

ANALYSIS OF TOURISTS' BEHAVIOR IN CLUJ-NAPOCA, ROMANIA

Valentin TOADER

University Babes-Bolyai, Faculty of Business, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, Email: valentin.toader@tbs.ubbcluj.ro

Adina Letiția NEGRUȘA

University Babes-Bolyai, Faculty of Business, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, Email: adina.negrusa@tbs.ubbcluj.ro

Smaranda Adina COSMA

University Babes-Bolyai, Faculty of Business, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, Email: smaranda.cosma@tbs.ubbcluj.ro

Cristina BOLOG

University Babes-Bolyai, Faculty of Geography, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, cpatratu@gmail.com

Marius George OPREA

University Babes-Bolyai, Faculty of Geography, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, Email:

Marius LAZIN

Information Tourist Center Cluj-Napoca, Romania, Email:

Veronica Rozalia RUS

University Babes-Bolyai, Faculty of Business, Cluj-Napoca, Romania, Email: veronica.rus@tbs.ubbcluj.ro

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to characterize the behavior of tourists' visiting Cluj-Napoca – one of the Romanian candidate city for the title of European Cultural Capital in 2021. To analyze the tourists' behavior we are implementing an exploratory and a descriptive research, using the tools of descriptive, inferential and econometric statistics.

The questionnaire is the tool we use to collect primary data. It has two sections, the first being focus on tourists' motivation to visit Cluj-Napoca, while the second emphasizes the expenditures made during their visit. In order to assure the representativeness of the data collected, the questionnaires were implemented in the main spots of the city. The study was implemented for the first time in 2015 (June – July) and it is continued in 2016 during the timespan April – June.

The first data we collected emphasizes that the tourists in Cluj-Napoca are young (57% are below 30 years), educated (50% have at least a bachelor degree) and are earning an average income. Half of them are spending at most 3 nights in the city, 14% are not staying overnight, while one quart of them are for the first time in Cluj-Napoca. Their personal interest (visiting friends and relatives, medical reasons and shopping) and their attendance to festivals, concerts and other cultural events represents the main reasons for Romanian tourist visiting the city. The foreign tourist are young, educated and are coming especially from Hungary, Germany and France. Their purpose to visit the city are recreation and the interest to attend festivals, concerts and other cultural events.

1. INTRODUCTION

Each destination attracts tourists through the products and services offered. Individual motivation is the initiator of the tourists' choices. Tourists show certain behavior before, during and after travelling. They behave in a certain way according to their attitude toward a tourism product. Tourism is a response to felt needs and acquired values within temporal, spatial, social, and economic parameters. Once needs and/or values have been activated and applied to a holiday scenario, the generated motivation constitutes a major parameter in expectation formation. Expectations, in turn, determine performance perceptions of products and services as well as perceptions of experiences. Therefore, understanding the tourists' behavior and more specific consumers' motives is a key prerequisite to designing and tailoring offerings to particular markets (Park, Reisinger & Kang, 2008). Tourists' behavior plays an important role in tourism. As Laws (1995) points out, understanding tourist's choices and behavior is crucial in determining the management and the development of destination facilities. Effective marketing and managements is impossible unless the tourists' motivation were identified, understood, and prioritized. Also Gunn (1984) suggested that knowledge of the market demand is an essential aspect of tourism planning. Knowing the motivation of visitors allows tourism stakeholders to intercede more successfully at various points in the tourists' decision-making process, resulting in the attraction of more visitors, getting them to stay longer, increasing their enjoyment, changing anti-social behavior, and much more (Dewar, Meyer & Li, 2001).

There are many studies and researchers which have identified factors influencing tourists' behavior and analyzed how the behavior changed in accordance with them (Cohen, 1972, 1979; Hamilton-Smith, 1987; Ryan and Robertson, 1997; Smith, 1977; Yiannakis and Gibson, 1992). These factors could be considered into some categories like: demographic (e.g., age, gender, marital status, stage of life), social (e.g., social class), economic (e.g., income, spending patterns, employment), cultural (e.g., values, norms, customs), geographic (e.g., origin, trip destination), psychographic (e.g., personality, needs, attitudes, lifestyle, emotions, preferences, benefits sought), and behavioral (e.g., buyer status, buying rates, activities, experiences). The tourist's personal and psychological characteristics and the decision process influence his/her responses such as product selection, pricing acceptance, seller and service choice, reactions to product promotion, purchase

location, amount, and timing. But, according to Yvett Reisinger, even if many demographic, economic, or socio-psychological variables, that are used to characterize tourists, are common to many individuals, the ways by which individual tourists express themselves are very different. Accordingly, each type of tourist has different priorities, preferences and behavior. Therefore, dealing with multiple types of tourists means dealing with their multiple and diverse behaviors.

