

# EUROPEAN UNION AND DEVELOPMENT OF ROMANIAN TOURISM<sup>1</sup>

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**Abstract:** *At present, both in Romania and in Europe, tourism has the tendency to become one of the biggest industries, with great possibilities of development in the future. This is possible due to the implication of European Union, who has been supporting us not only in the process of economic development, but also in the process of tourism development. This work intends to review what we call tourist phenomenon and the measures applied by the European Union in the development of Romanian tourism.*

**Keywords:** tourism development, Romanian tourism and European Union

**JEL Classification:** M19, O22, R19, R58

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism appeared long time ago. The precise date of its shaping as a distinct activity cannot be established, due to the lack of historical information. However, it seems that some incipient forms of tourism have been practiced since ancient times. Perhaps it would not be exaggerated if we stated that, though they were not a purpose in itself, tourist satisfactions of some journeys date almost as long as the first stable human settlements. The affirmation is based on the idea that man, from the most ancient times of his evolution, did not succeed to produce all he needed for his living. Despite the insufficient means of communication, he tried to cultivate and to maintain relationships with his peers from other settlements by commercial exchanges, which favoured inherently a gradual enlargement of contacts, allowing a better reciprocal knowledge.

*Homo sapiens* always travelled, either to find food, or shelter, or from boredom, for pleasure. Evolving, his travels became longer, ending either by coming back (like Ulysses to Ithaca), or by

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remaining somewhere else (like Aeneas to Latium). They were either to prey, like the migrating people, or for “business”, like the Phoenicians, but also from curiosity, like king Solomon’s ships to Africa, or even for war.

Man built roads, bridges, he tamed horses, but mostly he first gathered information. There is a common element in this type of travels and in modern tourism, mentioned by Ilie Rotaru (2004): the guide – the person who knows the way, the people, and the travel places, and who can offer protection. All the successful travels had an efficient guide. Towards the second millennium of our era, infrastructure developed, and despite all the dangers from medieval roads, travels multiplied, though the idea is still far away from what we understand nowadays by tourism.

The travel, as an old practice, has been the subject of several comments for centuries. Notions as “travelling is extending” and “tourism is educational” are used very often. Saadi, a Persian poet, declared several centuries ago: “the benefits of travels are many: the freshness brought to the heart, the deliciousness of seeing new cities, of meeting new people” (Jafari, 1990).

In what concerns tourism, its consecration and emphasis as an activity takes place towards the end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, at the same time with the exploitation of thermal waters from the European countries, when tourism is considered a new industry, with a rapid evolution and a growing economic importance.

Consequently, in Switzerland, in 1883, the first official document referred to hotel activity, and in 1896, Guyer Freuler (1963) published the study “Contributions to tourism statistics”, where tourism was defined as “a phenomenon of modern times, based on the growing necessity to rebuild health, and to change the environment, to cultivate the feeling of receptivity towards beauties of nature [...], result of the development of commerce, industry, and means of transportation.”

Simultaneously, or a little later, in countries like Austria, Germany, Belgium, Spain, France, Italy, some works appeared, dedicated to the research of tourism as a phenomenon, to its definition and evaluation, to the analysis of its impact over the economy.

A referential work in the field, with a remarkable contribution to the economic study of tourism is that of British professor Ogilvie (1893-1949). This work is an extended demonstration of the mechanism and formation of demand, launching the first elements of a theory of tourist consumption.

Surely, along with the passing of time, and with the amplification of travels, the approaches of tourist phenomenon became more and more numerous, and the content of the notion of tourism became richer, trying to reflect as well as possible the complexity of this activity.

Tourism was an important factor in developed economies starting with the middle of 19<sup>th</sup> century. Surely, nothing stays in place, and now tourism is a business or a globalised industry (Meethan, 2001)

Tourism is nowadays, by its content and role, a distinct field of activity, one of the most important components of the economic and social life for a growing number of countries in the whole world.

Receptive to the changes of the contemporary civilisation, tourism evolved under their impact, its dynamics integrating to the general development process. At its turn, by the vast human and material potential used in its development, as well as by the beneficial effects over the interference fields, tourism is a stimulating factor of progress, of development.

The aspect of the creation of limits in tourism as subject of an academic research clearly needs several discussions. Meethan (2001) is citing Nash and Smith when he states that tourism tries to limit to a formula or a set of very necessary notions, leading to much more generalised declarations of the two authors. They state that tourism is found not only in any culture, but also it belongs to some specific type of life, to a certain context.

