

# Comparative Analysis between Romanian and Bulgarian International Tourism

Andreea MARIN-PANTELESCU

Bucharest University of Economic Studies, Faculty of Business and Tourism, Romania  
E-mail: marindeea@yahoo.com

Laura Cristina MANIU

Romanian-American University, School of Domestic and International Economy of Tourism,  
Romania, E-mail: laura.maniu@gmail.com

DOI Link: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v6-i2/2025>

Published Date: 19 February 2016

## Abstract

International tourism present complex challenges for a specific country and for the development of that country, because it must serve the range of needs of international tourists as well as the resident community. The international tourism is a key driver of the economy and the countries are trying to do their best in attracting more and more tourists each year. The paper intents to make a comparative analysis between Romanian and Bulgarian international tourism regarding the following aspects of the tourism activity: the international tourist arrivals, the international tourism receipts, and the trends in tourists' traffic.

**Keywords:** Tourism, International Tourist Arrivals, International Tourism Receipts

## 1. Introduction

The concept of international tourism according to The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) represents "all displacements that do not convert the traveller into a resident and that are outside his/her usual environment". The international tourism is classified by country of residence<sup>1</sup>.

The concept of international travel (Holloway, 2004) signifies "*all displacements that do not convert the international traveller into a resident (whether usual or non-usual environment)*". The international travel classified by nationality. It is recommended that travelers (and visitors) be classified on the basis of their country of residence. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Glossary of Statistical Terms, the international tourist industry of a country may be defined as "*the sum of domestic*

---

1

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/tradeserv/Workshops/Chisinau/docs/05%20a%20-%20UNWTO-Basis%20concepts.pdf>

activities that directly support the consumption of goods and services of foreign tourists in the country”<sup>2</sup>.

The paper intends to make a comparative analysis between Romanian and Bulgarian international tourism regarding the following aspects of the tourism activity: the international tourist arrivals, the international tourism receipts, and the trends in tourist’s traffic.

## **2. The present state of knowledge**

Regarding the international tourism activity, there is rarely a single actor implicated in creating a good experience for the international tourists, and for these particular reasons the destination managers should have a pertinent set of goals and aims (Shaw and Williams, 2000).

A country must respond to the need and preferences of the international tourists, offering accommodation structures, food and beverage units, means of transportation, entertainments and other tourism facilities, and all these have to function together as a harmonious union (Wearne and Baker, 2002). An important question is rising: “So, why is so important the international tourism for the state economy?”

First, tourism makes an important contribution to GDP creation, and specific countries depend entirely on tourism for survival. Also tourism brings its strong contribution to the creation of added value (Minciu, 2000). The tourism activity contributes to the development of other supporting industries, such as transport, finance, food and beverage, insurance, construction, health, entertainment, and so on.

Second, international tourism is part of the international trade with services, contributing to the balance of payments and providing wealth in a country (Marin-Pantelescu, 2009). International tourism brings a large increase in exports and concurs to the diversification of the exports.

Third, the international tourism is a jobs creator, both for the tourism sector and for other economic sectors. Last, but not least, must mention the multiplier effect of international tourism, which in its easiest form is how many times money spent by a tourist circulates through a country's economy<sup>3</sup>.

The spread of tourism has lead to economic and employment advantages in many related sectors, from agriculture to industry, from construction to telecommunications. What it can be said about the magnitude of the world international tourism? With International tourism receipts (ITR): US\$ 1245 billion and International tourism receipts (ITR): US\$ 1245 billion, the tourism activity represents the fastest way to growth the wealth of a specific country<sup>4</sup>.

Regarding Europe, with 581,769,000 international tourist arrivals in 2014 and 508,897 million US\$ international tourism receipts<sup>5</sup>, the tourism activity express the importance for the economic prosperity of each destinations. With over 1.1 billion tourists taking an international trip every year, tourism continues to be an important force and a key factor of the global economic saving. Tourism contributes crucial to job making, poverty alleviation, environmental protection and multicultural harmony and understanding. International

---

<sup>2</sup> <https://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=5878>

<sup>3</sup> <http://geographyfieldwork.com/TouristMultiplier.htm>

<sup>4</sup> [http://dtxtq4w60xqpw.cloudfront.net/sites/all/files/pdf/unwto\\_annual\\_report\\_2014.pdf](http://dtxtq4w60xqpw.cloudfront.net/sites/all/files/pdf/unwto_annual_report_2014.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <http://www2.unwto.org/content/why-tourism>, Why tourism? Tourism – an economic and social phenomenon

tourist arrivals increase by 4.4% in 2015 to achieve a total of 1,184 million in 2015, according to the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer. Roughly 50 million more tourists (overnight visitors) traveled to international tourism destinations around the world in the year 2015 as compared to year 2014<sup>6</sup>.

