the most frequently repeated themes are that the guide makes a quick tour and rushes the group / incomplete information.

Hatice SARI GÖK

Tourism Trends of Millennials Tourists

Millennials are considered to cover individuals born between 1980-1996. This generation in the literature is also described as an internet belt, millennial, echo-boomers, generation next, nexters. The core values of this generation are innovation, independence, creativity, ambition and development. More egocentric than other generations, millennials are fond of brands, friends, entertainment and digital culture. Y-generation, a self-confident, educated generation, has a different perspective on business life, consumption style and social relations. In the next 10 years, millennials will make up 75% of the global workforce. It is estimated that vacation and travel will be an indispensable item for the Y generation. Therefore, it will reveal a number of opportunities for the travel and hospitality industry. There will also be differentiations in tourism trends for this generation, which prefers travel programs to have different experiences in travel and sightseeing preferences. Finally, examples of the millennials study tourism trends (wellness tourism, camping, solo traveller, spiritual tourism and yoga holidays) examined and Turkey / Antalya / Adrasan has been transferred as a case study in terms of yoga tourism.

Gheorghe SĂVOIU, Angela KAPLINA

Some Major Aspects, Related to Already Visible Inadvertences in the Future Rural Development of Tourism in Romania

The nature of the private property, the ownership of managers, implosive demography, the rural economy in decline, the lack of rural development policies, etc. are some of the Romanian realities described

in this article as factors that generate inadvertences or already visible gaps for the future of rural tourism in Romania.

Gheorghe SĂVOIU, Sandra MATEI

New Statistical Instrument for Tourism Evolution / Involution Calculus, Based on the Ancient Plato's Tetra-, and Hexahedron and Index Numbers

A new statistical tool is needed to evaluate not only seasonality but also territorial or structural evolution or involution in modern tourism, emphasizing gaps and limit levels. The article succeeds in using creative a new concept of statistical spatial and volume index to measure not only the seasonality but also evolution or involution in Romanian tourism in an original and implicitly extended way, with the help of Plato's ancient tetrahedron (pyramid) and hexahedron (cube).

Mosam Vinod SHARMA, Sandeep Rangnath KAPSE

An Exploratory Study of Issues and Challenges of Caravan Tourism in Maharashtra

Over the years it has been noticed that there is a shortage of accommodation in tourist locations, especially in rural areas. That is why motorhome/caravan/RV tourism can successfully meet the rising demand. Bollywood celebrities, prominent politicians, business tycoons, and sports personalities favor the use of recreational vehicles in India. Many corporations are interested in how marketable mobile homes and caravans are. An increased interest in caravans, campers, and other similar "homes on wheels" and recreational vehicles (RVs) has been observed in India ever since the COVID-19 pandemic and the requirement for vacations with proper social distancing. In India there are the most popular driving vacations that one can take where they can get homelike facilities while travelling. In 2010, the Union Ministry of Tourism, Government of India launched a policy for the development and promotion of caravan and caravan camping parks. The plan was to set up parks using a PPP model. The policy deals with parking bays equipped with tourist amenities that will provide electricity, water and sewage disposal, etc. States like Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, and Karnataka took the initiative to promote caravan tourism. Maharashtra

State announced caravan tourism in 2021 to boost the tourism sector in the state. The paper uses secondary data only and analyzes the status of a certain caravan in different states. In addition, the authors extensively reviewed the available literature/policy on caravan tourism in various countries such as UK, USA and Australia. The study also provides recommendations for policy makers to improve their caravan tourism policies and practices to support and strengthen tourism in Maharashtra.

Alina Simona SIMION, Diana MOISUC

The Perception of the Value of Traditional Maramureş Architecture among the Young Population and Its Role for Rural Tourism

Maramureş is a well-known region in Romania for practicing rural tourism, due to its valuable cultural and natural heritage. In Maramureş, the relationship between humans and nature has always been special, reflected in crafts and customs. The results of this relationship are frequently found in Maramureş villages in the form of traditional wooden gates, wooden churches, and wooden houses. The perception of their value varies among the local population, and the profound changes that Romanian society has undergone politically, socially, and economically in recent years, put traditional Maramureş architecture at risk in all its components. Rural tourism can play an important role in preserving traditional architecture by contributing to its promotion, protection, and restoration. This study aims to highlight the perceived value of young Maramureş locals regarding local traditional architectural elements, through an online survey. The survey questions are focused on how rural tourism can help in the preservation and awareness of the value of traditional architecture. All of these aspects are important both for rural tourism and for preserving local identity.

