Assessment upon Seasonality of Tourist Offer on the Romanian Seaside using the Paul Krugman's Core-Periphery Model

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Abstract: Seasonality is a specific problem of Romanian tourism, especially on the Black Sea seaside. Through a comprehensive approach, based on statistical data, we show the huge differences between the summer and the off-season offer, providing a starting point for future studies, both from official and field sources. The Krugman's Core-Periphery model clearly emphasizes that the development of a core neglects the periphery, and seasonality only accentuates its affectation until its complete abandonment, stagnation of development or regression. The impact of seasonality on the Romanian Black Sea seaside determines, to a certain extent, the development of egocentric poles, around which satellite-resorts are extremely dependent, their improvement requiring a research of all economic indicators involved. The development of the Northern Zone to the detriment of the Southern one has led to the emergence of extremely comprehensive results on the current situation, and the intense study of this area could reduce the socio-economic gap between them, being profitable for both private and public.

Key words: *Krugman, core-periphery, Romanian seaside, seasonality, offer.*

Introduction

The history of tourism in Romania and of the seaside in particular has not been the subject of systematic studies that would have brought to light this aspect of our national industry.

In Romanian literature, this region was subject in books about general aspect of Romania's tourism and economy (Neacșu et al., 2006; Ciangă, 2008) or tourism development in all countries around The Black Sea (Stănciulescu et al., 2000). Some papers refer to this region, studying it in a large context in terms of accommodation and seasonality. Thus, Dogramadjieva and Matei (2010) pointed that the Black Sea coast has a higher accommodation facilities both in Romania and Bulgaria than other regions in the countries, with a peak occupancy rate in summer. Stupariu and Morar (2018) stressed the role of this area in tourism for the South East Development Region of Romania in terms of accommodation offer.

The issue of seasonality debated in international tourism literature, remains a subject of interest as many countries in Europe face this phenomenon (Karamustafa and Ulama, 2010) and need instruments for its measurement (Ferrante et al., 2018).

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In Romania, the seasonal character of tourism, seen through its economic, social and environmental impacts is a challenge for the tourism industry (Stupariu and Morar, 2018), as a phenomenon that occurs both at national and at regional level especially during the summer season (Coroş and Negruşa, 2014).

Research on the seasonality tried to clarify the term and measurement methods but, it depends of each scientist's view by domain specialized in. In this respect, Butler (2001) considered it to be linked to the number of visitors, their expenditures, the traffic on transportation, the employment, the tourist flow at an attraction etc., while Karamustafa and Ulama, (2010) wrote a comprehensive analysis of methods used to study the seasonality (the seasonality ratio, the seasonality indicator, the Gini coefficient and the seasonality index). Thus, they concluded that seasonality is better understood if it is evaluated through the combination of different methods in order to see its structure, and types in a destination.

In this framework, this paper aims to address, methodologically and conceptually, a topic that has been ignored for some time, starting from sources, especially unique, that have been used in writing it. Thus, this research used the Krugman's Core-Periphery Model (KCPM), a theory awarded by Nobel Prize (2008). In line with his recognition, the KCPM was used in different fields such as tourism marketing in China (Lai and Li, 2012) or in explanation the remote areas importance in Australia tourism (Carson et al., 2010), while in Europe it was applied to explain the economic and political disparities and convergence (Börzel and Langbein, 2019) or economic development (Gräbner and Hafele, 2020).

Based on, as an explanatory model for the development of the seaside in recent years, the study can be an important starting point for creating prediction models for the seaside area, as well as for understanding the direction which Romanian tourism will take.

In addition, the results may represent starting points for other investigations in the field, studies necessary for a complete and objective presentation of the tourism industry in Romania, in the context of the importance given recently, at national, European and global level. The synthesized factual and theoretical data, as well as the conclusions resulting from the research carried out on the subject in question can be used both for the elaboration of studies on tourism, industrial policies, economy, etc., as well as in the scientific-didactic process in the academic institutions, when they are used in the normative and special courses.

