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QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE SPORT TOURISM FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ROMANIAN YOUNG ADULTS

Sport, as a passive or dynamic activity has an important role in our lives. It has become a social phenomenon. At the same time, the sporting industry represents an “economic phenomenon” generating billions of dollars every year through tickets, sponsorships and TV rights. Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world. Sport tourism involves traveling and visiting a destination for sporting reasons, either active or passive. The aim of our study is to analyze the importance of sport tourism for young adults in Romania. With the help of questionnaires we will try to find out the importance and the shapes sport tourism can have in the lives of students from different faculties. Additionally, our study brings an overlook on the qualitative and quantitative aspects that characterize this new form of tourism, from the young Romanian adults’ perspective.

Key words: tourism, sport, travel, Romania, young adults

INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry is a constantly evolving economic activity both horizontally (the expansion of the types of tourism packages and activities supplied by the companies involved in the industry) and vertically (the steady increase of the number of international and domestic tourists). Sport tourism has been established as a new form of tourism mainly since the increase of importance and attendance of sporting events.

Tourism has been one of the fastest-growing economic activities in recent decades. In the business terrain, it is an unqualified success. The evolution of international arrivals

and the income that results from it show the constantly increasing participation of the industry in production and employment worldwide. Thus, according to the latest statistics provided by the World Tourism Organization, the number of international trips has increased 25 times since the 50s, while their revenue in the last year of reference reached a figure over 200 times higher than the initial one in nominal terms. There is no doubt that the main explanation for this expansion lies in rising incomes globally as a generator of tourism demand. According to UNWTO figures, international arrivals have “reached 842 million in 2006 and total incomes of approximately 735 billion \$”¹.

Because of the number of Multinational Corporations involved and the complexity of the global sports industry, computing the total income of that industry is problematic. The total income generated by the industry is distributed between: conglomerate oligopolies that own a range of subsidiaries, including sports-oriented firms as well as other firms that can compliment the sports-related businesses; firms whose sole activities centre around sports, some are in the service sector, some mass entertainment, others manufacturing; national sports leagues that promote their teams and athletes and have sponsorship and merchandising relations with Multinational Corporations and local businesses; and international sports organizations and federations and national sports bodies. Businesses that are allied to the sports industry include suppliers of food and beverages at stadiums, raw material suppliers for sports apparel and shoe producers, public relations firms, sports lawyers, and the sports medicine industry. Finally, gambling, which has legal and illegal components overlapping formal and informal economies worldwide, is also integral to the global sports industry.

In the following chapters we will present a general overlook of the sport and tourism industry in the third millennium and in the last chapter we will present a series of implications of different sporting activities over the tourism industry and the features of a new form of tourism: “sport tourism”.

1. THE SPORT INDUSTRY

Sport and active recreation have become successful and fashionable industries worldwide. The factors influencing the growth of sport and recreation are similar to those influencing tourism growth - notably increased disposable income, greater availability of leisure time, fashion and changing consumer preferences. An increased awareness of the benefits of greater physical activity for all ages has also become a major factor in implicating large number of people in becoming practitioners of sporting activities.

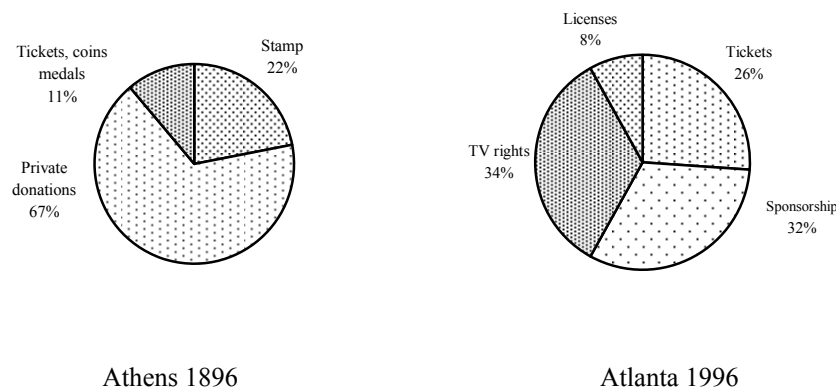
In addition, the role of the media in promoting sports has been critical. A number of factors have contributed to this greater international media attention on sport and recreation, especially in western economies:

- increased demand for sports programming from television broadcasters to meet consumer demand, the advent of dedicated sports channels (eg. Eurosport), and the availability of satellite technology allowing live coverage;

¹UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, Vol. 5, 2007, 1-4, available at www.unwto.com

- increased prominence of professional sportspersons across a range of sports, e.g. soccer, tennis, volleyball, basketball (Ronaldinho, Roger Federer and others);
- sports associations becoming more like large-scale business enterprises;
- growth of merchandise associated with particular sports, sporting activities and sporting teams;
- significant advertising, promotion, and activity associated with high-profile international sporting events, e.g. the Olympic Games, soccer World Cups, Grand Slam tennis, Formula One Grand Prix, and national sporting competitions;
- increasing opportunities for participation, especially in western economies, through changing leisure patterns, ageing of the population, increased disposable income, and increased awareness of the benefits of physical activity;
- large amounts of money being spent by corporations directly and indirectly sponsoring events, teams and individuals for commercial advantage. Television commercials during athletic events are among the most common forms of advertising. Sports have a wide audience as almost 75% of Americans watch televised sports at least once a week. Corporations have recognized this and are thus willing to advertise during TV programs that appeal to their target audiences. Advancing the TV audience up the consumption escalator is typically a core consideration of corporations that sponsor sport events. To that end, in 2002, corporations “spent \$58.3 billion on TV commercial advertisements. Whereas there are many benefits of advertising on TV, there can also be negative effects. Television commercials can often be time-consuming and expensive to produce.”².

Figure 1. **Olympic Games Funding**



Source: Cashman, R., Hughes, A., *Staging the Olympics*, University of New South Wales Press, 1999, p 199

²Cianfrone, B., Zhang, J., “Differential Effects of Television Commercials, Athlete Endorsements, and Venue Signage During a Televised Action Sports Event”, *Journal of Sport Management*, vol. 20, 2006, 329-334;

Because of their importance and attendance, there are two sporting events that represent the main attraction for sponsors: The Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup. They are considered mega-events held every four years.

The Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup are different types of mega-events. Naturally, they also differ significantly from other single day mega-events such as Formula One races or NFL Super bowl. Whereas the Olympic Games are usually held in only one city, the FIFA World Cup is held in multiple cities over more than four weeks. However, the demands of hosting an Olympic Games are much more intense for the host city. A great number of competitions, requiring a wide variety of stadiums and infrastructure, are held over an action-packed two week period. Beis, et al³ described the Olympic Games as the most complex and voluminous large-scale competition event in the world. The most recent Olympic Games in Athens were the largest sports event to date, attracting more than 2000 athletes from 28 different sports. The combined budget between the Athens 2004 Organizing Committee (ATHOC) and the Greek government was \$7 billion. This large budget included all work done on supporting infrastructure and stadium development. It may be argued, however, that the modern FIFA World Cup places greater demands on the overall infrastructural capabilities of a country. With the tournament held over a much larger geographical area than the Olympic Games, transport infrastructure and capacity become especially important for the swift transfer of both players and supporters between matches.

At the same time, the growth of football as an international sport has also increased the requirements for hosting the World Cup. More teams, more games, and greater audiences pose enormous logistical and infrastructural challenges. Because of the advances in air travel and marketing, these mega-events also attract more tourists from across the globe than ever before.

From large metropolitan areas to outlying hinterlands, public and private stakeholders are interested in adding the brand element of sport to their destination marketing profile as they view it as a means of enhancing their local economies. Communities host sport events for entertainment purposes, to enhance community pride, and to stimulate spending; however, the latter is generally considered the primary motive because economic impacts are used to validate events and determine their continuance, while acting as a focal point when illustrating the vitality of tourism activities as a whole.⁴

Preuss⁵ lists a number of objectives that these countries had in hosting the Olympics. These include putting the country 'on the map'; showcasing the region; promoting the political system; creating new trading partners; attracting investment; boosting tourism; creating jobs and business opportunities; urban renewal including housing and infrastructure; building a legacy of sports infrastructure.