Hamidreza SOLAYMANI OSBOOEI

Biodiversity in the Iranian Mountains

Iran is a mountainous country harboring an extraordinary vascular flora including many rare and endemic plant species in the alpine zone. The importance of mountain biodiversity for the whole of humanity triggers

the necessary changes both in attitude and behavior required to secure mountain biodiversity and its genetic resources for future generations. Iran a great place to see plants you have never seen before; according to which, more than 100 mountain peaks can be found in Iran, some in the Zagros and Alborz mountains which reach altitudes of more than 4000 m. The upper limit of vascular plants is 4800 m, the highest point where a plant has been found in Iran. A first evaluation of the vascular flora shows that 682 species belonging to 193 genera and 39 families are known from the alpine zone. This zone is characterized by many species of hemicryptophytes and thorny cushions; species numbers decline strongly as altitude increases. The mountain flora of Iran is exceptional.

Mirela STANCIU

Analysis of the Rural Tourism Potential of Villages with Fortified Churches in Sibiu County (Romania)

Sibiu County is rich in history, traditions and numerous fortified churches that invite interested visitors to take a journey from the past to the present. Fortified churches are edifices of worship, surrounded by walls, which often include elements of military architecture for defence. The aim of the paper is to analyse the rural tourism potential of 12 localities with fortified churches in Sibiu County, as follows: Cisnădioara, Biertan, Moșna, Axente Sever, Valea Viilor, Slimnic, Șura Mare, Cristian, Apoldu de Jos, Miercurea Sibiului, Cârța and Vurpăr. Four research objectives were established: 1) Analysis of the natural and human touristic heritage of the 12 rural localities of Sibiu County; 2) Description of the specifics of the activities carried out by the local communities in the localities under study; 3) Carrying out a SWOT analysis, regarding the development of rural tourism in the studied area; 4) Determining visitors' perception of the tourist potential of these localities. The research methods used are: bibliographic study, field documentation, sociological survey among 335 tourists, using as a working tool a questionnaire with 23 items (of which 8 on the socio-demographic data of the respondents and 15 on the motivation to spend a stay in villages with fortified churches). The results were analysed, processed, interpreted, and represented graphically.

Harish SURYAWANSHI, Harshada SATGHARE

Assessment of the Potential of Oktoberfest Organised in Pune

Oktoberfest is the world's largest folk and beer festival of Munich, Germany. Recently, the most authentic version of this festival was also introduced in Pune, a metro city of the state of Maharashtra (India). There are not many literature or research papers available on the topic of Pune's Oktoberfest. The purpose of the study is to compare the Oktoberfest celebrated in Munich and Pune. The research will also study the awareness and perceptions of tourists from Pune about the event. The researcher has collected all the relevant data from the available resources. Primary data is based on a survey which was held through a scheduled questionnaire using Google Forms. As per the analysis, the awareness of Oktoberfest in Pune is very low, and many tourists are unaware about the Oktoberfest. The outcome of the survey was that there is not much awareness about Oktoberfest among the tourists of Pune with only 47.2% being aware about the festival. But they are willing to attend it in the future.

Alina SUSLENCO, Marilena DONCEAN, Octavian COZNIUC

Information Technologies Implemented in the Business Environment, Smart Pillar for Increasing Organizational Performance

The paper is a methodological approach that analyzes the efficiency of the implementation of information technologies in the business environment. In the context of the digital transformation of SMEs in the EU, Romania and the Republic of Moldova, attention must be focused on the implementation of information technologies in business as the main factor for increasing organizational performance. The purpose of the paper is to discuss the possibilities of implementing information technologies in the business environment in Romania and the Republic of Moldova. Quantitative research was used, more precisely, a questionnaire. The results show a direct interconnection between the implementation of information technologies and customer satisfaction, especially organizational performance. Thus, organizations that aspire to increase their performance should reshape their management system in terms of implementing new information

technologies that will increase customer trust, improve customer satisfaction, and gain customer loyalty to the products/services provided by the company.