Its multiple connexions and economic, social, cultural and politic implications, its active role in society, on one hand, and its transformations as phenomenon, on the other hand, prove the actuality of preoccupations for the knowledge of tourism content, its sensitivities and incidences, for deciphering the functioning mechanisms. In the same context there are also present the specialists' efforts concerning the definition with scientific precision of the category system integrated to tourism, of the inter-dependences with the other components of the economy of quantification of its effects (Erdeli , et.al., 2003).

## **2. ROMANIA AND THE EUROPEAN UNION**

### **2.1. Tourism in Romania**

Some countries that in the past were rarely visited, especially from the Central or Eastern Europe, among which Romania, are becoming more and more attractive, due to the economic transition and opening of the borders, which offer a huge potential for tourist development (Bedrule – Grigoruță and Corodeanu, 2007).

Among the countries from Central and Eastern Europe, Romania is gifted with the wealthiest and most varied tourist resources, either natural or manmade, which confers it great tourism opportunities (Nedelea, 2007). This valuable tourist potential is materialised in spectacular landforms and picturesque landscapes, harmoniously joining across the whole country, mineral waters, a climate favouring the practice of tourism all year long, an abundant flora, animal species rising the hunters' interest, peerless historical, artistic and architectural monuments, folklore traditions, etc., and can satisfy, through a multitude of tourism forms, various impulses of Romanian and foreign tourists'.

These are the results of a diverse configuration of the ancient land, as well as of the Romanian people's several millennia history, which enable Romania to have a tourist potential of great complexity and distinct value, and also of the geographical position, which offers Romania the status of a Carpathian-Danubian-Pontic country, due to the presence of the three natural elements defining the landscape structure of Romanian territory and tourism: the Carpathian Mountains, the Danube River, the Black Sea.

Romania's tourist vocation is obviously supported by the dense network and the multitude of natural and artificial lakes, which generate diverse landscapes, offering a large area for varied tourist activities: rest, spa treatment, aquatic sports, recreational navigation, tourist transportation, fishing, and so on ((Erdeli et.al., 2003)

**Romania** is considered by both Romanian and foreign specialists a country with tourist potential, which could compete with any other country in the world in what concerns the wealth of tourist resources (Nedelea, 2007). According to the tourism development strategy, a quarter of Romania's surface is considered a true tourist heaven. A study realised by the Tourism Research Institute shows that more than half of Romania's surface has tourist potential.

Romania is divided into three areas: *the area of great value*, with tourist potential; *the area with high tourist potential*, and *the area with low tourist attractiveness*. Consequently, 24% of the surface of the country is of high and great value tourist potential. This category includes: the mountain and sub-mountain area from Carpathians and Apuseni Mountains, Maramureş, the Danube Delta and the coastal area. 34% of Romania's surface has an average tourist potential, including spa resources, museums, memorial houses and other historical areas, Someş Plateau, Târnave, Central Moldavia Plateau, or Dobrogea Plateau (Bedrule – Grigoruță and Corodeanu, 2007).

Glăvan (2000) states that the natural and manmade elements that are potential resources and tourist attractions have a fundamental role in tourism development. These are as follows:

- The landscape, esthetical, entertainment and cultural values, etc., regardless the region (mountain, hill, plain or sea shore);
- The quality and volume of some natural healing factors, including the bio-climate;
- The existence of some natural conditions generating specific tourism aspects (the snow layer, the water mirrors, cynegetic resources etc.);
- The cognitive and educational-training role of many elements, especially of particular ones, like natural reservations and others, natural monuments, cultural and historical objectives.

Many tourists travel in order to “get away from it all”, to relax and search for different ways to spend their free time. Therefore, *the recreation* (Smith and Duffy, 2003) enerally defined as an essential part of daily life, is specific to holidays. This is necessary for our mental health and well-being (Meethan, 2001).

