

World Travel & Tourism Council Spells Out Policy Recommendations for Romania to Tap Travel & Tourism Potential

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The research contained economic projections for the growth of Travel & Tourism in Romania and a series of policy recommendations intended to maximize the potential of Travel & Tourism to the country's economy and tap its position as a leading catalyst for economic development and job creation.

In Romania for 2006, WTTC is forecasting:

Demand: Encompassing all components of Travel & Tourism consumption, investment, government spending and exports to grow 9.2 per cent (real terms) and total US\$7.1 billion (RON24.6 billion) in 2006. The ten-year annualized growth (2006-2015) forecast is 7.9 per cent per annum. This makes Romania the fourth fastest growing country in the world in terms of Travel & Tourism Total Demand.

Visitor Exports: Spending by inbound international visitors is expected to total RON6.4 billion in 2006, representing 2.5 per cent of total exports.

Gross Domestic Product (GDP): Travel & Tourism's contribution to Romania's economy is illustrated by the direct industry impact of 1.9 per cent of total GDP and the combined direct and indirect impact of the Travel & Tourism economy which is expected to total 4.8 per cent in 2006.

Employment: The Romanian Travel & Tourism industry is expected to account for 265,000 jobs or 3.1 per cent of total employment in 2006. The broader perspective of the Travel & Tourism economy (direct and indirect), which includes the spillover employment associated with industry capital investment and government spending, is expected to account for 485,000 jobs dependent on Travel & Tourism or 5.8 per cent of total employment.

In order for Romania to realize its potential in Travel & Tourism, WTTC's principal policy recommendations included:

- œ Raise awareness of the economic and social benefits of Travel & Tourism throughout all levels of the population
- œ Factor Travel & Tourism into mainstream policies for employment, trade, investment, education, culture and environmental protection.
- œ Prioritize the drawing up of a strategic plan and ensure its implementation over a given time frame.
- œ Focus on product diversification to increase income generated through tourism and reduce seasonality
- œ Update the Tourism Satellite Account on a yearly basis to ensure that adequate data is available to factor Travel & Tourism in to economic and employment strategies
- œ Develop a clearly identifiable 'brand' Romania to raise awareness of the country as a destination throughout the world
- œ Take advantage of opportunities, such as Sibiu - European Capital of Culture in 2007, to raise awareness of Romania as a tourism destination.
- œ Pursue a liberalized aviation policy
- œ Raise the quality of Romania's accommodation stock by enforcing quality standards
- œ Pull together a concerted campaign involving government ministries, the private sector and training institutions to promote the benefits of working in Travel & Tourism
- œ Establish a dedicated tourism training facility in collaboration with the private sector
- œ Provide a one-stop shop for Travel & Tourism investors to reduce bureaucracy and streamline the process
- œ Integrate environmental management and tourism development plans to ensure that development of tourism and protection of the environment are mutually supportive

At the launch in Bucharest, Jean-Claude Baumgarten, WTTC President said, 'Romania is at an exciting stage in its Travel & Tourism development. With entry to the EU on the cards there is everything to play for. Its vast rural areas and unique cultural heritage, combined with a business centre in Bucharest, offers huge potential for a diverse and quality tourism

product. WTTC is ready to work with the National Tourism Authority, and the wider Travel & Tourism industry, to help ensure that this sector bring maximum benefits throughout Romania for both its people and its environments.'

Mr Marian said, 'We welcome this study from WTTC and its findings. It comes at time of new energy in our country's Travel & Tourism, with a significant increase in budget to invest in Travel & Tourism infrastructure. We recognize the important contribution made by Travel & Tourism to our economy and are committed to ensuring that its considerable potential is realized.'

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