Nishant SUTARE, Vilas RATHOD

Comprehending the Difficulties Encountered by Visitors in Pune

Pune is the second-largest city in Maharashtra after Mumbai, and it is a significant city in terms of economic and industrial development. Pune, once the center of authority for the Maratha Empire, has become Maharashtra's cultural capital due to its rich historical past. Pune is one of 109 cities selected for India's Smart Cities Mission, and the city has set aside an estimated US\$5.2 billion for smart city development. The city's top goals are to improve urban mobility, provide access to water, increase citizen outreach, and improve infrastructure in areas such as energy, housing, safety, and security. Pune is a famous tourist destination with a variety of natural and historical tourist attractions. The city is simple to navigate, rich in art and history, and has a vibrant nightlife. The purpose of this research is to shed light on the issues that tourists encounter in terms of tourists visiting Pune face a variety of issues, including a poor public transportation system, high decibel levels, rude auto rickshaw drivers, and the absence of toilets, particularly for women, at historical sites. The authors used questionnaire method for primary data collection. Furthermore, they recommend and suggest certain remedial ways to local authorities to overcome problems.

Simge ŞALVARCI, Hatice SARI GÖK

Examination of Pamukkale Destination as a UNESCO Natural and Cultural Heritage Site from a Visitor's Perspective and Overtourism Perspective

Pamukkale was included in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1988, both as a natural and cultural heritage, with its travertines resembling cotton fields with the crystallization of thermal springs after coming to the surface. Cultural heritage sites can provide important economic and social contributions to the development of tourism with good planning and implementation. In this context, the aim of the

study is to determine the situation about excessive tourism in the region from the point of view of the visitors visiting Pamukkale, which is a natural and cultural heritage site. In the study, the opinions of the visitors who commented as a crowd among the comments on the tripadvisor.com website of those who visited Pamukkale were taken into account. The data obtained were subjected to descriptive analysis, one of the qualitative research methods, and content analysis with the NVIVO program. According to the results of the research, the tourists who visit Pamukkale are commented that it is more crowded every year, it is very crowded, very hot, it is very crowded, it is surprisingly clean despite the huge influx of visitors, and the density changes according to the visiting hours. Suggestions have been made to take necessary measures to protect Pamukkale, which is a UNESCO natural and cultural heritage site, from damage due to excessive tourism, and to ensure its sustainability. The results obtained in the study will form an idea for the researchers in the context of the tourism sector with the views of the tourists about the region.

Dan Constantin ȘUMOVȘCHI, Ioan GÂF DEAC

The Importance of Education for the Integration of Young People from Mountain Areas into the Labour Market

Understanding how intentions are formed among young people from mountainous areas can have a significant impact on their behavior as adults. Although there is no single theory that fully explains the relationship between education and success, research has shown that there are many social, economic, and cultural factors that can influence the development of young people. This paper aims to highlight the importance of education in shaping the expectations and behavior of young people regarding integration into the labour market. Previous studies have shown that education can have a significant impact on how young people set their goals and aspirations, as well as on how they build their careers. Therefore, education can play a key role in developing the skills necessary to succeed in the labour market and to integrate into society. However, in mountainous areas, there are often a series of unique challenges that can influence the development of young people. These include, among others, limited access to training opportunities and resources, as well as cultural and social influences

specific to this area. In conclusion, this research highlights the importance of education in shaping how young people from mountainous areas integrate into the labour market. By understanding the factors that influence their development, we can identify ways to support young people in developing the skills necessary to succeed in their careers and to integrate into society.

Georgia-Daniela TACU HÂRȘAN

Cultural Tourist Attractions in the City of Iași

The paper presents and evaluates the opinions of some Iași specialists, theoreticians and practitioners in the field of tourism, on the way in which the cultural tourist attractions in the city of Iași are administered and on the prospects for the development of Iași cultural tourism through their promotion and management. The research was carried out in April and May 2022, using the in-depth interview method and the conversation guide as a tool. The questionnaire consisted of 10 open questions. The interviews were conducted both onsite and online. Four objectives were pursued: identify the most important cultural tourist attractions in Iași; determine their advantages and disadvantages; evaluate the effectiveness of their promotion; evaluate the sustainability of Iași cultural tourism development. The final goal was to provide a clearer picture of Iași cultural tourism potential.

Ion TALABĂ

Institutional Approaches After 2018 of the Terminology and Definition of Specific Aspects of Tourism

The paper analyzes some of the new approaches at the institutional level, both in the European Union and in Romania, on the basic terminology of tourism. Namely, the basic, established terminology, which theorists, practitioners and institutions in the field of tourism have been using for a very long time. For example, replacing the name of *tourist package* with that of *travel package* (when one buys several different types of travel services, such as a flight and a hotel, for one trip at a total price) and *tourist* with *traveller*. We consider that, from a scientific point of view, this substitution is inappropriate, since the tourist phenomenon can no longer be defined precisely enough. At the

same time, we consider that the change that occurs as a result of the scientific debates in the literature can not and should not be equated with the change imposed by a mere normative act.