Any geographical space is a potential bearer of tourist activities which could create tourist areas of different types and dimensions, by development and intensification, specialisation or diversification. On the territory of our country, specialised tourist areas, where tourism is the main economic activity for space occupancy, have appeared and developed. Also multipurpose tourist areas, where tourist activity is taking place at the same time with other activities, have developed lately. Often between these activities, there is a complementarity indispensable to tourist production and consumption (Erdeli et al., 2003)

Romania is the holder of a rich treasure of archaeological vestiges, historical monuments of art and architecture, as well as of a priceless folklore and ethnic inheritance. This proves the evolution and the community of work and life of our country, as well as the development of the Romanian people’s culture and civilization. All this cultural and historical background is an important part of the Romanian tourist offer and a component of the image of our country around the world.

Romania was an important tourist destination for the Eastern-European market before the 1990’s. The political, economic and social context following that period was not favourable for tourism development in Romania. In the 1960’s, Black Sea was a successful tourist destination. However, due to the communist political regime at that time, this progress was stopped much too early.

After 1989, thanks to the diminishing standard of living of Romanian citizens, a reorganization of their priorities has taken place. Tourism was affected among the first.

The demands of the international market could not be accomplished, because the Romanian tourist offers did not change along the years, consequently becoming uncompetitive as compared to the tourist demand.

Possible ways of reviving the Romanian tourism in order to become a successful industry can be the elaboration of some efficient strategies and marketing policies. In order to implement more easily the new measures, eight development regions were created on the Romanian territory. The development regions are not territorial-administrative units, they do not have a juridical personality and are the result of an agreement between county councils and local councils (Nedelea, 2007).

Even though the eight regions of the country, especially the underdeveloped ones, have a valuable potential for tourist development, in the year 2003 the contribution of tourism to the development of national economy was considered too small, *i.e.* 2.13% of Romania's GDP (Ministry of Development, Public Works and Housing (June 2007), *Regional Operational Program 2007-2013* 2007-2013, București, p. 52).

## **2.2. European Union – measures for reviving Romanian tourism**

Tourism includes a wide variety of products and destinations, and implies many different interested parties from public and private sector, with highly decentralized competence areas, at local and regional level. Tourism is a strategic economic activity in the European Union, and its importance in the EU economy will probably increase in the next few years.

This department of activity has a wide variety of products and destinations. Tourism has a great potential in what concerns the contribution to the accomplishment of several major objectives of the European Union, as the lasting development, economic growth, and human resources development, economic and social cohesion. The strategic approach of the process is to create conditions and to provide the basis of a lasting Romanian tourism, of high quality and competitiveness. The strategy for accomplishing this objective is based on a number of points, the most important being to follow an approach based on knowledge, to know how to better exploit the existing information, to obtain and develop the know-how, and to innovate by developing new processes (Năstase, 2007).

The European tourist industry generates more than 4% of European Union's GDP, with approximately two million companies that occupy around 4% of the total labour (approximately eight million jobs). If we take into consideration the related departments, the estimative contribution of

tourism in creating the GDP is much larger, because tourism indirectly generates approximately 11% of European Union's GDP, and includes approximately 12% of the labour ([http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/index\\_ro.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/sectors/tourism/index_ro.htm) 17th of March, 2011).

Romania officially expressed the request to adhere to the European Union in June 1995. In December 1999, at Helsinki, the European Council decided to begin the negotiations with six countries, Romania included. Five years later, in 2004, at Brussels, Romania received from the European Council the political confirmation of the ending of negotiations for adhesion to the European Union. Romania became a member state of the European Union in 2007 ([http://ec.europa.eu/romania/eu\\_romania/index\\_ro.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/romania/eu_romania/index_ro.htm), 19<sup>th</sup> of March, 2011).

In the country report concerning the progress made by Romania from October 2004, the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2007 has been chosen as the day when Romania and Bulgaria adhered to the European Union. The two countries signed the Treaty of adhesion on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April 2005, at Neumunster Abbey in Luxemburg.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2007, Romania became a member state of the European Union. The member state quality implies both rights and obligations. All these derive from the treaties and legislation adopted by the European Union from the beginning to the present day, like any other member state of the European Union.

After signing the Treaty of adhesion on the 25<sup>th</sup> of April 2005, Romania obtained the status of active observer in all the community institutions, the presence of Romanian representatives in the European institutions and their work groups being necessary. The status of active observer allowed Romania to express its own point of view in the process of making decisions related to the community, even if without the right to vote, being thus able to influence these decisions and to promote its national interests.