2. Krugman's Core-Periphery Model, Base of Methodology

Considering the great discrepancy between the stage of economic development of the county residences versus those near them, respectively an even bigger difference between them and the more distant localities, the core-periphery effect is very obvious in the development of tourism on the Romanian seaside. Therefore, an analysis of its causes and effects would be necessary, from the conclusions being able to create some ideas that would attenuate the difference between the economic situations of the resorts in the immediate vicinity of the cores, respectively those located at considerable distances from them.

The seizure of economic power by the nucleus leads to a great disadvantage for the peripheral localities, which, because of this, develop only partially. Fujita, Krugman and Venebles (2001) point out that the core-periphery effect may, depending on the evolution of GDP, at a certain historical moment, this effect has the role of unbalancing savings, respectively, depending on GDP evolution, to strengthen their economy.

Through the core-periphery model, also called center-periphery, Krugman showed in his main work, by developing a simple model, how a country can become an industrialized "core" or,

conversely, an agricultural "periphery", how it feels the influence of economic geography and trade in its evolution.

The development of industry and services in the "core", as well as the emigration of the population and the orientation of the labor force towards it show its obvious advantages.

Hence, investments, salaries and rents are higher in the center, while commercial costs are higher in the periphery, the difference between income and expenditure also becoming larger.

The shown economic indicators enrich the core, and the population ends up concentrating in it, to the detriment of the periphery, population migration being an obvious economic indicator at continental level, not only in a small region of a country.

In this context this article will show a new facet of the Romanian tourism industry in terms of tourism seasonality, approached in a new way based on a method developed by Paul Krugman in 1991 (Krugman, 1991).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Values and reason about the study

The Ministry of Tourism, through its structures, independently of the National Institute of Statistics, gathered data and information about the resorts on the Romanian seaside (Ministry of Tourism, 2019). These data are sometimes different from those of the abovementioned Institute, especially since some of them are updated monthly and others annually.

A problem in tourism research on the Black Sea seaside is seasonality, a factor that significantly changes the activity in the private and public sector. The causes of this factor are (Mieczkowski, 1990):

1. Natural factor related to the succession of seasons and climatic conditions (Romania has four seasons). Thus, a tourist destination on the seaside is attractive due to the beaches and sunny and warm summers. Here we distinguish (Krugman, 1991):
 - a) the recreation season, which coincides with the period of natural vegetation (the time between the flowering period and the fall of the leaves);
 - b) the bathing season, when the water temperature is over 18°C or the daily average air temperature is higher than 15°C;
 - c) the winter season, when the daily average air temperature is lower than 0°C;
 - d) the hunting and fishing season that respects the reproductive cycles of the animals, complying with the instructions of the authority in the field (Cooper et al., 1996).

Another natural cause is the existing natural resources that can be satisfactory at a certain time of year, such as water sports: swimming, yachting, windsurfing, speed sailing, diving, etc.

2. Economic factor because various events (fairs, festivals, etc.) take place here on occasion. They may or may not take place periodically, at the initiative of public or private bodies, depending on the purpose pursued.
3. The social and organizational factor, especially from the point of view of holidays, the structure of the school and university year, traditions, etc. The length of school holidays and paid vacation due to traditional holidays are variables independent of human action, the limits being imposed by the authorities, in compliance with the laws in force.

From a calendar point of view, we have three periods :

- the summer season, from June to August, when we have a maximum tourist activity;

- intermediate season, at the beginning of the summer period or at the end of it, characterized by the increase or decrease of the tourist activity, respectively of the intensity of their circulation;
- off-season, in which tourist activity is reduced or even stopped in terms of services.

If we take into account the free time available, we can distinguish between weekly free time and vacation time. Depending on these, seasonality:

- concentrates tourist demand and consumption in a single season, usually limited in duration (the summer tourist season on the seaside, for example);
- concentrates the tourist activity in two periods of season, summer and winter, different in length and tourist frequency;
- involves the relatively linear frequency of tourist arrivals throughout the calendar year, especially in the areas of spas (where treatments take place throughout the year) and large urban centers, due to congresses, fairs, exhibitions, tourists in transit, etc. (Snak, 1994; Neacșu et al., 2006).

This seasonality also has a negative character, the seasonal concentration generating a series of disadvantages for different economic sectors, tourists and providers. As for the various economic sectors unrelated to tourism, it should be noted that, during this period, they are affected by the leave of absence of a large number of employees during the same period of the year, the remaining ones having to take over their tasks as well.