In the light of that understanding why tourists choose a destination, an event or a cultural asset for visiting, and how tourists behave in his/her experience are fundamental for making decisions about tourism products and destination development.

This study provides exactly this type of information to the persons who are responsible in Cluj-Napoca with the process of candidature to the European Cultural Capital in 2021. In the next years, if the title will be obtained, there will have to develop different programs and actions and all these will have to be planned and organized according to the characteristics and the needs of the visitors and local participants.

2. METHODOLOGY

To analyze the travelers' behavior in Cluj-Napoca, we conducted an exploratory and descriptive research, using the tools of descriptive and inferential statistics. The research method was the survey and the secondary data analysis.

We used a questionnaire to collect primary data for our purpose. The questionnaire had 19 questions, organized in two sections, each focused on collecting a specific type of information: firstly we gathered information about visitors' motivation to travel to Cluj-Napoca and the type of activities realized in town and secondly, data about the expenditures they made during their visit. We used structured questions and open questions. The questionnaire was implemented during the timespan June – July 2015 in the main spots of the city where we could identify tourists – the central square, the Botanical Garden, the central park, train station and information tourist center. Also, we succeed to implement the questionnaire in some accommodation units.

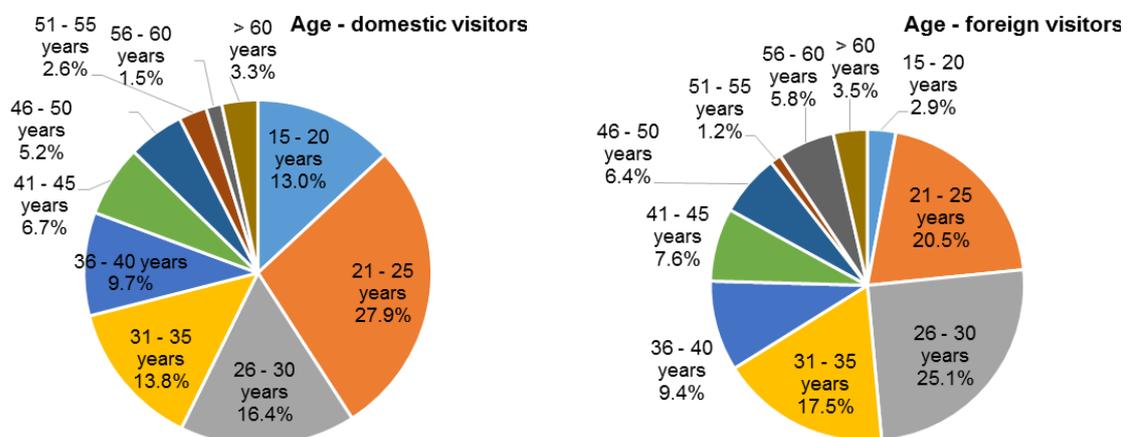
We gathered 440 valid questionnaires, 269 from domestic travelers and 171 from foreign travelers.

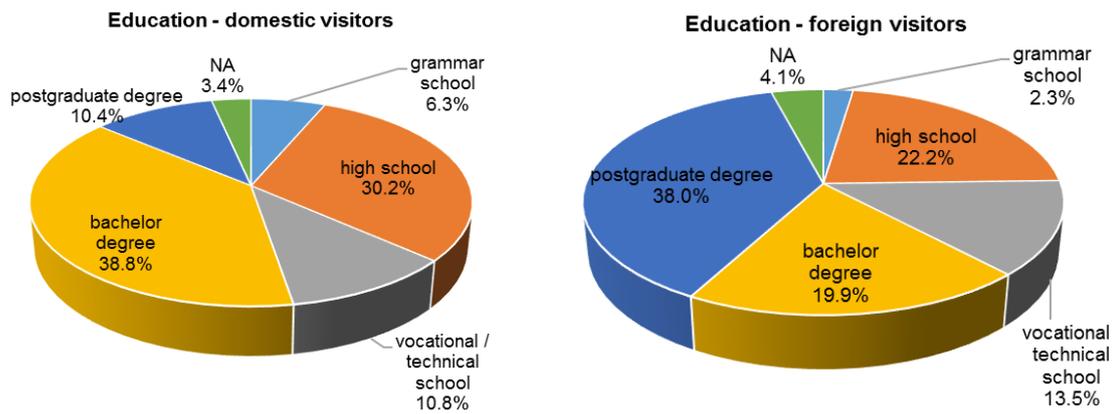
3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1. Demographic characteristics

