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Abstract: The globalization, new destinations' proliferation and new technologies have changed the competitive environment of the European countries. In the present, the most powerful tool in tourism's promotion is represented by the image of a country or region or touristic product. If we focus our attention on the international dimension, the strategies of defining an image or touristic promotion are: to create a new touristic image, re-position a traditional touristic destination, create a degree of awareness in a competitive environment, create brands (a brand for a region/state).

Key words: tourism, globalisation, strategy

In the case of the well-known destinations, the touristic promotion is planned and financed by the collaboration and partnership between the public and private sector. This thing brings for sure, before all, more resources to promotion, resources which can be assigned thanks to a long term strategy, and marketing and communication perspective where the objectives and targets are very well defined. The public-private partnership within the touristic promotion is an important issue due to the small size of the great majority of tourism organisations and they have the tendency to settle shorter periods of time and take individual decisions while the objective should be that of perceiving the tourism on the whole. This is an important point of the involvement into promotion activities and in strengthening the collaboration among different parties so that to be assured the participation of all the parties of this process.

In 2007 it was recorded a number of 760 millions of tourists. In the next 15 years there is expected to be registered 1 milliard and 760 millions. Generating considerable public incomes, the tourism is one of the most important sectors and the one with the fastest development of the national economy. If there does not exist a strategy to develop the implementation of a SUSTAINABLE tourism, a quality tourism based on a lasting development including a selective and planned construction of the accommodation places and the reconstruction of the existing ones, the gradual development of a supplementary offer (culture, business, welfare, amusement, recreation etc.), development of the family, organizational and business tourism, aiming all the potentials of the entire territory, then there will not be recorded successful results. The touristic sector itself must adopt a proactive attitude. Yet, the tourism is a special product. The arguments are:

- 1) **Tourism really is one of the economic activities with the most significant potential to generate growth and work places in the EU.** In a limited sense²¹⁰, the tourism presenting contributes with approximately 4% to the EU GIP (Gross Intern Product), varying between 2% in a line of new member states and 12% in Malta. The indirect contribution of tourism to the GIP is bigger, indirectly generation more than 10% from the EU GIP and insuring approximately 12% of the work places.
- 2) **Tourism has a special importance concerning the work place offer** destined to the young people, which are twice as numerous in the tourism department than in the rest of the economy²¹¹, in the last years, the increase, of occupying in the tourism department has been much bigger than in the rest of the economy, the tourism significant by contributing to the Lisbon objective of creating more and also better work places. The importance of tourism in the economy should continue to grow and in the following years there is expected an annual growth of the demand concerning tourism, of over 3%²¹².
- 3) Integrating the aspect concerning the **durability** inside their activity, the partier in discussion in the tourism area will protect the competition advantages which make Europe one of the most attractive touristic destination in the world – will protect its intrinsic diversity, as well as the variety of landscapes and

that of the cultures. Likewise, approaching the concerns regarding the durable development in a responsible manner socially speaking²¹³, the tourism industry will be able to offer products and innovating services having efficient value and quality.

“*The agenda for a durable and competitive European tourism*” recently exhibited in the **COM 2006**, Communication represents the fulfillment of a commitment on the long term of the European Board²¹⁴, this commitment being supported by the other European institutions²¹⁵. This will find the proper balance between the autonomous development of destinations and the protection of the environment pertaining to these on one hand, and the development of a competitive economic activity, on the other hand, can represent a challenge.

However, the activity of the **Group for a durable tourism** confirmed the fact that tourism can, more than any other economic activity develop synergies tightly connected with the environment and society. This is possible due to the fact that development of the touristic destination is connected to their natural environment, cultural characteristics, social interaction, security and welfare of the local populations. These characteristics make tourism the main engine of the preservation and development of destinations – directly by making people sensitive upon these and through the aid for the income and, indirectly, by offering an economic justification for aid supply from other sources.

The global tendencies and priorities change: more than ever, the great challenge for the department of tourism is to be continuously competitive, but also lasting, admitting the fact that, on long run the competition depends on the durability. Especially in the present the weather changes represent a basic aspect which also imposes to the tourism industry to reduce its contribution to the gas emission with greenhouse effect, and to destinations to adapt themselves to the request and types of tourism which they offer.

In the future, the European tourism will focus on the quality of the experience of the tourists – these will realize that the destinations that pay a special attention to the environment, employees and communities count on the Group report for a durable tourism and results of the previous public counsel²¹⁶. The Agenda represents a new contribution in putting into practice the strategy of Lisbon revised for growth and workplaces²¹⁷ and the revised Strategy for lasting development²¹⁸.

In order to establish a proper balance between the welfare of the tourists and needs of the natural and cultural environment, as well as between the development and competition of destinations and enterprises, it is necessary an integrated and global political approach inside which all the interested parts share the same objective.

Objectives to be followed in order to assure sustainability to tourism.

The community background for the development of economic politics, social and environmental based on the Partnership for growth and work places, as well as the Strategy for durable development, represents the proper context for attaining the objective targeting the durability of tourism (European) and challenges that are about to be approached to the objectives of the given “agenda”: economic prosperity, equality and social cohesion, protection of natural environment and culture²¹⁹.