³Beis, D.A., Loucopoulos, P., Zografos, K.G., "PLATO helps Athens win gold Olympic Games knowledge modelling for organizational change and resource management", *Informis*, vol. 36(1), 2006, 26-42

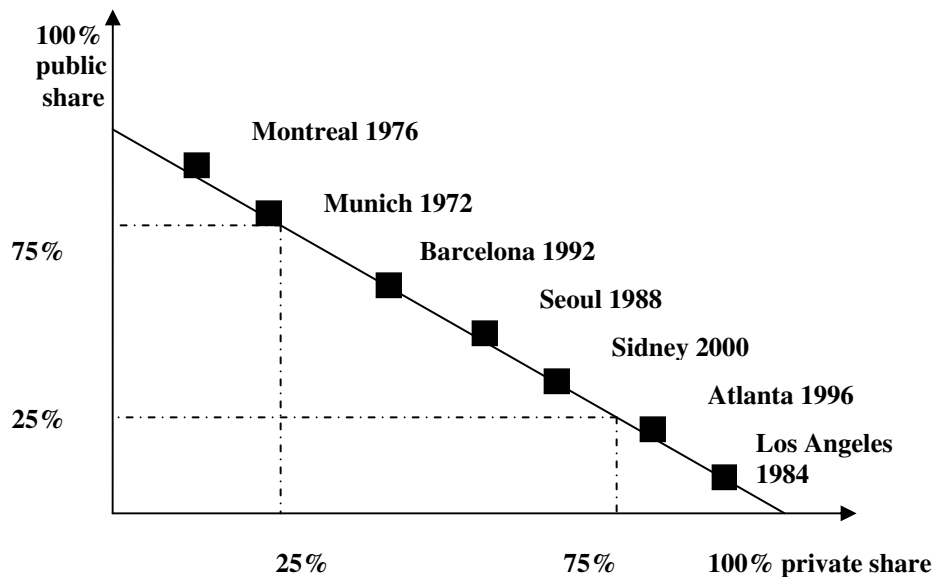
⁴Daniels, M., "Central place theory and sport tourism impacts", *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 34, No. 2, 2007, 332

⁵Preuss, H., *Economics of the Olympic Games – Hosting the Games 1972-2000*, Walla Walla Press in conjunction with the Centre for Olympic Studies, 2000, 167

Figure 2 shows the distribution of costs between the private sector and the public sector for the Olympic Games from 1972 to 2000. As shown, the public sector has borne a higher share in Europe, Asia, and Australia than in the United States. The structural requirements for an event can be costly. This, however, is not a rationale for the government to fund the investments⁶.

Financially the Montreal Games of 1976 left the citizens of that city with a substantial Olympic debt, which took decades to pay off. As a result, Los Angeles was the only serious bidder for the 1984 Games⁷.

Figure 2. Financing models of the Olympic Games from Munich 1972 to Sydney 2000



Source: Solberg, A., Preuss, H., "Major Sport Events and Long-Term Tourism Impacts", *Journal of Sport Management*, vol. 21, 2007, 230

"The Olympic Partner" (TOP) is central to the worldwide Olympic marketing agreement, that governs the relationship that sponsors have with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the Olympic Games.⁸ The TOP program was established to secure the long-term financial needs of the Olympic Movement and diversify its revenue base so

⁶Solberg, A., Preuss, H., "Major Sport Events and Long-Term Tourism Impacts", *Journal of Sport Management*, vol. 21, 2007, 229 – 230;

⁷Cashman, R., Hughes, A., *Staging the Olympics*, University of New South Wales Press, 1999, 133-135

⁸http://www.olympic.org/uk/organisation/facts/programme/sponsors_uk.asp last access 30th November 2007

that the International Olympic Committee did not solely rely on television income (Table 1.).