End consumers, namely tourists, find seasonality stressful, especially due to traffic congestion/overcrowding (incorrect sizing in case of overload, lack of public services), overbooking by hoteliers and increasing tariffs and prices on the part of providers of tourist goods and services, leading to a decrease in the level of comfort perceived in case of early booking, respectively the acceptance of any conditions by those who come on their own, regardless of whether they are below or above their financial possibilities (Postelnicu, 1999). At the same time, the quality of services decreases due to the maximum demands of the season, creating a state of tension between economic agents and tourists, the result being the dissatisfaction of the latter.

De facto, in the off-season, the situation is also negative in the sense that the level of occupancy is low for tourism operators (the consequences being reduced revenues, decreased capital and labor productivity, low or negative profits, prolonged periods of amortization of investments, etc.), to which are added temporary dismissals of staff that thus reduce their standard of living. In high season, however, they have to hire more seasonal staff, often unskilled or with a low level of professional qualification, the result being the poor quality of services provided, also at public level (to which is added the indifference of the authorities) by affecting the environment (pollution of water, air, soil, vegetation).

According to the KCPM the Romania's Black Sea tourist area has two cores: Constanța Municipality for the Northern area, respectively the Mangalia City for the Southern area. Constanța represents the Main Core, having as main peripheral area the resorts Mamaia and Năvodari, the latter being also called Mamaia-North, together with Eforie and Techirghiol in the South. Mangalia town represents the Secondary Core, the resorts near Comorova Forest (Olimp, Neptun, Jupiter, Cap Aurora, Venus and Saturn) being the Main Peripheral area immediately subordinated to it (Gheorghe, 2020). The Figure 1 shows the positioning from north to south of the resorts on the Romanian Black Sea coast.

Figure 1. The Krugman model applied to the Romanian seaside. Source: [Gheorghe, 2020](#).

3.2. The Northern Core-Periphery Area

Although the Northern Core-Periphery Area includes Periphery no. 1 North with wild, undeveloped beaches, it is the most economically developed, benefiting from most investments in *accommodation and food service structures* in the other two peripheries. Data from the Ministry of Tourism show that 5-star offers are rare (most in Năvodari - 33 units, Mamaia - 4 units and Constanța - 1 unit), most being 3 and 4 stars, Eforie Sud also benefiting from 2-star accommodations (Figure 2).

Figure 2. Accommodation offer in the Northern Core-Periphery Area by comfort categories (no. of units) (2018). Source: [N.I.S., 2019](#).

The report of the Ministry of Tourism shows that there are a total of 66,757 accommodation structures, of which 19.64% are in Năvodari Resort, 37.27% in Mamaia Resort, 5.27% - Constanța

Municipality, 26.66% - Eforie Nord, 9.8% - Eforie Sud and 2.08% - Techirghiol, without taking into account the comfort category (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Accommodation offer in the Northern Core-Periphery Area by comfort categories (no. of places) (2018). Source: N.I.S., 2019.

According to the same data provided by the Ministry of Tourism, the food service structures in the Northern Core-Periphery Area represent 65.30% of the entire seaside, most of which are concentrated in Mamaia, Constanța, and Eforie Nord (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Number of food service units in the Northern Core-Periphery Area (2018). Source: Ministry of Tourism, 2019.

Figure 5. The share of food service units in the Northern Core-Periphery Area on the entire seaside (%) (2018). Source: Ministry of Tourism, 2019.

Regarding the number of places related to food service units, Mamaia holds 30.10% of the total on the seaside, Eforie Nord - 15.60%, and Constanța 9.70% (Figure 5).

3.3. The Southern Core-Periphery Area

For the benefit of low-income tourists, in the Southern Core-Periphery Area the 3- and 2-star accommodation structures predominate, with the exception of the resorts Venus, Saturn and Mangalia where the 5 stars resorts are located (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Accommodation offer in the Southern Core-Periphery Area by comfort categories (no. of units) (2018). Source: [N.I.S., 2019](#).