### 3. Research methodology

The present paper analyzes the statistic data from the Romania National Institute of Statistics and from Bulgaria Statistical Yearbook 2014.

The study makes statistic data comparison and calculates shares and change for the particular series data. The results are integrated in tables and graphs, which highlight the evolution and the transformation of the international tourism phenomenon.

### 4. Analyzing Romanian and Bulgarian international tourism

Moving forward into the new era of international tourism, first we want to see the magnitude of the arrivals of foreign visitors in Romania and the evolution of this data series during 2010 and 2014. The total arrivals of foreign visitors in Romania in 2014 were 8,442,000, with 5.3% more than in 2013, representing a positive thing for the tourism activity in our country.

Table no.1

Arrivals of foreign visitors in Romania by continents (Thousands persons)

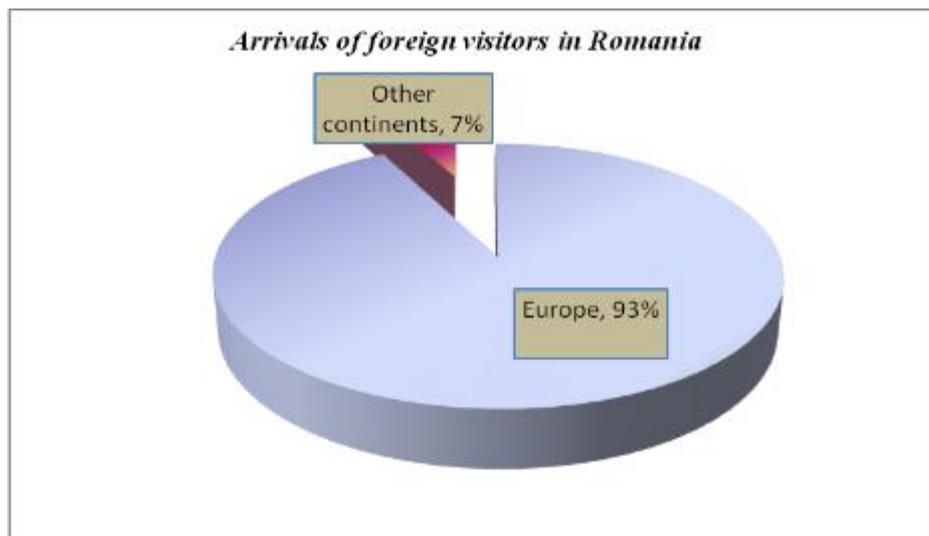
Country	Year				
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Europe	7098	7180	7473	7526	7815
North America	171	182	207	209	294
Asia	195	211	216	241	285
Africa	21	22	24	25	28
Australia	13	16	17	18	20
Total	7498	7611	7937	8019	8442

**Source:** Romania National Institute of Statistics<sup>7</sup>

Regarding, the arrivals of foreign visitors in Romania by continents in 2014, we can notice the fact that Europe continues to have the supremacy with 93% from the total arrivals of foreign visitors in Romania.

<sup>6</sup> <http://media.unwto.org/press-release/2016-01-18/international-tourist-arrivals-4-reach-record-12-billion-2015>

<sup>7</sup> <http://statistici.inse.ro/shop/index.jsp?page=tempo3&lang=en&ind=TUR107C>



*Graph no 1.* Arrivals of foreign visitors in Romania

Analyzing the arrivals of foreign visitors in Romania by origin countries in 2014, it can be highlight that 1,209,000 persons from Bulgaria chose Romania for tourism. Significant countries that also have chosen Romania were Hungary, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