The concept of exclusivity was crucial. Rather than having a proliferation of sponsors, the IOC settled for a small number of elite international sponsors — 11 in all (Coca – Cola, VISA, IBM and others), with each covering a particular category of sponsorship. “TOP members pay very large sums of money for the right to be the chosen Olympic sponsor in a particular category. In return, companies such as Coca-Cola enjoy a breadth of Olympic exposure in over 200 member countries and an IOC 'delivery system'”⁹. Because the IOC channels some of the sponsorship money to the various National Olympic Committees (NOCs), TOP members gain leverage in many countries.

Table 1. Evolution of TOPs from 1988 to 2004

Location(Year)	No. of sponsors	No. of NOCs	Revenue (\$ million)
Seoul (1988)	9	157	97
Barcelona (1992)	12	172	175
Atlanta (1996)	10	197	Over 300
Sydney (2000)	11	Over 200	Over 400
Athens (2004)	12	Over 200	Over 600

Source: Cashman, R., Hughes, A., *Staging the Olympics*, University of New South Wales Press, 1999, p. 235

Hosting the World Cup brings significant costs and potentially large benefits. On the cost side, FIFA requires that the host country provide at least 8 and preferably ten modern stadiums capable of seating 40,000 to 60,000 spectators. For the 2002 event in Japan and South Korea, each offered to provide ten separate stadiums. As neither country had a large existing infrastructure for soccer, South Korea built ten new stadiums at a cost of nearly \$2 billion, and Japan built seven new stadiums and refurbished three others at a cost of at least \$4 billion. The operating costs of a mega-event are also enormous and are growing. Greece reportedly spent up to \$1 billion on security for the 2004 Olympics. Can the economic impact of an event, even one the size of the World Cup, compensate the host nation for the substantial infrastructure and operating costs?¹⁰

Past and present prospective economic impact analyses prepared by event boosters have predicted economic windfalls from hosting the World Cup. The 1994 World Cup Organizing Committee in the United States, for example, predicted that “as many as one million international visitors will travel to the United States in conjunction with the World Cup, making the event one of the most significant tourist attractions in American history.

The promise of substantial economic impact provides a justification for public subsidies for mega-event infrastructure. Promoters of subsidies for mega-events throughout

⁹Cashman, R., Hughes, A., *Staging the Olympics*, University of New South Wales Press, 1999, 133-135

¹⁰Bohlmann, H., “Predicting the Economic Impact of the 2010 FIFA World Cup on South Africa”, *Department of Economics Working Paper Series*, University of Pretoria vol. 11 May 2006

the world argue that the expenditures should properly be treated as investments that generate positive economic returns, that is to say yields that exceed those generated by the next-best, alternative use of those funds. Claims that sports mega-events provide a substantial boost to the economy of the host city, region, and country have been strongly criticized by some scholars¹¹.

Unfortunately, professional sports have been struck in recent years by many scandals regarding drugs, illegal bets and the implication of lawyers and economists who tend to reduce the pure spirit of competitions.

Although we cannot be sure of the precise level of drug use in modern sport there is near universal agreement that the use of performance-enhancing drugs by athletes has increased markedly over the last three decades. Briefly, the evidence suggests the use of drugs has spread from athletics (Marion Jones), weightlifting (Leonidas Sampanis) and cycling (Floyd Landis) - the three sports in which drugs appear to have been most frequently used in the 1960s - to most other sports, and that it has spread from elite level sport down to lower levels, with drugs even being used in fun runs and college sport.

The gambling and betting industry has become an important factor for the sport industry. There are numerous companies that offer a wide range of bets for different types of sports. Also, important betting companies have become official sponsors for football teams. Unfortunately, in recent years there have been some scandals regarding the illegal bets placed by professional sportspersons or the implications of athletes in gambling scandals (Nikolay Davidenko in tennis, referees in NBA in 2007 etc)

In a recent study, Businessweek¹² published a ranking of the 100 most powerful people in sport. In the top ten there is only one professional sportsman – Tiger Woods, the remaining nine are CEOs, commissioners, chairmen, TV station owners and other types of white collar individuals that are more interested in the financial aspects of the sports industry rather than the principles issued by Pierre de Coubertin.