Maria TĂȚĂRUȘANU, Valentin NIȚĂ, Gina Ionela BUTNARU, Elena Ramona CIORTESCU

Values, Attitudes and Motivations of Romanian Tourists towards Nature-Based Tourism: Implications for the Interpretation of Natural Heritage

Nature-based tourism is one of the fastest growing forms in recent years. There is a methodology to interpret the European natural heritage in tourism, especially since people are more and more interested in travelling to quiet, undiscovered places where they can experience new emotions. The aim of the paper is to analyse the values, attitude and motivations of Romanian tourists towards nature as a new and "fashionable" tourist trend. The data were collected through a questionnaire applied to Romanian tourists who travelled to natural areas. The information obtained was processed using SPSS 25. A structural equation model was developed to analyse the relationship between the values and attitude of tourists towards nature, as well as their travel motivations. The results indicated that tourists' values and attitudes can influence travel motivations as well as their activities at the destination. These results are important for researchers, students, managers of tourist destinations in their efforts to understand and develop specific natural heritage interpretation programmes in order to attract tourists and ensure sustainable tourism development.

Vasile TODINCĂ, Maria Flavia POP, Andreea Maria POP, Florica Teodora HUS

Opportunities for the Sustainable Development of Rural Tourism and Agritourism in Beiuș Land

Beiuș Land is located in the south west part of Bihor County, is an extremely complex cultural, spiritual and touristic reality, with rich and varied forms of material and spiritual culture, which must be known, understood and cherished with the same love by all those who visit in

this space. This is how our research bears the imprint of knowledge of this reality and its popularization, in order to attract other willing and consumers of beauty and traditions to tap into this source of traditional spirituality. Following the steps taken in Beiuș Land, we came into contact with traditional facts and phenomena, which still exist and which can be explored for the purpose of a beneficial ethnographic and cultural tourism. We are referring to: traditional architecture, medicinal plants, which grow in the area and which have developed a real pharmaceutical industry, crafts such as woodworking, lime preparation, the traditional preparation of alcoholic beverages, wooden churches that still last, mills on water and, of course the traditional gastronomy of the area.

Tatiana TOFAN, Ala GRECU

Trends in the Development of Medical Tourism in the Republic of Moldova

In this article, an analysis was made of the current situation of medical tourism, as well as its development trends in the Republic of Moldova. As international practice demonstrates, medical tourism is currently considered a strategic sector for the economic development of developing countries, as it brings substantial benefits to the gross domestic product, being the segment in tourism with the highest growth worldwide in the last 5 years. The Republic of Moldova could benefit, having development opportunities through lower cost prices than in other European countries, high quality training of medical personnel, as well as by offering a spectrum of tourist attractions.

Ligian TUDOROIU, Constantin MANEA

The Moșneni Community in Nămăiești-Muscel, and Rural Tourism

The village of Nămăiești is part of the Valea Mare Pravăț rural commune in Argeș county, located at the foot of Mateiaș mountain, in a beautiful area on the Argeșel valley, a tributary of the Târgului River, in the old Muscel region. It is located about 7.5 km north-east of Câmpulung Muscel and 62 km from the city of Pitești, the main town and administrative centre of the county. The first documentary-historical attestation dates back to 1 July 1506 (DRH, B, ȚR, vol. II,

doc. 46). The village of Nămăiești has been known since antiquity as a village of shepherds who owned the valleys and mountain peaks in the area. The first form of administrative-economic organization that appeared was the *obște* formation (i.e. a rural community), which included only the inhabitants of the area, owners of land and cattle. The date when the Nămăiești community was established is lost in the mists of time, meaning it is not known with any degree of precision. Approximately by the 13th century a written document, a Princely donation issued by Negru Vodă, can be found, marking the beginning of the Nămăiești community. For about four centuries, the customs and the rules of functioning of the Nămăiești community remained unaltered. Later, the peaceful existence of the Nămăiești community was disturbed by foreigners who came from across the Danube and infiltrated the life and rules of the community. After the elimination of the monarchy from power, the communist state, based on the 11 June 1948 law of nationalization, confiscated the lands that the community had legally owned for centuries, being bequeathed from father to son, ignoring Radu Negru's donation, and so the lands temporarily and abusively became the property of the communist state. After 1989, based on Law no. 169 / 4 November 1997, the locals of the Nămăiești village, the rightful descendants of the small landowners (*moșneni*) abusively dispossessed by the communist state, got together and took long and difficult steps through the legislative chaos in order to recover the expropriated land. Thus, by the civil sentence of 11 April 2000, the Nămăiești community legally regained in court, and so received, the status of legal personality based on the new legislation issued. Currently, the Nămăiești rural community is engaged in rationally exploiting the forests and the pastures, as well as in sheep farming, manufacturing and marketing the local handicraft products. They have completed the construction of a beautiful guesthouse equipped with electricity, central heating, optic fiber internet and conference rooms, which is about to enter the tourist circuit. One can find and visit the following tourist attractions in the area: the Nămăiești Monastery, the George Topârceanu Memorial House and the Mateiaș Mausoleum, built in memory of the Romanian heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country in the battles of the First World War. Also available are the tourist trails and paths, either marked or unmarked,