Accommodation is concentrated on 3 star hotels (4,350 units) and 2 star hotels (1,454 units) especially in Jupiter and Venus (3,573 units, respectively 1,405 units), the 5 star ones being found in Venus (294 places), Saturn (182) places) and the Southern Core - Mangalia (142 places) (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Accommodation offer in the Southern Core-Periphery Area by comfort categories (No. of places) (2018). Source: [N.I.S., 2019](#).

At the level of food service units, the offer is richer in Peripheral Area no. 2 (Neptun - Olimp with 99 structures representing 7.80% of the entire capacity of the seaside and Venus with 52 structures, representing 4.10% of the capacity of the seaside), followed by Peripheral Area no. 1 from the South (Costinești with 88 structures representing 7.00% of capacity) and the South Core - Mangalia (55 structures, respectively 4.30% of capacity); the rest of the units in the Peripheral Area no. 2 and 3 in the South cannot offer their services to a very large number of tourists (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Number of food service units in the Southern Core-Periphery Area. Source: [Ministry of Tourism, 2019](#).

The number of seats keeps the same dynamics, being concentrated in the Peripheral Area no.2 (Neptun-Olimp - 10.40% of dining places on the entire seaside, respectively Venus with 4.40%), Peripheral Area no. 1 (Costinești by 8.20%) and Mangalia Core by 4.00% (Figure 9).

Figure 9. The share of food service units in the Southern Core-Periphery Area on the entire seaside (%) (2018). Source: [Ministry of Tourism, 2019](#).

Figure 10. Food service structures on the Romanian seaside by comfort category (%) (2018) Source: [N.I.S., 2019](#).

As in the case of the accommodation offer, in the studied Area the table seats of category 2 and 3 stars predominate (2 stars - 85,702 seats / 48.10%; 3 stars - 61,099 seats / 34.30%) (Figure 10).

3.4. Distribution of seasonality on the Romanian seaside

In order for the Romanian seaside to become attractive even in the off-season, spa, business and cultural tourism should be combined, given the relatively low prices. Unfortunately, Romania, being at the 45° N lat., the interest of tourists coincides with the offer of services during the summer.

Promoting the idea of making a profit even in the off-season will have to be in line with the accommodation and food offer. The North core-periphery area contains accommodation and food

service units open all year round (considering that here we have the Constanța Core, a commercial and tourist port with the largest spas - Eforie Nord and Eforie Sud, respectively Techirghiol), while in the Southern Core-Periphery Area only the Mangalia Core and the second Peripheral Area, Neptun-Olimp, have units open in the off-season as well.

Hotels opened in winter

The North Area contains 44 units (Năvodari - 3 units, Mamaia - 18 units, Constanța Municipality - 17 units, Eforie Nord - 6 units), and in the South Area 7 units (Neptun-Olimp - 1 unit, Mangalia Municipality - 6 units), totaling 7,117 accommodation places (6,163 places in the North - 85% and 1,054 places in the South - 15%) (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Number of accommodation units open in winter on the entire seaside (%) (2018) Source: [Ministry of Tourism, 2019](#).

Figure 12. Accommodation units open in summer vs. those open in winter on the entire seaside (%) (2018) Source: [Ministry of Tourism, 2019](#).

Comparing with the units open during the season with those in the off-season, we find that only 3% of all hotels are open in winter (Figure 12).

All-inclusive hotels

Due to the fact that it is too cold in the off-season to dine on the terrace, a number of hotels have developed as an all-inclusive. Searching the available databases, out of the 51 permanently open hotels (with a total capacity of 7,117 seats), most are located along the Mamaia Nord-Mamaia-Constanța axis (Northern Core-Periphery Area), representing approximately 10% of the maximum hotel capacity on the Black Sea seaside (Figure 13).

Figure 13. All-inclusive accommodation units on the entire seaside (2018). Source: [Ministry of Tourism, 2019](#).

From another point of view, *all-inclusive* hotels are relatively evenly distributed between the two nuclei: 48% in the North (14 units / 3,776 seats) and 52% in the South (15 units / 6,097 seats) (Figure 14).

Figure 14. No. of places in accommodation structures in the Northern vs. the Southern Core-Periphery Area (2018). Source: [Ministry of Tourism, 2019](#).