In general, the visitors of Cluj-Napoca, no matter if they are domestic or foreigners, have similar characteristics. They are young (domestic: 81% out of them having less than 40 years, while 57% out of them having less than 30 years; foreigners: 75% out of them having less than 40 years, while 48% out of them having less than 30 years), male and female in the same proportion, educated (domestic: 50% of them graduated at least a bachelor degree, while 80% of them graduated at least the high school; foreigners: 58% of them graduated at least a bachelor degree, while 80% of them graduated at least the high school) and earning an average income (domestic: 68% out of respondents are earning less than 2200 lei – around 490 euro). In the case of foreign visitors, most of them are coming from Hungary, Germany and France.

Fig. 1. Demographic characteristics of visitors

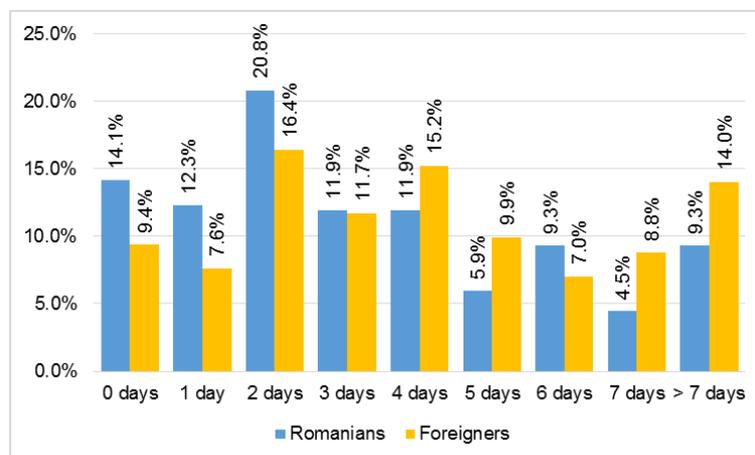




3.2. The reasons to visit Cluj-Napoca and the length of stay

Regarding the domestic visitors' length of stay, we observed that the average length of stay is 3.28 nights (it is not statistically significant). Moreover, 14.1% are not staying overnight in Cluj-Napoca, 45% are staying at most three nights, while the rest (37.9%) are staying more than 3 nights. As a result of this data, we observed a significant difference between the data we collected and the official statistics regarding the length of stay in Cluj-Napoca - according to National Institute of Statistics, during the time span January 2010 – April 2016, the length of stay fluctuated between 1.57 and 2.03 nights. The main source of this difference is the fact that 42.7% out of our respondents are staying at friends, other family members or another type of accommodation units not registered in the official system (apartments, couch surfing, airbnb.com), their length of stay being 4.12 nights. Most of the domestic visitors have visited Cluj-Napoca previously (74.6%), 70.7% visiting our city at least two times per year.