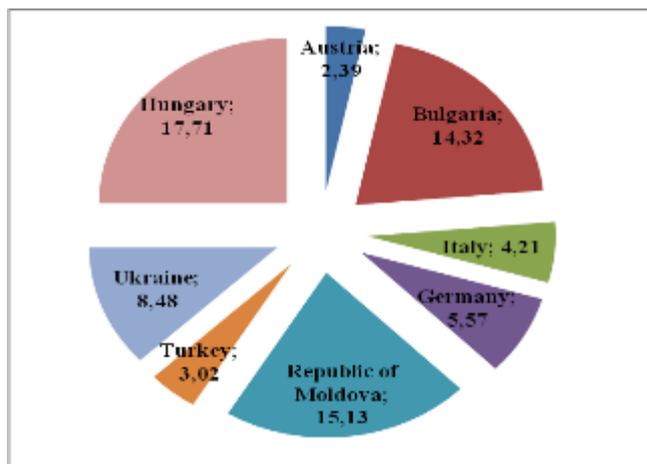
Table no. 2

Arrivals of foreign visitors in Romania by origin countries in 2014 (Thousands persons)

	<b>2014</b>	<b>Share</b>
Total, of which:	8442	100
Austria	202	2.39
<i>Bulgaria</i>	<i>1209</i>	<i>14.32</i>
Italy	355	4.21
Germany	470	5.57
Republic of Moldova	1277	15.13
Turkey	255	3.02
Ukraine	716	8.48
Hungary	1495	17.71

**Source:** Calculated using Romania National Institute of Statistics<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> <http://statistici.insse.ro/shop/index.jsp?page=tempo3&lang=en&ind=TUR107C>



Graph no. 2 Countries that provides most of arrivals of foreign visitors in Romania in 2014

Concerning the departures abroad of Romania visitors, during 2010-2014, it can be seen an increase from year after year, with more than 8% growth in 2014 compared to 2013.

Table no. 3

Departures abroad of Romania visitors

Year	Thousands persons
2010	10905
2011	10936
2012	11149
2013	11364
2014	12299

**Source:** Romania National Institute of Statistics<sup>9</sup>

With respect to the arrivals of visitors from abroad to Bulgaria, the total number of foreign arrivals was 9,191,782 in 2013, with 3.7% more than 2012.

The arrivals of visitors from Romania to Bulgaria during 2009-2013 continued to grow year by year, from 1,398,694 in 2010 to 1,465,600 in 2013; this means that Romanian tourists prefer Bulgaria tourist services.

Table no. 4

Arrivals of visitors from abroad to Bulgaria (Number)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Total	7872805	8374034	8712821	8866552	9191782
EU	5480832	5447092	5567705	5374403	5362776
Romania	1398694	1445342	1499415	1468179	1465600

**Source:** Statistical Yearbook 2014<sup>10</sup>

As well, we investigated the evolution of trips of Bulgarian residents abroad during 2009-2013, and around 3,900,000 Bulgarian tourists traveled abroad in 2013. Most of them were taking trips to the counties of European Union.

<sup>9</sup> <http://statistici.inse.ro/shop/>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/publications/God2014.pdf>

Table no. 5

Trips of Bulgarian residents abroad (Number)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Total	4993034	3675936	3803240	3757882	3929648
EU	2905763	1784252	1937490	1892689	2080367
Romania	445447	288187	327555	318112	308306

**Source:** *Statistical Yearbook 2014*<sup>11</sup>

Regarding the trips of Bulgarian residents in Romania by purpose of visit in 2013, it can be seen that from the total of 308,306 tourists, 27.5% chose holiday and recreation, 30.4% chose business and professional reasons and 42.1% chose other purposes of visiting Romania like education and medical treatment.

Table no. 6

Trips of Bulgarian residents in Romania by purpose of visit in 2013 (Number)

Country	Purpose of visit			Total
	Holiday and recreation	Professional	Others*	
Romania	84833	93795	129678	308306
Share	27.5	30.4	42.1	100

\*Incl. medical therapy, education and others

**Source:** calculated after *Statistical Yearbook 2014*<sup>12</sup>

Comparing Romania and Bulgaria international tourist arrivals in 2010, 2012 and 2014, we can see positive and important effects of the international tourism for the national economy.

The Romania international tourist arrivals experienced a growth of 23% in 2012/2010 and with 15.7% in 2014/2012. In 2014, the Romania International Tourist Arrivals represented nearly 2 million tourists. The Bulgaria international tourist arrivals experienced a lower growth than Romania, with 8.2% in 2012/2010 and 11.8% in 2014/2012. In 2014, the Bulgaria International Tourist Arrivals represented more than 7 million tourists.