Structures with treatment and wellness functions

In Constanța County, 21 treatment bases are authorized to carry out their activity, which can perform 24,800 procedures daily: Eforie Nord (7 units), Techirghiol (5 units), Saturn (3 units), Eforie Sud, Mangalia, Neptun, Năvodari, Costinești and Mamaia one unit each.

In the Northern Area are found most of the treatment bases, as follows: Năvodari (1 unit / 278 places), Mamaia (1 unit/484 places), Eforie Nord (7 units, of which 1 unit with state capital/1,954 places), Eforie Sud (1 unit/44 places), Techirghiol (5 units, of which 3 with state capital/278 places).

According to the statistics provided by the National Institute for Tourism Research and Development (I.N.C.D.T.), on the Romanian seaside, 24,800 medical procedures are performed daily. Thus, 70 procedures are performed in Năvodari, 5,610 procedures in Eforie Nord, 200 procedures in Eforie Sud and 9,520 procedures in Techirghiol. In 2016, the analysis performed by the above-mentioned institution shows that medical procedures are no longer performed in Mamaia.

The comfort level within the treatment bases in the Northern Core-Periphery Area is 5 stars per 1 unit in Năvodari (5%), 4 stars per 2 units (1 unit - Eforie Nord, 1 unit - Techirghiol, representing 11%), 3 stars at 4 units (1 unit - Mamaia, 2 units at Eforie Nord and 1 at Eforie Sud, representing 34%), 2 stars at 2 units (1 unit - Eforie Nord, 1 unit - Techirghiol, representing 11%) and 1 star at 4 units (1 unit - Eforie Nord, 3 units at Techirghiol, representing 34%).

In the Southern Core - Periphery Area there are few treatment bases, as follows: Neptune 1 unit/601 places, Saturn 3 units/1,698 places and Mangalia Municipality 1 unit with state capital/350 places.

Out of a total of 24,800 medical procedures, according to statistics provided by the I.N.C.D.T. in 2016, in the Southern Core-Periphery Area, 9,400 daily procedures can be performed: 2,400 procedures are performed in Neptune, 4,000 procedures in Saturn and 3,000 procedures in Mangalia.

Throughout the analysis, it was observed that the degree of comfort within the treatment bases in the Southern Core-Periphery Area is lower than that of the Northern Core-Periphery Area, especially since it does not have any 4- and 5- star units, but only 2- and 3- star units: 3 stars

at 4 units (1 unit - Neptun, 3 units - Saturn, representing 75%) and 2 stars at 1 unit in Mangalia (representing 25%) (Figure 15).

Figure 15. The degree of comfort within the treatment bases in the Northern vs. the Southern Core-Periphery Area (2018). Data source: [Ministry of Tourism, 2019](#).

Infrastructure for business tourism

As one of the largest economic centers in South-Eastern Romania and the most important port on the Black Sea, Constanța can be a potential business tourism destination, with specific structures for organizing large events of public and private interest (fairs, exhibitions, conferences) within the Constanța Exhibition Pavilion ([C.C.I.N.A. Constanța, 2019](#)), held by the Constanța County Council.

There are also other spaces for organizing smaller events, such as the Exhibition Center, but also conference rooms with different capacities:

- Ceremony Hall, capacity 372 seats;
- Red Hall, capacity 70 seats;
- Blue Hall, capacity 35 seats;
- Green Hall, capacity 25 seats;
- Nicodim Hall.

Involvement in this form of tourism is achieved through the Constanța Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Navigation and Agriculture, an autonomous legal entity, non-governmental, of public utility, apolitical, non-lucrative, non-profit organization, created for the purpose to represent, defend and support the interests of its members and the business community in relation to public authorities and bodies in the country and abroad ([C.C.I.N.A. Constanța, 2019](#)).

Among others, C.C.I.N.A. Constanța supports the business community by promoting key areas of the regional economy (navigation, tourism, agriculture, trade), organizing fairs, exhibitions, business forums, economic partnership actions, in the country and abroad, support offered to traders to participate in fairs and exhibitions abroad, etc.