Fig.2. Visitors' length of stay in Cluj-Napoca



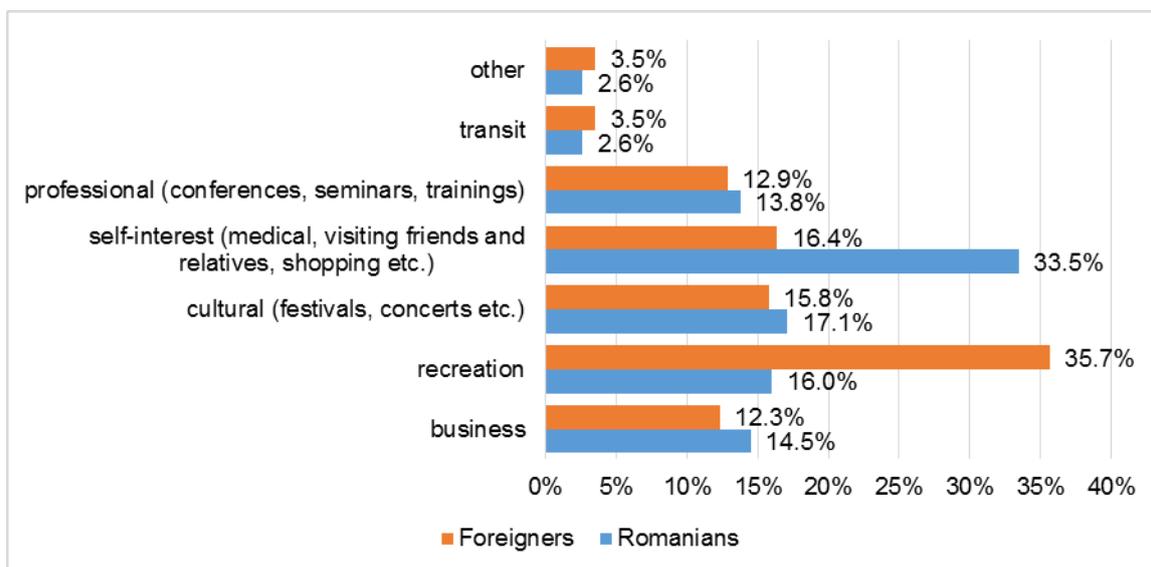
As in the case of domestic visitors, we could not determine a statistical relevant average value for the length of stay in the case of foreign visitors. 9.4% declared that they are staying overnight in Cluj-Napoca, while 50.9% are staying between two and four nights. An important aspect we noticed is the fact that 14% out of foreign visitors are staying more than one week in Cluj-Napoca, most of them for recreation, professional or cultural reasons.

As we would expect, the share of foreign travelers visiting Cluj-Napoca previously is lower than in the case of domestic visitors, but it represents an important part of the total foreign visitors – 43.3%. Moreover, 70.6% out of these persons visiting Cluj-Napoca every year.

The top three reasons for visiting Cluj-Napoca are: self-interest (visiting friends and relatives, shopping etc.) – 33.5%, attending festivals and concerts – 17.1% and recreation – 16%. This three categories of visitors (T3RVs) have a similar length of stay as the other tourists, over 80% out of them visiting Cluj-Napoca previously. On the other side, the size of the group these visitors are members is higher than the average group (2.75 persons than 2.57 persons), while the number of

persons traveling alone is lower in their case than for other types of tourists – only 19% are traveling alone, compared to 29% in average.

Fig.3. Visitors' reasons to visit Cluj-Napoca



In the case of foreign visitors, we have the same three reasons to visit Cluj-Napoca, but in this case, the most frequent reason being recreation – 35.7%, self-interest - 16.4% and attending festivals and concerts – 15.8%. On the other side, the groups of foreign travelers are larger than in the case of domestic visitors 3.4 persons.

3.3. Visitors' expenditures

3.3.1. Accommodation, food and transportation

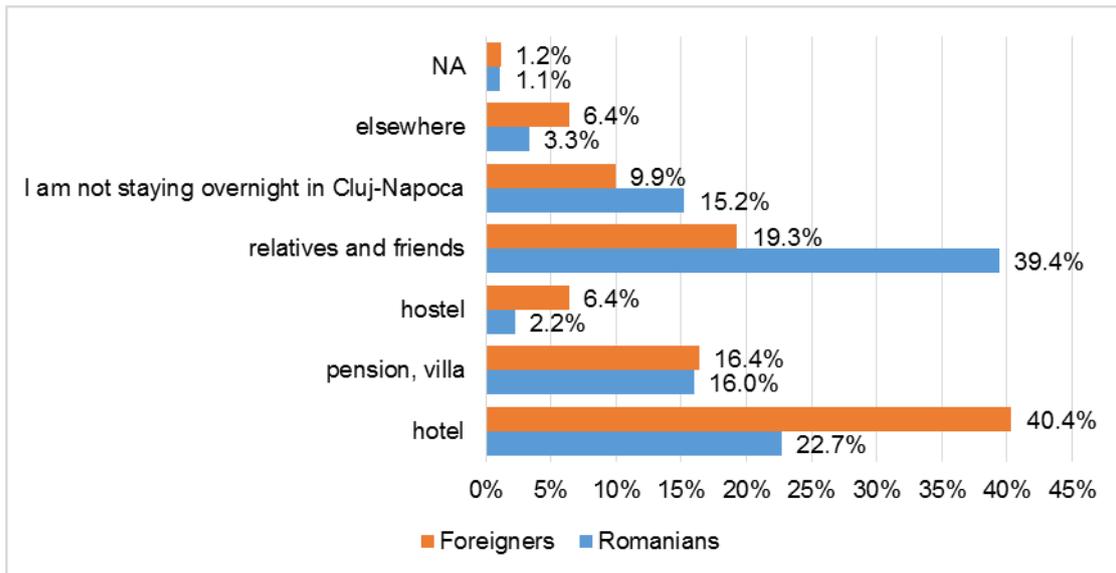
The most important characteristic we identified in the case of accommodation is the fact that a large share of the domestic visitors are lodging at their friends and relatives – 39.4% out of total number of visitors. Moreover, 51.9% out of the T3RVs mentioned above (personal interest, attending festivals and concerts, recreation) are using this type of accommodation.