In what concerns our country, Romania has irreversibly engaged itself on the way to European adhesion by signing the Association Agreement with the European Union. The adhesion must promote the national interest and the development of the Romanian economic and cultural patrimony, having as main objective the development of the standard of living, and the improvement of the quality of life of the whole population.

Consequently, the political and diplomatic steps assuring the beginning of the negotiations for the adhesion to the European Union must be consistently doubled by sustained, coherent and purposeful efforts and actions in the field of departmental policies, which should assure the compensation of the

delays and time gaps which continue to differentiate Romania from the other European countries (Ștefura, 2006).

Following Romania's adhesion to EU, we received both several obligations and a series of rights. One of these rights is the non-reimbursable economic assistance.

The non-reimbursable economic assistance (NEA) is a contemporary, important and significant economic reality which, as a subject of research, reveals many issues. NEA is a phenomenon of resource transfer, which takes place from the senders to the receivers- beneficiaries, with different national locations. Though there are theoretical approaches to the phenomenon, which were concerned mainly with the significance, importance, impact and implications of the NEA, especially in the case of assistance for development, the diversification and contemporary evolution of the flows of assistance stimulate new researches.

An essential element of the processes from the last 15 years, which modified the NEA practice, is the appearance of countries with a transitional economy from the command economy, at the same time with the process of integration of some of these countries to the European Union, Romania included. Both the demand and the offer of NEA were modified and adapted according to these historical changes (Lianu, 2004).

As we mentioned above, eight regions were established by the Law no 151/1998 of the regional development, amended by the Law no 315/2004, with the observance of the EC Regulation no 1059/2003, referring to the establishment of a statistical system with common classification of territorial units. The eight Development Regions are:

- Region 1: North–East includes 6 counties: Bacău, Botoșani, Iași, Neamț, Suceava, Vaslui.
- Region 2: South–East - 6 counties: Brăila, Buzău, Constanța, Galați, Tulcea, Vrancea.
- Region 3: South - 7 counties: Argeș, Călărași, Dâmbovița, Giurgiu, Ialomița, Prahova, Teleorman.
- Region 4: South–West includes 5 counties: Dolj, Gorj, Mehedinți, Olt, Vâlcea.
- Region 5: West - 6 counties: Bihor, Bistrița-Năsăud, Cluj, Maramureș, Satu-Mare, Sălaj.
- Region 7: Centre - 6 counties: Alba, Brașov, Covasna, Harghita, Mureș, Sibiu.
- Region 8: București-Ilfov includes București, the capital of the country, and the county of Ilfov ([http://www.mdrl.ro/\\_documente/POR/POR\\_august\\_07.pdf](http://www.mdrl.ro/_documente/POR/POR_august_07.pdf), 27<sup>th</sup> of February, 2011).

For the implementation of the policies of regional development, it was necessary to create the corresponding institutions and instruments at central and territorial level, to which it was given juridical



ground by a legislation adapted to the European standards, according to the **National Program of adoption of the community acquis**.

The elementary tools used for the implementation of the objectives of the regional development policy are:

**a. Planning tools:**

- National and regional strategies, formulated on the basis of the diagnosis of the economic and social situation;
- Plans elaborated on the basis of the national and regional strategies, for at least one year;
- National and regional programs realised with an annual and multiannual cover;
- Projects which are specific actions, coherently belonging to the programs elaborated.

**b. Financial tools:**

- **Regional Development National Fund;**
- **Regional Development Fund;**
- **Pre-adhesion tools (mainly PHARE);** (*National Agency for Regional Development, work realised with the support of Program PHARE, brochure*).

Consequently, in the European Union four structural funds were created, one cohesion fund, and structural funds:

- Regional Development European Fund, created in 1975, intends to consolidate the economic potential of the assisted regions, to support the structural adjustment, and to contribute to the promotion of the increase of the labour lasting use.
- Social European Fund (SEF), created in 1958 by the Treaty of Rome, reformed in 1988, has the main objective to fight lasting unemployment and to ameliorate youth's capacity to obtain work places.
- European Fund for Agriculture Orientation and Guarantee (EFAOG), created in 1962 by the Common Agricultural Policy, has the objective to encourage structural adjustment in agriculture, based on the measures of production modernisation and development of rural regions.
- Financial Tool of Fishing Orientation (FTFO), created in 1984 to replace different separate financial tools, active from 1976.
- Cohesion Fund (CF), created by the Treaty of Maastricht in 1993, has in view the investments in the transportation infrastructure and environmental protection in the poorer member states.