We can conclude that in the near future a change of attitude will be needed in order for individuals, especially teenagers, to learn about the beauty and benefits of sports not the grim realities that shadow the industry.

2. SPORT AND TOURISM

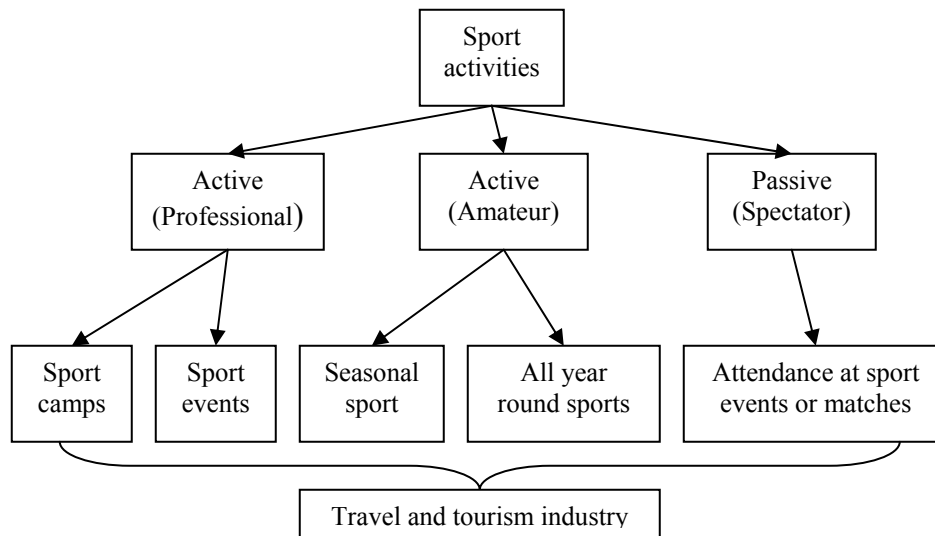
Sport can be considered the world's largest social phenomenon. Tourism has become one of the world's biggest industries. The points of contact between sport and tourism have increased dramatically – the mutual benefits for both are quite perceptible and the relationships very compatible. The links between sport and tourism have expanded considerably, and become more clearly defined, in recent years. The latter part of the

¹¹ Baade, Robert A., "Professional Sports as a Catalyst for Metropolitan Economic Development," *Journal of Urban Affairs*, Volume 18, Number 1 1996, 1-17

¹² http://images.businessweek.com/ss/07/09/0927_power100/index_01.htm?campaign_id=yhoo last access 30th November 2007

twentieth century witnessed the rapid development of sport and tourism.¹³ In fact, the term ‘sports tourism’ has been coined to better understand the use of sport as a touristic endeavor.

Figure 3. **Relation between sport and tourism**



Source: Băc, D., Bădulescu, A., Băc, O. “*The impact of sport on tourism*”, The Academic Journal “Management and Education”, Vol. III (1), University "Prof. dr. Assen Zlatarov" House Press, Bourgas, 2007, 44

Different forms of tourism can be defined in terms of the kind of leisure mobility undertaken by the tourist and could well be identified as follows: adventure tourism (reality experiences); incentive tourism (productive motivational techniques); cultural tourism (vestige of lifestyles); heritage tourism (glories of the past); leisure tourism (away from work time); ecotourism (experiences of alien sceneries); educational tourism (site visitation learning); wilderness tourism (related to nature); sports tourism (physical activity focus). Oftentimes, sports tourism is categorized directly or indirectly through a value system related to economic impact. The primary qualifier for the determination of sports tourism is the destination focus directed to sporting activities, through marketing strategies and provision for a sports programming milieu. On the other hand, tourism destinations whose sport activities are ‘peripheral’ to their focus and marketing efforts are considered to offer sports programs and activities solely for a ‘supportive’ role acting as a ‘retention’ factor for the respective destination.