In order to stimulate local business and to facilitate partnerships at national and international level, C.C.I.N.A. Constanța operates a number of business centers covering the following areas:

- Enterprise Europe Network - business in the European space;
- Entrepreneurship Information and Assistance Office – starting and developing a business;
- Regional Contact Point ORIZONT 2020 - research and innovation programs;
- Regional Center for the Promotion of Intellectual Property Protection - protection

of intellectual property;

- Euro-Agriculture Center - European funds for rural areas and agriculture;
- Technology Information Center (CIT) - innovation and technology transfer;
- TradeNet Constanța - business in the Black Sea basin area;
- BU.RO.COOP and EuroDobrogea - Romanian-Bulgarian cross-border affairs;
- Corporate Social Responsibility Assistance Office;
- Romanian Business School - Constanța branch - professional training.

The organization of business events (business meetings, round tables, seminars and trainings, presentations of companies and products, etc.) can be done in the two conference rooms with capacities of 140 seats, respectively 15 seats.

In order to develop this type of tourism, many hotels and structures with related facilities offer accommodation and support in this regard:

Northern Core-Periphery Area: 240 units: 29 units - Mamaia Nord (of which 12 accommodation structures with conference rooms, and 15 of them are hotels), 93 units - Mamaia (of which 48 accommodation structures with conference rooms, and 86 of them are hotels), 25 units - Constanța (of which 18 accommodation structures with conference rooms, all within the hotels), 75 units - Eforie Nord (of which 23 accommodation structures with conference rooms, and 55 of them are hotels), 20 units - Eforie Sud (of which 5 accommodation structures with conference rooms, and 5 of them are hotels) and 2 units - Techirghiol (located within the hotels).

Southern Core-Periphery Area: 170 units: 40 units - Costinești (of which 10 accommodation structures with conference rooms, and 21 of them are hotels), 41 units - Neptun-Olimp (of which 11 accommodation structures with conference rooms, and 39 of them are hotels), 21 units - Jupiter (of which 11 accommodation structures with conference rooms, and 18 of them are hotels), 25 units - Venus (of which 11 accommodation structures with conference rooms, and 25 of them are hotels), 22 units - Saturn (of which 3 accommodation structures with conference rooms, and 16 of them are hotels), 10 units - Mangalia (of which 6 accommodation structures with conference rooms, and 9 of them are hotels), 7 units - Vama Veche-2 Mai (of which 3 accommodation structures with conference rooms, and 4 of them are hotels) (Figure 16).

Figure 16. Number of accommodation structures with conference rooms in both Core-Periphery areas (2018). Source: [Ministry of Tourism, 2019](#).

At the level of the two areas it is found that there are 161 accommodation structures with conference rooms (39%) and 328 hotels that have conference rooms (61%), the share of the North Area being 66%, and of the South Area 34%.

On the entire territory of Constanța County one can also use the existing infrastructure within the community centers or of the different business centers that have appeared recently:

- The "Lucian Grigorescu" Trade Union Community Center (Medgidia Municipality) - has a room for conferences, meetings and reception organization (72 sqm); ground floor foyer (290 sqm), first floor foyer (190 sqm), hall for cultural-artistic activities (84 sqm). It hosts various cultural activities, but also conferences and congresses, business presentations, exhibitions of traditional and contemporary art, as well as product fairs in all fields ([Cernavodă City Hall, 2020](#)).
- The "I.N.Roman" Community Center (Medgidia municipality) - has a performance hall, where conferences can be organized;
- The Community Center (Hârșova city) - has a performance hall (364 seats), which can be used for organizing conferences. Within the building there are also 3 foyers where you can organize activities with a small number of guests (50 people).
- The "Terasele Dunării" Cross-border Center for Oenology and Viticulture (Ostrov commune) - has a conference room (40 seats);
- The Cross-border business center, Valu lui Traian - has a conference room;
- The Carmen Sylva Business Center (Eforie Town, Eforie Sud) - has 2 conference rooms;
- The Trittech Business Center (Poarta Albă Commune) - has 2 conference rooms.
- The Năvodari Business Center - has 5 meeting rooms, 2 exhibition halls, 1 amphitheater with a capacity of 400 seats ([Creative Eye, 2020](#)).