The first option for the majority of the domestic tourists (approximately 60%) in the case of traditional accommodation units are the three stars units. It is interesting to notice that T3RVs' second option is focused to two stars units (22%), while, in general, the second option of the visitors in Cluj-Napoca are the four star units (21%). As a result of these preferences, a Romanian visitor is spending on average 95 lei/night (approximately 21 euro/night) for accommodation – the average value is within the range [85.74 lei, 103.17 lei] with a confidence level of 95%. On the other side, the T3RVs who are using a traditional accommodation unit during their stay, are spending for accommodation only 76.84 lei/night (approximately 17.07 euro/night), the average value being within the range [68.39 lei, 85.28 lei] with a confidence level of 95%.

As we would expect, in the case of foreign tourists, 63.2% out of them prefer traditional accommodation units, while only 9.9% are not staying in Cluj-Napoca overnight. The share of the foreign visitors staying overnight at their friends and relatives is only 19.3%, their main reasons for visit being the self-interest and recreation. Going deeply with the analysis, we observe that in their case, the tourism activity is determined by the ancestral connection with the persons and the place of origin. These persons fall into two categories:

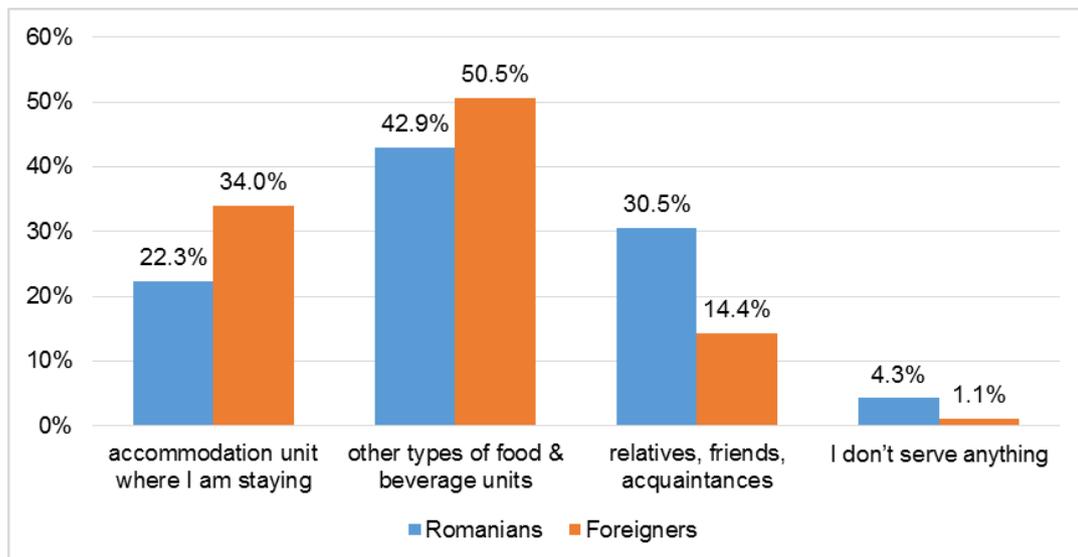
- firstly, we have persons (especially Romanian and Hungarians) who left Romania many years ago and formed a family abroad and now, from time to time they are coming to visit some of their family members;
- secondly, there are some visitors (especially Hungarians and Germans) who would like to spend some time (recreation) in a place their ancestors lived and even if they do not have family members in the region, they developed relations with locals of the same ethnicity.

