

Increased Competitiveness of Timis Tourism Area on the National Market

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Abstract. Tourism expresses a phenomenon due to which a growing number of people leaving temporarily, usually for more than 24 hours, their place of permanent residence to perform or provide unpaid work turning into consumer of goods and services in other cities or countries. Tourism as a means to use in a pleasant and comfortably for leisure time has now become a big business potential especially in the balance of income of countries and regions, counties or other forms of administrative – territorial organization. Although Timis county is considered a "tourist" county it can be identified goals and traditions enough to transform it in an "interesting" county in terms of tourism activities. This paper makes a brief scan of tourist activity in Timis. It also summarizes the measures which the authorities are considering to increase the competitiveness of this activity in our county.

Keywords: competitiveness, tourism, touristic development, strategies, market

INTRODUCTION

Tourist region includes vast areas where tourism phenomenon takes place in all its complexity. Within it usually differs only tourist areas or areas with many centers and tourist spots.

As local level, tourism regions are lower country, in most cases, identifying themselves within them. But sometimes they go beyond national borders, resulting in senior tourist regions, border (Rotariu, 2004)

The competitiveness of a system refers to the ability of the system to defeat, to obtain, through cooperation and/or competition, the success in confronting the external environments, in a horizon of space-time-resource, using the opportunities of joining system networks from its internal and external environments (Popa *et al.*, 2008).

The durable/sustainable integrative competitiveness is the ability and the capacity of a system, composed by several subsystems, to optimize its internal environments, to defeat competition (confrontation and cooperation) from the external environments without degrading them, in order to realize its welfare for a very long period of time (Bacanu, 2009).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

It can be analyzed competitiveness both at the micro level where it can be identified the competitiveness of enterprise business, as well as assortment or mezo-economic and macroeconomic level, where it can be identified the total or sustainable competitiveness.

This became in present days an essential requirement for the cities, regions, countries and continents which want to achieve progress on an unlimited period of time, to insure the wellbeing of the population, the health of the environment and to keep the biodiversity.

The competitiveness of each nation, of a region, of a city depends on the competitiveness on the global market of the products, services, management, education and value system of the human resources.

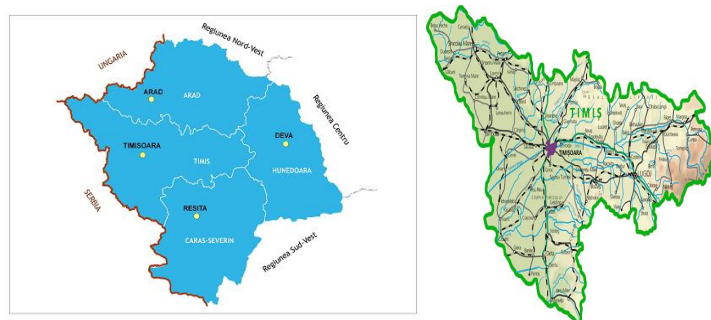


Fig. 1. Map of Development Region West and Timis County

Between strategy and competitiveness there is a strong link, both of them have as purpose the improvement of the activity and of the offered product, penetration on new markets, building alliances with different partners in order to strengthen the organization position, of the cluster or of the area in comparison with the completion.

In tourism, maybe more than in other areas, two organizations can compete in order to attract tourism but in the same time they can cooperate in order to offer tourists a friendly environment, so in tourism rival companies can cooperate in order to build successfully a touristic destination.

Therefore the authors believe that tourism development strategy refers to art of selecting and optimizing any kind of resources and means that the tourism company (cluster, region, county, city) has in order to achieve one or more progress objectives, imposing to the competition the place, the moment and the conditions of the “competition battle”. These strategies are very popular because the development and the growth are associated with the success or the turnover and so with the profit of the company or area.

At regional, national and even transnational level other strategies are applied; among these the most frequently used is the territorial (regional touristic development), which implies an touristic arrangement of the territory and the total involvement of the local community.

The authors (Rotariu, 2004) of the regional touristic development strategies propose the focus on the activities generating the highest income losses like distribution, advertising, marketing of touristic products, informational services, financing of hotels and other cultural objectives construction.

This strategy is useful for the requirement of maximum valuation of the natural and cultural potential in the conditions of minimizing its degradation.

The strategy of territorial touristic arrangement is based on a series of principles in order to elaborate several actions preceding the adoption of arrangement decisions.