Currently, there is a need to develop new infrastructures with large *indoor* capacities (1,500-2,000 seats), on the one hand to attract new customers, and on the other hand to be able to develop this form of tourism as much as possible. In this regard, we believe that in order to attract as large a group of professionals as possible, it is necessary to set up a Convention Bureau.

4. Conclusions

The slight economic growth and the relative financial stability in the last years have led to the conclusion that the offer presented by the providers of services and goods from the tourism industry is starting to become, very slowly, attractive to the domestic or foreign tourists. Unfortunately, there are large discrepancies in the relationship between services and prices, which means that in some areas, investments in units and infrastructure are very small or non-existent.

Thus, most investors focus on the Northern Core-Periphery Area, the Mamaia-Mamaia Nord-Năvodari axis, especially since here are available the most valuable structures in terms of accommodation, entertainment and leisure in general. In comparison, the Southern Core-Periphery Area remains for the youth, although, lately, investments have appeared here as well, especially in the Jupiter resort.

The offers try, as much as possible, to attract tourists, be they Romanian or foreign, but the way in which the strategies are carried out does not help reach their expected goal, with the balance of the flow of tourists leaning towards other countries.

The summer tourism base consists of 2- and 3-star units, unattractive for foreign tourists, with 4- and 5-star hotels being exceptions. The last hotels are mostly located in the North Area, which also shows the attractiveness of the development of these areas.

Krugman describes very well the relationship between the core and the periphery. In the Northern Area, where both the administrative center of the county and the economic center are located, the relations towards the periphery gradually decrease, maintaining a certain economic balance. This is the reason why the Mamaia-Mamaia Nord axis is extremely developed, and as we

move away, constancy is maintained, for example, between the comfort of the accommodation units, which keeps the stability of the area and the offer.

Also, here we meet most forms of leisure, from simple walks on the beach to amusement parks, museums, scientific objectives, etc., which complete the good image of the Northern Area that was created in time.

In comparison, also using Krugman's model, the Southern Area is less evolved, although, theoretically, it should have been at almost the same level as the Northern Area. The development of the offer is relatively small, most of the hotels in this area being 2 and 3 stars, and the leisure units are not enough to really attract tourists, but rather to exploit their arrival there.

In both Areas, the food service structures are best developed. The multitude of restaurants, terraces, fish markets, fast food places, etc. can satisfy any food lover, offering either local or international cuisines, and from the point of view of arrangement, the trends are thematic, with the scent of local heroes or being part of large international chains.

A not negligible aspect is business tourism, a component that is almost underdeveloped, although there is a slight increase in this trend. For the time being, the units that own or have conference rooms or business offices are sufficient, but, as we have shown, some investments are needed to ensure a continuous flow of tourists, especially in the off-season.

Speaking of the off-season, we find the Romanian seaside is not lively at all, the few accommodation structures - in fact, it is still the North Area that is chosen by tourists - are those that have treatment bases. Unfortunately, the number of stars in comfort level revolves around the figure 3, which, foreign tourists and also Romanian tourists in most cases, consider inappropriate for themselves and their families.

Krugman addresses the fact that the periphery will always relate to the center. The Romanian seaside is a faithful example of Krugman's theory in terms of developing the particularities of the tourist offer and product, given that the center is the one that coordinates all activity and provides the guide according to which the periphery(-ies) should develop. This tendency is observed, as mentioned before, on the axes Mamaia - Mamaia Nord - Năvodari, respectively Eforie Nord - Techirghiol - Eforie Sud on the one hand, and on the other hand the axes Saturn - Mangalia - Vama Veche, Neptun - Olimp - Jupiter .

From the analysis conducted briefly throughout the article, we find that the Southern Core-Periphery Area tends to develop as much as its older sister, but, for economic and strategic reasons, it still cannot reach it.

This concise radiography of the state of Romanian tourism shows that the public and private environment should cooperate in an objective way and not in a subjective way, in which personal interests are above national interests. The creation of a legislative framework, drawn from the model created by Paul Krugman, should allow everyone in the industry to develop harmoniously, in line with tourism supply and demand, so that the profitability of the industry increases and thus becomes an international tool strong enough to develop the nation.

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