Fig.4. Visitors' preferences for accommodation during their visit in Cluj-Napoca



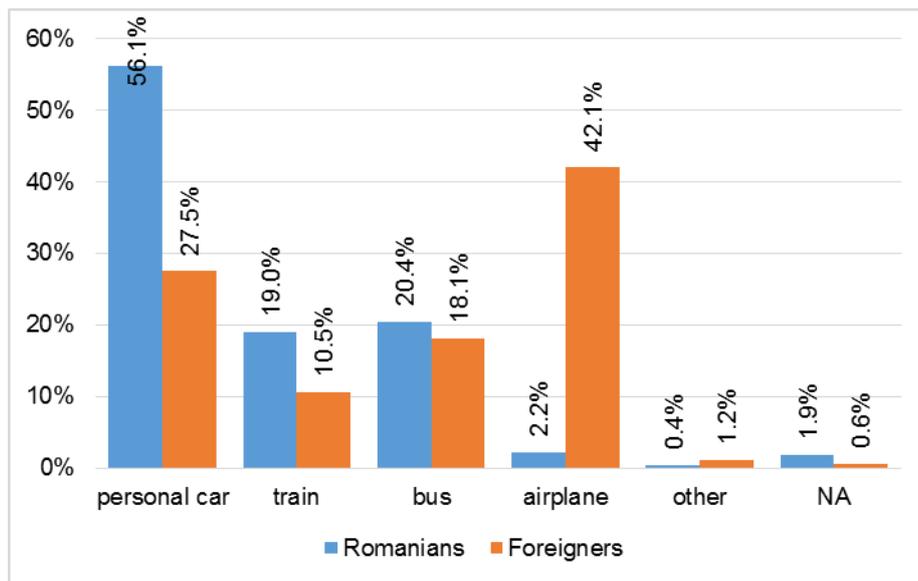
Like the domestic travelers, the foreign tourists prefer three stars accommodation units – 58% out of them, while their second option being four stars accommodation units. As a result of their preference, the average expenditure on accommodation is 35.9 euro/night, the average value being within the range [32.83 euro, 38.95 euro] with a confidence level of 95%. A similar trend with domestic tourists is observed in the case of the expenditures made on accommodation by foreign T3RVs – they spend less than an average foreign tourist – only 31.6 euro/night, the average value being within the range [28.06 euro, 35.17 euro] with a confidence level of 95%. Also, the maximum amount spent per night by the foreign T3RVs respondents is 69 euro, while in the case of total foreign tourists the maximum amount spent for one night of accommodation was 89 euro.

Fig.5. The place the visitors are serving their meals



When it comes to analyze the visitors' behavior regarding the place they eat, both the domestic and foreign travelers prefer to have their meals in other units than the one they are accommodated in - 45% out of Romanian visitors and 55.6% out of foreign visitors. As a result, the Romanian visitors spend on average 59.14 lei/day (the average value is within the range [54.40 lei, 63.80 lei] with a confidence level of 95%), while the foreign visitors spend on average 23.39 euro/day (the average value is within the range [21.30 euro, 25.50 euro] with a confidence level of 95%).

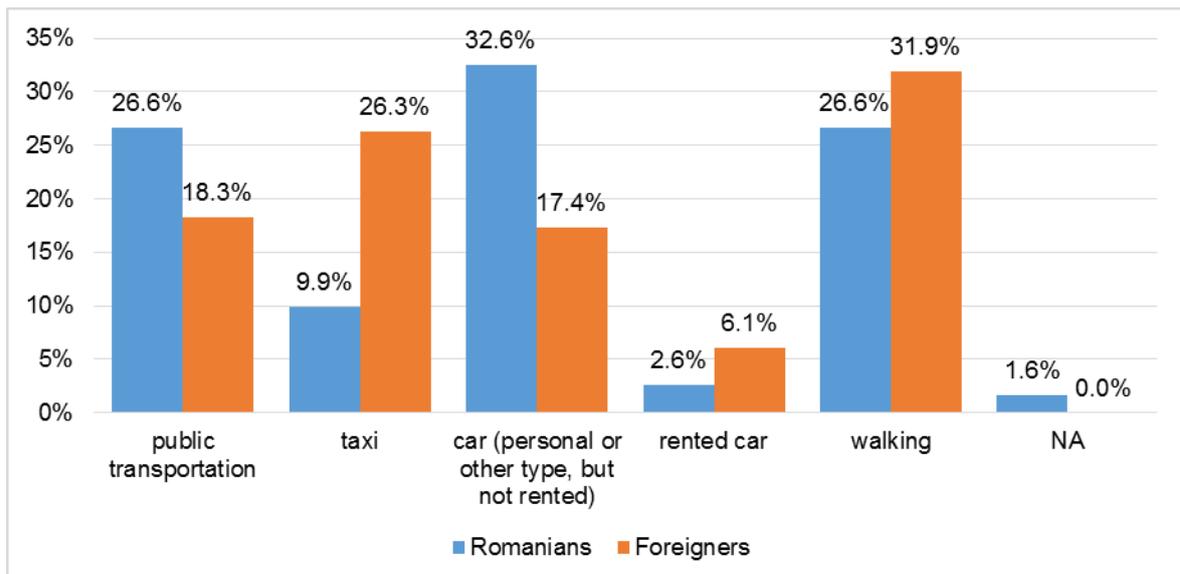
Fig.6. The visitors' primary means of transportation when travelling to Cluj-Napoca