These objectives should likewise guide the interested parts inside the European tourism in the actions and politics which influence the impact of the European tourism and in supporting it as an instrument for the durable development in the host countries. In the direction to touch these objectives, a series of challenges must be met²²⁰ that are specific to the department of tourism. These mainly include the preservation and durable administration of the natural and cultural resources, the shortening at minimum of the use of resources and of pollution within the touristic destinations, including waste production, administration of change for the welfare of the community, shortening of the seasonal trail of the demand, study of the impact on the environment which the local transport has implied in tourism, creation of a tourism open to everyone without discrimination and improvement of the quality of the work places from the department of tourism, approaching within the politics of the Board concerned with the migration²²¹ – the problem of hiring some resortisants from third countries whose stay is illegal.

Providing the security and safety of the tourists and local communities from the touristic areas represents another challenge and also an essential condition for the successful development of tourism²²².

These priorities can vary in space and time. The given priority, way of approach, as well as the chances they can offer vary from case to case.

The parties implied must continue to anticipate and monitor the changes. The politics and action must take into account the way the demand and offer will be affected by the environment challenges – for instance weather changes²²³ and lack of water²²⁴ – by the technological developments or other contemporary political, economic and social aspects. Thus, these entire challenges will be updated periodically, in accordance with the parties involved.

The fulfillment of the objectives of the given agenda and the approach in the challenges mentioned previously will require a coherent action which can be supported by proper public politics: the durable administration of destinations, implication of the concerns for durability within the business area and making tourists sensitive concerning the durability.

The sustainable administration of destinations is essential for the development of tourism, especially by planning the efficient use of space and field, as well as through checking the development and decisions to invest in infrastructure and services. Securing the fact that the new development of the tourism is as scale and type, proper to the requirements of the local community and natural environment, the durable administration can strengthen the economic performances and the competition position of a destination. This requires a background that implies all the parties concerned on local and regional level, as well as an efficient structure that would ease the partnership and efficacious leadership.

A basic requirement for the touristic destination is that of remaining competitive. The actions undertaken in this direction should be considered as a part of the creation process of a character, which represents one of the most important competitive advantages. Consequently, in order to insure their competition, viability and prosperity on long term, the destinations should focus more on the full integrity of concerns targeting the durability within the decisional process and within practices and instruments of administration belonging to these. An important part in this process is the service and the supporting associations of the touristic destinations.

Ultimately, in order to record a visible process, the request coming from the market, leisure activities, and touristic destinations should send stronger and more coherent signals.

Making tourists sensitive is necessary in order to develop and strengthen the ability to make choices in the favor of the durable development. The rendering sensitive concerning durability and ethics can facilitate the emergence of some individual attitudes and practices that make the tourists responsible. The increasing understanding of the consumers concerning durability could influence the enterprises to show some interest in this direction and to act accordingly.

Principles to be followed for the achievement of a competitive and durable tourism

In order to attain the objective of a competitive and durable tourism, the Board invites all actors to respect the following principles²²⁵:

- **A global and integrate approach** – in the planning and development of tourism, the sum of the resulting impacts of this should be taken into account. In the same way, tourism must be balanced and integrated within the activities that have an impact on the society and environment.
- **Long term planning** – the sustainable development refers to the protection of the needs of the future and present generations. Long term planning requires the ability to sustain actions in time.
- **Finding the proper rate for development** – the level, rate and should reflect and respect the character, resources and needs of the host – communities and of destinations.
- **The involvement of all parties concerned** – A durable approach requires an ample and engaged participation into the process of taking decisions and putting into practice coming from all parties concerned with the results.
- **The use of the best available knowledge** – The politics and actions should be drawn up on the basis of the best and most recent available knowledge. Throughout Europe, the information targeting the tendencies and effects of tourism should be shared, as well as the competences and experiences.
- **The decrease and administration of risks** (the principle of caution) – In the case where there are doubts concerning the results, there should be a complete evaluation and measure

for prevention in order to avoid the occurrence of harmful effects on the environment or society.

- **The consequence of effects on the costs** (the use as well as the polluter pay) – The princes should reflect the real costs for the society generated by the exhaust activities and the production. This measure doesn't take into account only the pollution, but also the use of equipment that generates significant costs for the administration.
- **Establishing and respecting the limits, as needed** – The maximum capacity of certain sitters and regions should be acknowledged and where the case is, there should be the will and ability to limit the development of tourism and also the number of tourists.
- **Accomplishing a continuous supervising** - Durability supposes the understanding of the effects and vigilance concerning these, in order to bring the necessary improvements and change.

More concerned parties have already admitted the importance of durability and make efforts to improve their performance. Despite these efforts, a continuous progress is necessary. In order to obtain more significant results, the existing initiatives as well as the future ones should work together more visibly and in unity.

This presumes the strengthening of this kind of voluntary and continuous process. This should be encouraged by all involved parties in the field of the European tourism: the different levels of administration-local authorities, administration of destinations, regions, member states – as well as the European Board, enterprises, tourists and any other organism can stimulate, support and influence the tourism.

The field of tourism implies a multitude of concerned parties from the private and public department whose qualifications are decentralized.

Consequently, the tourism and its direct beneficiary: the touristic destination must bring together its efforts towards being sustainable and competitive, in order to obtain the attribute of Excellency.

We mention, accordingly, the initiative of the European Board: the pilot project, co-financed by the European Board – Excellency for the European Destinations – promoted by the Ministry of Small and Middle Enterprises, Trade, Tourism and liberal professions in Romania, having the period: December 2007 – June 2008.

In this competition, our country, through the Association for the Mehedinti tourism Promotion – APTMM, promotes an excellency triangle whose visiting card is well-known: Drobeta – Clisura Dunarii – Ponoare.

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