

ROMANIA: TOURISM REVENUE DECREASING, VISITOR NUMBERS INCREASING



In 2015, Romania welcomed 300,000 more foreign tourists (17.9 percent) than in the previous year. However, the tourism revenues decreased by USD 100 million.

According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO) data, **last year 2.2 million foreigners spent their holiday in Romania compared to 1.9 million visitors in the previous year.** Although increasing, the number is still not getting closer to other European countries.

Hungary welcomed 14.3 million tourists in 2015, Czech Republic registered 11.1 million foreigners, Croatia 12.7 million tourists and Poland reported 16.7 million visitors from abroad.

In total, the European Union attracted 607.7 million tourists - most of them headed to France (84.5 million), Spain (68.2 million), and Italy (50.7 million). The tourism revenue in the EU reached USD 450 billion.

Romania reported the overall earnings of the travel sector amounting to USD 1.7 billion, which is USD 100 million less than in 2014. According to the local tourism experts, the country could earn up to USD 10-15 billion if appropriate tourism infrastructure and services were provided. The state of public transport also hinders the development of the sector. There are no highways in Romania and the number of international airports is also insufficient.

Regarding the EU countries, Spain reached the biggest tourism revenue of USD 56.5 billion. Within the Central and Eastern Europe, Poland reported the greatest annual earnings of USD 9.7 billion, followed by Croatia and the Czech Republic with USD 8.8 billion and USD 6 billion respectively. While Hungary welcomed more tourists than Croatia and the Czech Republic, the duration of their holiday was shorter and thus the tourism revenue was also smaller - USD 5.9 billion. Bulgaria, the southern neighbor of Romania also earned more - last year the tourists spent USD 4 billion in the country.

The tourism industry contributed only 0.9 percent to the Romanian GDP of USD 180 billion. Compared to other countries, the percentage is quite low. In France, tourism represents 2 percent of GDP, in Italy 2.1 percent, in Spain it accounted for 4.6 percent, in Hungary it is 4.3 percent, Bulgaria 7.3 percent, Greece 7.5 percent, and in Croatia the percentage is 17.3.

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