The car is the main mean of transportation used to come to Cluj-Napoca for 56% of the domestic tourists, followed by bus (21%) and train (19%). During their stay in the city, the visitors are going to the places they are interested in by car (36.8%), public transportation (30.1%) and walking (30.1%). The average cost of transportation in the city is 8.61 lei/day (the average value is within the range [7.30 lei, 9.93 lei] with a confidence level of 95%).

The airplane represents the main mean of transportation to come to Cluj-Napoca in the case of foreign visitors – 42.1%, the car (27.5%) and the bus (18.1%) being the second and the third option. Inside the city, the most of the foreign visitors are walking (39.8%) to reach their destination, while an important part are using the transportation facilities available: taxi (32.7%) and public transportation (22.8%). As a result, the foreign visitors spend on taxi 11.82 euro on average, but not more than 30 euro, while for public transportation they are spending between 1 and 3.5 euro/day – we could not estimate a statically relevant average value for public transport expenditures.

Fig.7. The visitors' primary means of transportation in Cluj-Napoca

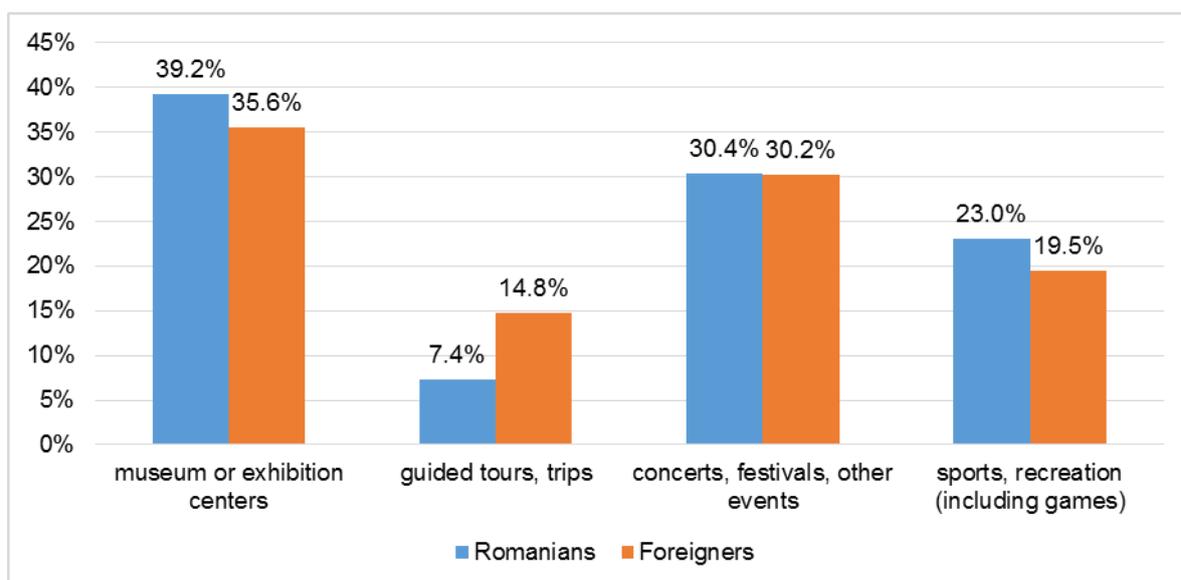


3.3.2. Tourism services

The T3RVs are consuming more tourism services than the other types of tourists. Most often, they are visiting museums and exhibition centers, attend concerts, festivals and other events. The expenditures on these services recorded significant fluctuations – between 1.5 lei to 60 lei for museums and between 20 lei to 300 lei in the case of concerts and festivals. These fluctuations emphasize the diversity of people visiting Cluj-Napoca and, on the other side, the diversity of events available in town. As a result of these evolutions, we could not determine an average value relevant from the statistical point of view for this type of expenditures.