➤ Structural funds follow the same method of implementation as the structural funds, only they are granted to the candidate countries for European Union (Moşteanu, 2003). These funds include **PHARE** (Starting with 1998, PHARE programming is based on the National Development Plan, supports the creation of the legislative and institutional frame necessary for the development of administrations and services from Romania in the eight development regions, financing the investments in the field of human resources, rural area, tourism and local initiatives), **ISPA** (Program has in view the alignment of the infrastructure standards from the candidate states to the community ones, offering a substantial contribution for the improvement of the environmental and transportation infrastructure. During 2000-2006, through this program, Romania receives non-reimbursable financing of approximately 240 million euro annually) and **SAPARD** (SAPARD Program is implemented through SAPARD Agencies existing in the eight development regions, based on four big objectives (improvement of competitiveness in processing and commercialisation of agricultural and fish products; improvement of infrastructures for agriculture and rural development; development of rural economy and human resources), and seven eligible measures proposed for financing) **Programs**.

After the adhesion, operational programs were proposed, addressing to one of the three major objectives: convergence, regional competitiveness, labour occupation, and European territorial cooperation. They benefit from European financing from a single fund.

The total budget allocated to Romania by the European Union through structural funds from 2007 to 2013 is of 12,661 million euro, and through the cohesion fund, the budget is of 6,552 million euro.

Regional Development European Fund is one of the two instruments of structural funds, with the role of giving an impulse to investments and to balance the regional development in the European Union. Research, innovation, environmental issues, risk prevention have financial priority, while infrastructure investments continue to play an important role, especially in less developed areas.

According to the priorities of the cohesion policy, and to the regulations concerning the convergence object, the following activities will be financed from the European Fund of Regional Development:

- Research and technological development, innovation;
- Informational society;
- Development of local initiatives and help for the creation of new jobs, when they are not covered by SEF;

- Environment;
- Risk prevention, including the development and implementation of plans for prevention and fight against natural and technological disasters;
- **Tourism;**
- Investments in culture;
- Investments in transportation;
- Investments in energy;
- Investments in education, including vocational training;
- Investments in health and social infrastructure;

In **Romania**, Departmental Operational Program for Economic Competitiveness Development (DOP ECD) and Regional Operational Program (ROP) will be completely financed through RDEF.

**Tourism** can mean an economic chance for Romania only if there are significant quantitative and qualitative changes not only in the specific and general infrastructure, but also in the managerial component (Bucur-Sabo , 2006).

Through POS CCE tourism is not financed, but we consider it a relevant program for the European Union's implication in the development of all economic fields in Romania (<http://amposcce.minind.ro/>, accessed on the 20<sup>th</sup> of June, 2011).

We present **Regional Operational Program (ROP)** as it follows:

ROP aims to all four priority fields of the National Strategic Framework of Reference (NSCR), with the general objective to accelerate the economic development of all Romanian regions, especially of the less developed ones. Consequently, at the end of the period 2007 – 2013, the ratio between the most developed region and the least developed ones should decrease in what concerns the development of infrastructure and business environment. This would lead to a differentiated allocation of funds per regions, according to the level of their development, correlated with the other operational programs.

Regional Operational Program 2007 – 2013 (POR) includes all the eight Development Regions of Romania.

The strategy was elaborated according to the European principle of subsidiarity, which means it is based on the Development Strategies of the Regions, elaborated for the regional level, in large partnership working groups.

ROP strategy is in agreement with the objectives of National Development Plan (NDP) and of the National Strategic Framework of Reference (NSCR) 2007-2013, contributing to reaching the global

objective of specific NSCR objectives concerning the diminution of development disparities between Romania and the other UE member states (Ministry of Development of Public Works and Housing, Management Authority for Regional Operational Program, *Document–Framework of Implementation of Regional Operational Program 2007-2013*, august 2007, București, p. 4).

The specific ROP objectives are the following:

- The development of the economic and social role of the urban centres, by a polycentric approach, in order to stimulate a more balanced development of the regions;
- The improvement of the regions accessibility, and especially of the accessibility of the urban centres and their links with the surrounding areas;
- The increase of the quality of social infrastructure of the regions;
- The increase of the competitiveness of the regions as business locations;
- The increase of the contribution of tourism to the development of the regions.