Respecting the following strategic territorial arrangement principles is important for the implementation of the territorial planning (Cristureanu, 2006):

- the principle of harmonious integration of the structures built in accordance with the environment conditions, with the services structure and infrastructure;
- the principle of evolving structures – according to which the touristic area should be arranged in a multi-structural system, adaptable to the structural modifications and evolution of the touristic demand;
- the principle of the main activity and of the secondary reception revealing the specific of the touristic consumption;
- the principle of independent networks – takes into consideration the integration of the touristic network, composed of material base, touristic services, manpower and consumers (tourists), in the socio – economical structure of the arranged area; respecting this principle

will avoid the occurrence of some contradictions between the touristic and resident population;

Tab. 1

Typology and characterization of strategies and tactics

Criteria		Types of strategies and tactics			Application
Object of strategic management (OMS) and systems hierarchy	System	Macro	Medium	Micro	- In case of system advanced managerial capacity
		Global Continental National Regional	County Zone City cluster	Network of companies Company Business Functional Operational	
	Performances	V=value; K= competitiveness, E= efficiency; R= profitability; W= productivity N= quality; C= costs			- when a performance has priority
Number of strategic units components of the objective (USO)		For a single USO		For more USO	In case of system advanced managerial capacity
Results of applying the strategy/tactic and system objectives	Strategies, offensive tactics (growth tactics)	- concentration on a product group - integration: downstream – toward clients, upstream – toward suppliers, total – toward client and supplier - diversification -concentric (related domains) - conglomerate (different domains) - penetration in new domains			-fast growth of the market; -industries/sectors in expansion; -real competitiveness; -resources in exhaustion
	OBJECTIVE: Competitiveness growth				
	Strategies/tactics for stabilization (maintenance strategies)	- relax – after growth effort; -yield – during the maturity phase of the products lifecycle			- slow growth of the market; Mature industries/sectors with stable markets
	Defensive strategies/tactics (reduction strategies)	- reversal to the changing external environment - limitation (in the unchanged external environment) - portfolio restructuring -strategic units abandon -captivity for a strong client -liquidation			-economical recession; -great losses; -activity reverse; -major opportunities -exhaustion of solutions -client dependence; -bankruptcy
	Combination strategies/tactics	Combination of strategies adequate for each situation and strategic unit perspective			- several component strategic units

Source: Popa *et al.*, 2008

➤ the principle of optimum functioning of the entire touristic system – refers to the ways of functioning of the structural elements which are integrated in the touristic system of the territory; the touristic components (natural resources, cultural resources, material base, infrastructure and superstructure) are functioning in an optimum way when they have dynamic effects on the entire system;

➤ the principle of direct and indirect profitability – any activity is justified for the society only when it is useful and efficient; the efficiency of the touristic activity can be

evaluated through profitability indicators (cost/benefit) and also through the indirect economical effects, stimulating effects, expressed in social and economical plan.

Consider that the planning of the touristic development in Romania is fragmented and uncoordinated. There are three levels of special planning in Romania: national, regional and/or district.

In order to increase the touristic competitiveness at regional and district level, the medium and macro economical touristic strategies should be taken into consideration. These include district, zone, local and cluster strategies together with the regional, national and, why not, it should be taken into consideration also the continental and international strategies, all these for attracting as many tourists as possible.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In the opinion of the author, the determination of the touristic value of a region depends on several factors (Cristureanu 2006): transportation costs and distances; incomes and profile of possible tourists; the size of the population in the neighboring the areas with touristic demand; transportation means and access possibilities; competition; advertizing efficiency; touristic services variety and its possibility to adapt according to the demand; population hospitality etc.

Also the touristic industry of Timis county can developed based on a healthy business climate which should insure:

- ❑ responsible and qualified manpower;
- ❑ environment quality;
- ❑ specific attractions which insure a stable and constant flow of visitors;
- ❑ a life quality level which provides to the local community a healthy environment, education, awareness of the regional culture, the right to adopt decisions related to the future of the community;
- ❑ united attitude of the community related to the tourists access;
- ❑ optimum solutions related to the usage of the land fund (hunting, fishing, species protection, reservations, parks).

In Timis county level, the development of “big” tourism is based mainly on three large programs:

- ❑ Master Plan for national tourism development 2007 – 2026
- ❑ National development plan for the Western region (2007-2013)- tourism related part
- ❑ Strategic development program of tourism in the area composed by Timis, Caras – Severin and Mehedinti counties.

It can also be add the Structural funds of the European Union according to the Priority axis 5 – Durable development and tourism advertising from Regional operation program which can be accessed by our country.

Priority axis 5 has three major intervention domains:

1. Restoration and durable valuation of the cultural patrimony, creation and modernization of the connected infrastructure;
2. Creation, development, tourism infrastructure modernization for the valuation of natural resources and increase of the touristic services quality (unfortunately a suspended domain for the North-Western region);
3. Touristic potential advertising and creation of the necessary infrastructure for the increase of the attractiveness of Romania as touristic destination.

By accessing projects in these areas, our county can improve its position in terms of improving tourism activities in our area.

CONCLUSIONS

Analysis of the main programs aimed at developing tourism in the Timis County and thus increases its national competitiveness it can have following conclusions:

- main characteristic of the touristic areas is the specificity, and of the touristic regions is the diversity in the units.

- Timis county has, in terms of tourism, both strength and weaknesses – which have to be corrected in order to become competitive on the national and European level.

- the three development programs of the district tourism (and implicitly regional tourism) have purposes, general and specific objectives, but all of them are focused on developing tourism in the western part of the country, valuating in a better way this potential, improving the accommodation capacity and the infrastructure from the area so that the tourist visiting the western region and Timis county to be satisfied.

- these tourism development plans are based on precise measures which must be taken in the following areas: information services; statistics and research; destination marketing, investments in tourism, legal background

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