Visiting museums and other exhibition centers represent the frequent tourism activity developed by foreign tourists in Cluj-Napoca - 31.0% out of them, while 26.3% attend concerts, festivals or other events. According to the data we collected, half of the foreign tourists are spending between 5 and 30 euro/day for visiting museums, while in the case of concerts and festivals, half of the tourists are spending between 30 and 100 euro/day. Unfortunately, we were not able to determine a statistically relevant average value for these expenditures.

Fig.8. Other tourism services



3.3.3. Other expenditures

Analyzing the other expenditures the domestic visitors made in Cluj-Napoca, we observed that they spent money on:

- shopping (53.9% out of them) – the average value being 182.11 lei/person, the average value being within the range [160.30 lei, 203.92 lei] with a confidence level of 95%
- souvenirs (25.3% out of them) – the average value being 43.72 lei/person, the average value being within the range [36.71 lei, 50.74 lei] with a confidence level of 95%
- clubs and bars – the average value being 98.33 lei/person, the average value being within the range [83.95 lei, 112.71 lei] with a confidence level of 95%

48% out of the foreign visitors spent money on souvenirs, half of them spending between 20 and 150 euro. Also, the foreign tourists spent money on clubs and bars (35.7%) and on shopping (33.9%). We could not estimate a statistically relevant average value for these type of expenditures.

CONCLUSIONS

In the light of the efforts made by Cluj-Napoca representatives to gain the title of European Capital of Culture in 2021, there are some important aspects identified during our analysis which should be taken into consideration for the future development of the city.

First of all, the high level of education of the majority of the visitors may represent the source for a large number of participants to cultural activities and events/festivals. Moreover, their youngness may represent a source for permanent and sustainable development of cultural tourism in Cluj-Napoca. There are already some important cultural events and festivals attracting year by year

more participants – Transilvania International Film Festival, the outdoor Opera representations, Jazz in the Park etc.

Secondly, the travelers' main three reasons to visit Cluj-Napoca are focused on recreation and self-interest, but also on attending festivals and concerts, a very important aspect from the point of positioning the city as a tourist destination. In its strategy, Cluj-Napoca wants to become a landmark in the EU for its dynamic cultural life, the culture being the source of social transformation and urban regeneration. The results of the previous efforts made in this direction can be seen today in visitors' motivations, but also in the way the city is promoted abroad: Lonely Planet Guide characterize Cluj-Napoca as the "Film capital of Romania" and as the place of other cultural highlights.

Thirdly, the increase in the number of visitors provides an incentive for the business sector development, but also facilitates social interaction and opportunities to promote local culture. In the last years there is an increase in the number of national and international events organized in town, events that bring money directly to accommodation, food and beverage and recreation units and indirectly to the entire city. The result is an increase in the quality of life, a lot of opportunities to spend the free time, and the development of the feeling of pride to live in Cluj-Napoca.

REFERENCES

- Cohen, E. (1979a, 1996): A phenomenology of tourist experiences. *Sociology* 13 (2): 179-201; In: Apostolopoulos, Y. (eds) (1996): *The Sociology of Tourism*. London: Routledge.
- Cohen, E. (1979b): Rethinking the sociology of tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research* 6 (1): 18-35.
- Dewar, H., Meyer, D. & Li, W.M. (2001), "Harbin, lanterns of ice, sculpture of snow", *Tourism Management*, 22 (5), pp.523-532.
- Gunn, C.A. (1988): *Tourism Planning* (2nd edition). New York: Taylor and Francis
- Hamilton-Smith, E. (1987): Four Kinds of Tourism? *Annals of Tourism Research*, 14 (3), 332-345
- LAWS, E. (1995), *Tourist Destination Management: Issues, Analysis and Policies*, London, Routledge
- Park, K.S., Reisinger, Y. & Kang, H.J. (2008), "Visitors' motivation for attending the South Beach Wine and Food Festival, Miami Beach, Florida", *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 25(2), pp.161-181.
- Reisinger, Y (2009), *International tourism: Cultures and behavior*, Butterworth-Heinemann, Elsevier.
- Ryan, C. (2002): Motives, behaviour, body and mind. In: C. Ryan (ed.). *The Tourist Experience* (pp.27-57)
- Smith, V.L. (1977a): *Hosts and Guest: The Anthropology of Tourism*. Philadelphia, University Pennsylvania Press.
- Yiannakis, A. and Gibson, H. (1992): Roles Tourists Play. *Annals of Tourism Research* 19 (2): 287-303.