The program is implemented by Management Authority, Ministry of Development, Public Works and Housing, and by the intermediate organisms represented by the eight Agencies for Regional Development.

The balanced development of all the regions of the country can be accomplished by an integrate approach, based on joining public investments with local infrastructure, active policies of stimulation of business activities, and supporting the capitalisation of local resources, by the following priority axes:

**Priority Axis 1: Supporting the lasting development of the cities – urban poles of development (30% of ROP allocated budget)**

Support for the development of the cities for the increase of the inhabitants' quality of life, and the creation of new work places.

**Priority Axis 2: Improvement of regional and local transportation infrastructure (20.35% of ROP allocated budget)**

Support for the rehabilitation and modernisation of the network of county roads, urban streets, including ring roads.

**Priority Axis 3: Improvement of social infrastructure (15% of ROP budget)**

Support for the improvement of the infrastructure of social service, health, and public safety in emergencies, modernisation of educational infrastructure.

**Priority Axis 4: Supporting the development of regional and local business environment (17% of ROP allocated budget)**

Financing for the development of structures of business support, rehabilitation of unused industrial centres, small enterprises support.

**Priority Axis 5: Lasting development and tourism promotion (15% of ROP allocated budget)**

Support for the restoration of cultural-historical patrimony, modernisation of tourist infrastructure, improvement of the quality of infrastructure in natural areas which could attract tourists.

**Priority Axis 6: Technical assistance (2.65% of ROP allocated budget)**

Support for transparent and efficient implementation of Regional Operational Program.

**2.3. Axis 5, concerning the lasting development and tourism promotion.**

*General presentation* – The axis is mostly analysing the long term capitalisation of the cultural patrimony and of the natural resources with tourist potential, as well as the improvement of the quality of tourist infrastructure of accommodation and entertainment, with the purpose to attract the regions, the development of local economies, and the creation of new work places.

*Major intervention fields and indicative operations*

**5.1. Restoration and long term capitalisation of the cultural patrimony, as well as creation and modernisation of related infrastructure**

- *Restoration, protection and conservation of international cultural patrimony, and modernisation of related infrastructure;*
- *Restoration, protection and conservation of national cultural patrimony, and modernisation of related infrastructure;*
- *Restoration, protection and conservation of urban cultural patrimony.*

**Table 1- Estimated financial allocation for the restoration and lasting capitalisation of cultural patrimony.  
- allocations, Euro –**

Year	Total	UE Contribution (EFRD)	National public contribution				Private contribution
			State budget	Local budget	Other public sources	Total	
2007	20,858,870	17,730,040	2,711,653	417,177	0	3,128,830	0
2008	25,531,257	21,701,569	3,319,063	510,625	0	3,829,688	0
2009	27,869,384	23,688,976	3,623,020	557,388	0	4,180,408	0
2010	33,086,897	28,123,862	4,301,297	661,738	0	4,963,035	0
2011	35,174,634	29,898,439	4,572,702	703,493	0	5,276,195	0
2012	41,938,620	35,647,827	5,452,021	838,772	0	6,290,793	0
2013	50,937,243	43,296,656	6,621,842	1,018,745	0	7,640,587	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>235,396,905</b>	<b>200,087,369</b>	<b>30,601,598</b>	<b>4,707,938</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>35,309,536</b>	<b>0</b>

Source: Ministry of Development of Public Works and Housing, Management Authority for Regional Operational Program (Ministry of Development of Public Works and Housing, Management Authority for Regional Operational Program, *Document–Framework of Implementation of Regional Operational Program 2007-2013*, august 2007, București, p. 4).

## **5.2. Creation, development, modernisation of specific infrastructures for long term capitalisation of natural resources, and for an increasing quality of tourist services**

- *Improvement of natural tourist objectives with tourist potential;*
- *Capitalisation of mountain tourist potential;*
- *Spa tourism development;*
- *Rehabilitation, modernisation and expansion of accommodation structures, as well as of corresponding utilities;*
- *Creation, rehabilitation and expansion of entertainment infrastructure, including the corresponding utilities.*

**Table 2 - Estimated financial allocation for the creation, development and modernisation of infrastructure.**  
**- allocations, Euro -**