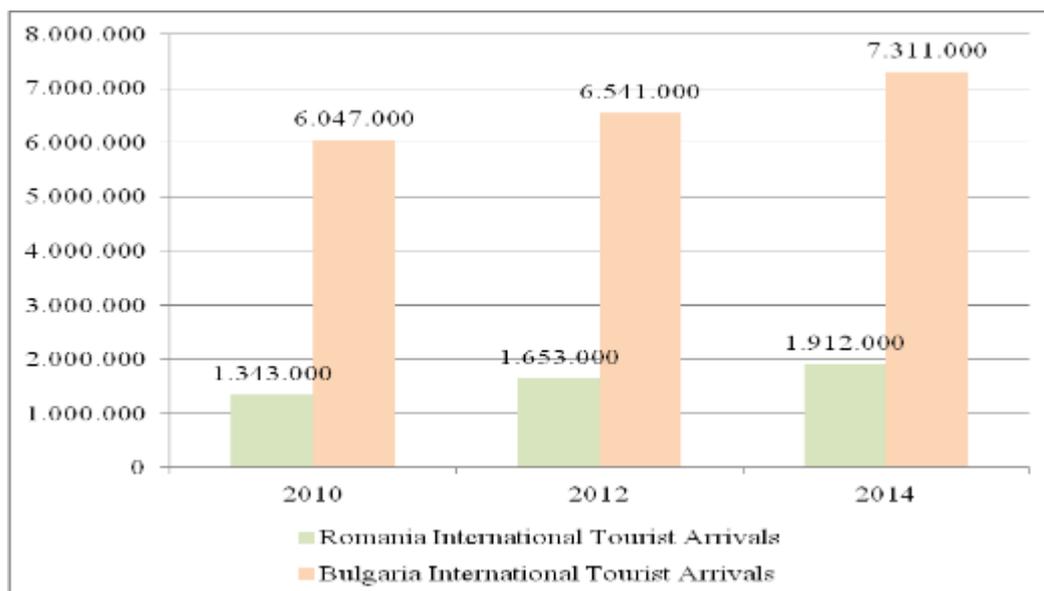
Table no. 7

International Tourist Arrivals

Destinations	2010	2012	2014	Change (%)		Share (%)
				12/10	14/12	2014
Europe	488,864,000	540,229,000	581,769,000	+10.5	+7.7	100
Central/Eastern Europe	98,389,000	118,211,000	127,350,000	+20.1	+7.7	20.8
Romania	1,343,000	1,653,000	1,912,000	+23.1	+15.7	0.3
Bulgaria	6,047,000	6,541,000	7,311,000	+8.2	+11.8	1.3

**Source:** Calculated using the data collected by UNWTO May 2015, World Tourism Organization, UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2015 Edition, p. 8

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/publications/God2014.pdf><sup>12</sup> <http://www.nsi.bg/sites/default/files/files/publications/God2014.pdf>



Graph no. 3 The evolution of the Romania and Bulgaria international tourist arrivals

Comparing the International Tourism Receipts in 2010, 2012, and 2014 for the Romania and Bulgaria, it can be seen a positive and prosper evolution for the counties' economy.

Regarding the Romania International Tourism Receipts in 2012/2010 was recorded an important increase with 28.8% and in 2014/2014 the increase was also significant (23.5%).

In 2014, the Romania International Tourism Receipts reached 1,813 million US\$ and the Bulgaria International Tourism Receipts recorded 4,134 million US\$.

With respect to Bulgaria International Tourism Receipts we found that the growth in 2012/2010 was of 3% and in 2014/2012 was of 10.3%.

The considerable difference between Romania and Bulgaria international tourism is due to the following factors: the services provided at the tourism destinations, the tourist services prices, the investments, the entertainment services and the tourism stakeholders involvement.