¹³ Higham, J., Hinch, T., “Tourism, sport and seasons: the challenges and potential of overcoming seasonality in the sport and tourism sectors”, *Tourism Management* vol. 23 2002, 175

It is imperative to provide a definition of 'sports tourism' (Figure 3). We consider sport tourism to be a new emerging form of tourism which involves traveling and visiting a destination for sporting reasons, either active (skiing, playing a specific sport) or passive (as a spectator at an event or match). The travel and tourism industry is interested in sport tourism because: sport camps for professional teams are held in touristic destinations; sporting events involve accommodations for players and staffs; seasonal sports and all year round sports represent a main attraction for several forms of tourism; attendance at sport events represent a boom for international tourist arrivals;

Much of the existing literature on event sport tourism has focused on mega or hallmark events. The term hallmark event refers to major fairs, expositions, cultural, and sporting events of international status which are held on either a regular or one time basis'. Hallmark events are generally thought to help position a host city as an international tourist destination and facilitate touristic activity in the years following the event.¹⁴

Regarding these events we have to take into consideration the negative effect that a large number of tourists for a relative small period of time might have. There are a series of similarities with the negative effects of the summer and winter seasons for resorts or regions. Firstly for the consumers there is general feeling of discomfort because of the large number of tourists that visit a specific region or town for a sporting event. Secondly, for the state and the local communities we can mention: the over - usage of the infrastructure might determine the increase of the number of accidents, there are hygiene problems (utilities, garbage collection), pollution and degradation of some sites, there is an increase in the unbalance and inequity between regions¹⁵.

So, in conclusion we have to realize the fact that organizing an event can have also negative impacts besides the obvious positive effects: increase of revenues, development of infrastructure, "free" advertising etc.

3. EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

The purpose of our empirical research is the analysis of the importance of sport tourism for the young adults in Romania.

In our study we considered young adults to be students with the age between 18 and 25.

We will describe the main shapes sport tourism can take in the lives of students from different Faculties from the University of Oradea. In order to achieve our goal, we have set a sample survey, with the following steps: identification of the main objectives; identification of the target population; choice of the sampling method, of the significance level, and of the sample volume; conducting the questionnaire; administration of the questionnaire; centralization of the data and elaboration of the survey report.

¹⁴ Gibson, H., Willming, C., Holdnak, A., "Small-scale event sport tourism: fans as tourists", *Tourism Management* vol. 24, 2003, 182

¹⁵ Bădulescu, A., Băc, D., *Economia turismului*, Editura Universității din Oradea, 2006, 75

Among the main objectives of our study we mention the description of the main shapes of sport tourism can take in the lives of young adults, the estimation of the percentage of the young adults that practice different types of sport tourism in the target population, the identification of the determinants of this structure, as well as the investigation of the intensity of the relationship between these determinants and the structure of the population with respect to different types of sport tourism.

As the main population is not homogeneous with respect to most of the target variables, we've used the proportional stratified sampling method, the sample and sub-sample volumes were set at 5% of the target population volume. This proportion is in correspondence with the chosen significance level (5%) and with the maximum admitted deviation.

The structure of our total population and of our sample is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The structure of the total population and of the sample

Population	Faculty	Faculty of Economics	Faculty of History and Geography	Faculty of Physical Education and Sport	Total
Total population		3953	605	410	4953
Sample volume		200	30	20	250

Source: authors' calculus

Talking about the distribution of our sample by age, 17% of the students from our sample are 21 years old, and 50% of them are between 20 and 22 years old. Most of our subjects were male (62%).

The questionnaire contains 21 questions, divided in two sections – the first regarding the sport and tourism activities of the young adults, and the second, regarding factual, personal data.

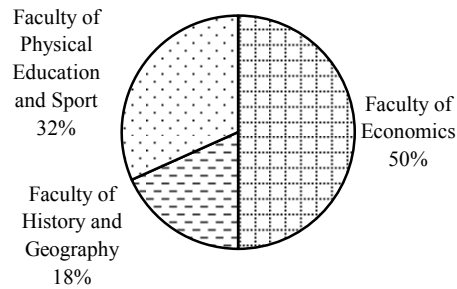
From the 250 persons that form our sample, 24% practice sport activities. The distribution of these persons by faculties is presented in Figure 4:

The proportion of the persons who practice sport activities (professional or amateur) in the sub samples is significantly different from a faculty to another. For example, only 15% from the young adults that study at the Faculty of Economics and that were included in our sample, practice sport activities, the correspondent proportion at the Faculty of History and Geography is 37%. Almost all of the students from the Faculty of Sport from our sample practice sport activities (95%).