Year	Total	UE Contribution (EFRD)	National public contribution				Private contribution
			State budget	Local budget	Other public sources	Total	
2007	29,243,481	20,470,437	0	0	0	0	8,773,044
2008	35,794,021	25,055,815	0	0	0	0	10,738,206
2009	39,072,000	27,350,400	0	0	0	0	11,721,600
2010	46,386,791	32,470,754	0	0	0	0	13,916,037
2011	49,313,732	34,519,612	0	0	0	0	14,794,120
2012	58,796,630	41,157,641	0	0	0	0	17,638,989
2013	71,412,414	49,988,690	0	0	0	0	21,423,724
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>330,019,069</b>	<b>231,013,349</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>99,005,720</b>

Source: Ministry of Development of Public Works and Housing, Management Authority for Regional Operational Program (Ministry of Development of Public Works and Housing, Management Authority for Regional Operational Program, *Document–Framework of Implementation of Regional Operational Program 2007-2013*, August 2007, București, p. 77, [http://www.mdrl.ro/\\_documente/POR/POR\\_august\\_07.pdf](http://www.mdrl.ro/_documente/POR/POR_august_07.pdf), accessed on the 4<sup>th</sup> of March, 2011).

### 5.3. Promotion of tourist potential and creation of the infrastructure necessary for a growing attractiveness of Romania as tourist destination

- *Creation of a positive image of Romania as tourist destination;*
- *Development and consolidation of internal tourism;*
- *Investments for the formation of National Centres of Information and Tourist Promotion (NCITP, Oprea, and Meșniță, 2007).*

**Table 3 - Estimated financial allocation for the promotion of tourist potential.**  
**- allocations, Euro -**

Year	Total	UE Contribution (EFRD)	National public contribution				Private contribution
			State budget	Local budget	Other public sources	Total	

<b>2007</b>	13,323,263	11,324,774	1,998,489	0	0	1,998,489	0
<b>2008</b>	16,307,674	13,861,523	2,446,151	0	0	2,446,151	0
<b>2009</b>	17,801,114	15,130,947	2,670,167	0	0	2,670,167	0
<b>2010</b>	21,133,716	17,963,659	3,170,057	0	0	3,170,057	0
<b>2011</b>	22,467,223	19,097,140	3,370,083	0	0	3,370,083	0
<b>2012</b>	26,787,610	22,769,469	4,018,141	0	0	4,018,141	0
<b>2013</b>	32,535,334	27,655,034	4,880,300	0	0	4,880,300	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	150,355,934	127,802,546	22,553,388	0	0	22,553,388	0

Source: Ministry of Development of Public Works and Housing, Management Authority for Regional Operational Program (2007), *Document–Framework of Implementation of Regional Operational Program 2007-2013*, August, București, p. 86

The priority axes proposed and the intervention fields included in ROP are in agreement with the objectives of Lisbon Strategy (taking into consideration Gothenburg Strategy 2001), of the Cohesion Policy of the European Union, and with the Community Strategic Orientations. At the same time, the program is in agreement with the principles of the objective of the Convergence of Structural Funds (<http://www.fonduri-ue.ro/programe-operationale-190>, 5<sup>th</sup> of March, 2011).

Consequently, the first two axes, 5.1., 5.2., can be accessed by any natural or artificial person who accomplishes the criteria of eligibility, while the axis 5.3 can be used only by the National Management Authorities (projects are administered nationally by the intermediate organisation of the Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism).

## CONCLUSIONS

The result of this analysis is that tourism is present in people's lives and it means, by its content and role, a distinct field of activity, a very important component of the economic and social life for a growing number of countries in the world.

In Romania, tourism is very used. However, after 1989, due to the lowering of the standards of living of the citizens of this country, a reorganisation of their priorities took place. Tourism was among the first that were affected. Consequently, possible ways of its revival were sought by the elaboration of some efficient marketing strategies and policies.

For the European Union, tourism is a very important strategic economic activity. In what concerns our country, Romania engaged itself irreversibly on the way of the European integration by



signing the Agreement of association to UE. Therefore, the adhesion should help promote the national interests and the development of economic and cultural Romanian patrimony, having as main objective the development of the standard of living, and the improvement of the quality of life for the entire population. The same, UE offered to Romania the opportunity to revive tourist industry by the implementation of programs which could help its development. Consequently, Regional Operational Program 2007 – 2013 is one of the measures taken by UE with the purpose to revive Romanian tourism.

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