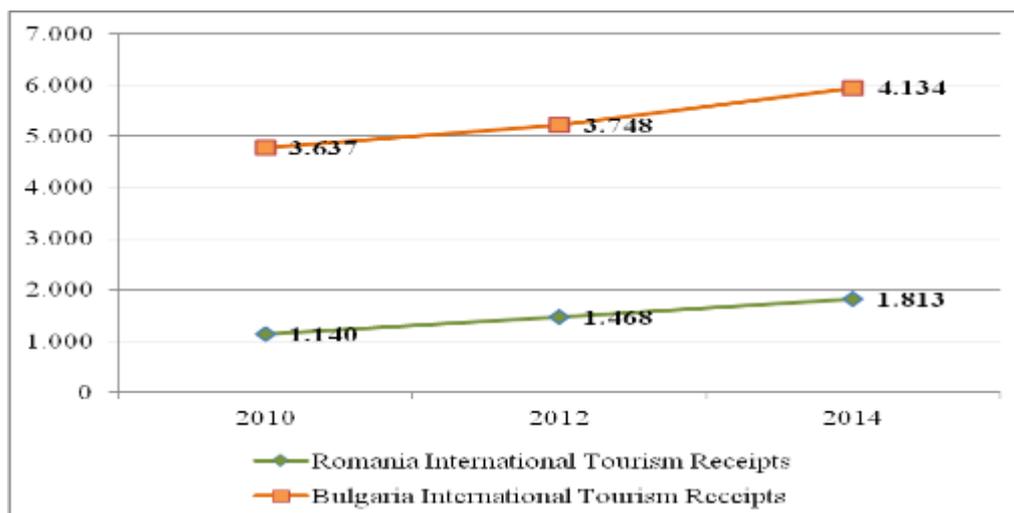
Table no. 8

#### International Tourism Receipts

Destinations	2010	2012	2014	Change (%)		Share (%)
	US\$ million			12/10	14/12	2014
Europe	411,615	454,658	508,897	+10.5	+11.9	100
Central/Eastern Europe	48,249	56,585	57,725	+17.3	+2.0	11.3
Romania	1,140	1,468	1,813	+28.8	+23.5	0.4
Bulgaria	3,637	3,748	4,134	+3.0	+10.3	0.8

**Source:** Calculated using the data collected by UNWTO May 2015, World Tourism Organization, UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2015 Edition, p8

Bulgaria delivers competitive all-inclusive services, has renovated tourism resorts, attractive prices and the resorts have renowned assured in time. The investments in Bulgaria tourism were from Germany and Austria tour-operators. The Bulgaria resorts benefits of entertainment activities, accessibility is ensured, and the environment cleanliness is protected.



Graph no. 4. The evolution of the Romania and Bulgaria international tourism receipts (US\$ million)

Romania international tourism is situated on an upward trend, and must catch up the development of Bulgaria international tourism. The efforts has to be concentrated on the destination accessibility, cleanliness, stakeholders involvement, fighting resort congestion, attractive prices, all inclusive services, accommodation refurbishment, entertainment facilities. Also, Romania tourism has to promote form of tourism like *religious and pilgrimage tourism*, adventure tourism, mountain tourism, *conference and event tourism*, *medical tourism*, and cultural tourism.

## 5. Conclusions

Analyzing the arrivals of foreign visitors in Romania by origin countries in 2014, it can be highlight that 1,209,000 persons from Bulgaria chose Romania for tourism. Significant countries that also have chosen Romania were Hungary, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.

The arrivals of visitors from Romania to Bulgaria during 2009-2013 continued to grow year by year, from 1,398,694 in 2010 to 1,465,600 in 2013; this means that Romanian tourists prefer Bulgaria tourist services.

Regarding the trips of Bulgarian residents in Romania by purpose of visit in 2013, it can be seen that from the total of 308,306 tourists, 27.5% chose holiday and recreation, 30.4% chose business and professional reasons and 42.1% chose other proposes of visiting Romania like education and medical treatment.

The Romania international tourist arrivals experienced a growth of 23% in 2012/2010 and with 15.7% in 2014/2012. In 2014, the Romania International Tourist Arrivals represented nearly 2 million tourists. The Bulgaria international tourist arrivals experienced a lower growth that Romania, with 8.2% in 2012/2010 and 11.8% in 2014/2012. In 2014, the Bulgaria International Tourist Arrivals represented more than 7 million tourists. In 2014, the Romania International Tourism Receipts reached 1,813 million US\$ and the Bulgaria International Tourism Receipts recorded 4,134 million US\$. In conclusion, Romania will have to make all necessary efforts to attract more foreign tourists offering a quality and price report above tourists expectations.

**6. References**

- Holloway, C. (2004). Marketing for Tourism 4th Edition
- Howie, F. (2003). Managing the tourist destination, Continuum, London
- Marin-Pantelescu, A. (2009). Diversificarea si personalizarea serviciilor turistice in contextul globalizarii, Editura ASE, Bucuresti
- Minciu, R. (2000). Economia Turismului, Editura Uranus, Bucuresti
- Shaw, G. and Williams, A. (2000). Critical Issues in Tourism, Second Edition, UK
- Tribe, J. (2005). The Economics of recreation, leisure and tourism, Elsevier, Third Edition, Great Britain
- Wearne, N. and Baker, K. (2002). Hospitality Marketing in the e-Commerce age, Second Edition, Australia