With a probability of 95% we can generalize these estimates, using confidence intervals. The proportion of the young adults that practice sport activities in the total students attending the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport is comprised between 90% and 100%, the same proportion for the Faculty of Economics is between 10,2% and 19,8%, while for the Faculty of History and Geography is between 19,81% and 54,19%.

Further we will refer to those students who practice a form of professional of amateur sport. The percentage of the young adults who practice an organized, professional sport activity is 68,33%, most of these young adults coming from the Faculty of Sport.

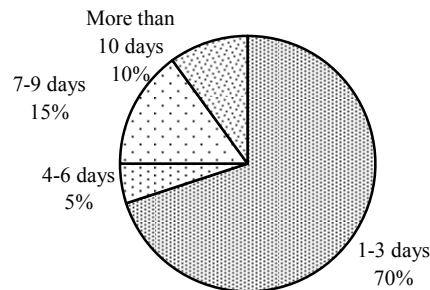
Figure 4. Distribution of the persons who practice professional or amateur active sport by faculties



Source: Authors' calculus

During the last year, 73,17% of these subjects have made a trip out of the home town in order to practice a professional sport activity (match, sport reunion, championship, sporting camp). The proportion of these persons in the total sample (250 young adults) is only 12,4%. Using a confidence interval, with a 5% significance level, this result can be generalized as follows: $P(8,32\% \leq p \leq 16,48\%) = 95\%$. With a probability of 95%, the proportion of the young adults that practice sport tourism for professional reasons in the total population is comprised between 8,32% and 16,48%.

Figure 5. Distribution of the duration of trips made for amateur sport activities



Source: Authors' calculus

At the same time, a proportion of 73,33% of the persons who practice a sport activity made a trip with the purpose of practicing an amateur sport activity. The proportion of these persons in the total sample (250 young adults) is only 17,6%. Using a confidence

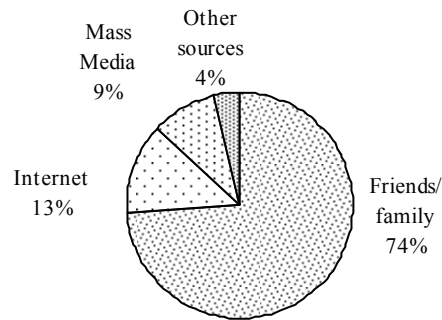
interval, with a 5% significance level, this result can be generalized, $P(12,88\% \leq p \leq 22,32\%) = 95\%$. With a probability of 95%, the proportion of the young adults that practice amateur sport tourism in the total population is comprised between 12,88% and 22,32%.

Most of these trips were made by the students attending the History and Geography Faculty (45%), and had duration between 1 and 3 days. The distribution of the duration of these trips is presented in Figure 5.

The most popular amateur sporting activities are skiing and trekking (each one with 42%) followed by mountain-biking and alpinism. The main reason for these activities is relaxation, as well as spending time with friends.

The information sources that helped the choice of the destination are presented in Figure 6. As we can see, the main information sources among young adults are friends and family as well as the Internet. This suggests the poor publicity and advertising of sport tourism destinations. At the same there should be a debate regarding the existing infrastructure for sport in general and sport tourism in particular

Figure 6. Information sources for amateur sport activities destinations



Source: Authors' calculus

We have also studied the proportion of the persons who visited a destination in order to attend a match or other types of professional competitions. During the last year, 48% our subjects have made such a trip. It is important to notice that most of these trips were made by the students from the Faculty of Economics. Using a confidence interval, with a 5% significance level, this result can be generalized as follows: $P(41,81\% \leq p \leq 54,19\%) = 95\%$. With a probability of 95%, the proportion of the young adults that practice passive sport tourism is comprised between 41,81% and 54,19%.