which cross the valleys and climb to the alpine peaks and pastures in the area (Mateiaș, Iezer–Păpușa, Piatra Craiului).

Dănuț UNGUREANU

A Brief Assessment at a Quarter of a Century: Rural Tourism Research in Romania in the International Context

At the initiative of a number of enthusiastic researchers, the first conference on Rural Tourism in Romania was initiated in 1999. A determining factor of this initiative was the fact that the gap between practice and theory in rural tourism at the time was obvious. Thus, personalities in the field of tourism from research and university education organized the scientific conference on Romanian Rural Tourism. This event has been organized year after year, without interruption, even during the pandemic period (online), for a quarter of a century. Throughout this period, new partnerships and collaborations were created, research was carried out on topics related to tourism and rural areas, 48 volumes were published, and the title of the conference and the research topics were periodically adapted according to the needs of each period. Over the years, researchers from the neighbouring countries Moldova and Ukraine, from Europe and other continents have participated.

**Dănuț UNGUREANU, Veronica ȚĂRAN BACIU
GEORGESCU**

Recognizing the Quality of Agri-Food Products from Mountain Areas and Identifying Them: "Mountain Product" Quality Scheme

Mountain products are an integral part of the image of mountain territories and are associated by consumers with local landscapes, customs and traditions. The term "mountain" is associated with the idea of purity, authenticity and quality. Mountain products stimulate mountain development through agricultural products and bring added value to mountain areas by protecting quality mountain agri-food. Mountain products are considered natural, healthy and of high quality. They must meet certain criteria in the manufacturing process. Consumers must easily recognize and distinguish genuine products from counterfeit ones. Marking them with logos can guarantee that

they are genuine and of high quality. It is also intended to prevent any fraud against the consumer through the abusive use of the term "mountain product" and to remedy market distortions caused by the sale of fake "mountain products".

Liliana VELEA, Silvia PUIU, Mihaela Tinca UDRIȘTIOIU, Anișoara IRIMESCU, Alessandro GALLO

Environmental Features of Interest for Tourism in Romanian Rural Destinations

Rural tourism is an emerging sector in Romania, benefitting from an increasing consideration from all the tourism actors - tourists, tourism investors and authorities. However, not all rural destinations observe the same success in terms of tourist influx. Among the major factors influencing the tourism influx are those related to the existing infrastructure, tourism products and services available and their quality. Nonetheless, the climate and environmental features of the destination may also play an important role, as they contribute to build the destination image. The link between climate, environment and tourism is well acknowledged, yet little attention has been given to the identification of the natural environmental features of most interest for tourists when choosing a certain rural destination. We address this issue by using an online survey disseminated in Romania during January-February 2023. The results indicate that the relief and the presence of natural vegetation play an important role in tourists' decision regarding the selection of a rural destination for their vacations. Furthermore, the human-made environment (e.g., buildings, monuments) is also of interest for a part of the tourists. The study indicates possible options toward exploiting more efficiently the destination assets in building its image as well as toward the development of a climate product relevant for tourists and rural destinations.

Vimal Chandra VERMA

Trends and Prospects of Rural Green Tourism in India: A Review

According to the definition of the NGO called Union for the Promotion of Rural Green Tourism, rural green tourism is a holiday in a rural area, resort or nature conservation area that requires well-

equipped private estates and appropriate infrastructure. Rural green tourism is tourism that takes place in rural settlements. India is known as the country of villages as it has more than 6 lakh villages. The aim of this paper is to identify trends and prospects of rural green tourism in India. Through its conclusions, the study suggests ways to increase the attractiveness of rural green tourism in India.

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