We have synthesized these results, for comparison reasons, as seen in Table 3.

Table 3. Absolute frequencies and proportions of persons that practice different types of sport tourism in the sample by faculties

Faculty	Sport activities	Professional sport tourism		Amateur sport tourism		Passive sport tourism		Inactive young adults	
		Abs. freq.	% in sub-sample	Abs. freq.	% in sub-sample	Abs. freq.	% in sub-sample	Abs. freq.	% in sub-sample
Faculty of Economics	Sub-sample volume: 200	5	2,5%	10	5%	90	45%	110	55%
Faculty of History and Geography	Sub-sample volume: 30	7	23,33%	20	66,66%	11	36,6%	10	63,33%
Faculty of Physical Education and Sport	Sub-sample volume: 20	19	95%	12	60%	19	95%	1	5%
Total	Sample volume: 250	31	12,4%*	44	17,6%*	120	48%*	130	52%

* Percentage in the total sample

Source: Authors' calculus

In it is interesting to notice that there is a strong relationship between the type of sport tourism practiced by young adults and their education. Comparing the different proportions, we can see that most of the young adults that attend the Faculty of Economics practice passive sport tourism, most of those from Faculty of History and Geography practice amateur sport tourism, while those coming from the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport practice professional sport tourism as well as passive sport tourism, situation that is in concordance with their professional profile.

Table 4. Relationship between the revenues of students and the practiced types of sport tourism

Revenue	Professional sport tourism	Amateur sport tourism	Passive sport tourism	Inactive young adults
Parents	15	10	38	
Scholarship	11	22	10	
Wage	5	12	72	
Total	31	44	120	130

Source: Source: Authors' calculus

As seen above, most of the young adults that practice an active sport activity are supported by their parents; those who practice passive sports activities, more expensive, have a permanent working place. Practicing a professional sport implies a significant

amount of time, which leaves no spare time for remunerated activities. The Chi-square test applied at a sample level confirmed the hypothesis of a strong relationship between the 2 variables. The result has been generalized, at a 5% significance level for the target population – we can say, with a probability of 95% that between the different revenues of the students and the type of sport tourism practiced there is a strong relationship, at the total population level.

All of the main shapes of sport tourism are found among the activities practiced by young adults in Romania. Yet, only a small proportion of our subjects take part in this type of sport tourism. With a probability of 95%, the proportion of the young adults that practice sport tourism for professional reasons in the total population is comprised between 8,32% and 16,48%. The same proportion for the amateur tourism is comprised between 12,88% and 22,32%. We found significant differences for these proportions from a faculty to another. Among the main determinants of this structure we mention the revenue distribution, education, as well as poor publicity of sport tourism facilities.

CONCLUSIONS

We can conclude that sport tourism has established itself in the last decades as a new form of tourism.

According to the results of our study we can conclude that sport activities in general and sport tourism in particular, the two being interrelated, do not represent very important activities in the free time of young adults in Romania. There a series of causes for this situation. Firstly there are external causes: the lack of information and infrastructure for sport, the negative impact of sport related scandals and the image of people involved in sport. Secondly there are personal causes: lack of time and money, two conditions that are sine qua non for tourism and sport and in a smaller measure education. These facts had been confirmed by our empirical analysis.

In order to improve the results of our study, we consider that actions should be taken both by the government and private entrepreneurs. The national and local authorities should improve the sport infrastructure and create additional sporting programs for young adults. As our study shows, sport tourism has great economic potential, thus private entrepreneurs should invest in sporting destinations and tourism agencies should create sporting tourism packages.

On the occasion of the World Tourism Day, which is celebrated worldwide on 27 September, the WTO Secretary-General Francesco Frangialli and the IOC President Dr. Jacques Rogge signed a joint message, in which they stressed that "sport and tourism share common goals: building bridges of understanding between different cultures, lifestyles and traditions; promoting peace and goodwill among nations; motivating and inspiring young people and providing entertainment and enjoyment to relieve the pressures of daily life to large sections of the population. Tourism and sport are interrelated and complementary." (www.unwto.com/newsroom)

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