

THE ROMANIAN OUTBOUND TOURISM MARKET – OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR DESTINATION BULGARIA

Chief Assist. Prof. Galina Ilieva, PhD

PhD student Ivelina Ilieva

Abstract

The Romanian tourism market is one of the most significant outbound markets for Bulgaria, with Romanian tourists consistently ranking among the top in terms of visits. This study aims to analyze the trends, characteristics, and potential of Romanian tourists, as well as the opportunities and challenges for Bulgaria as a tourist destination. Using data from the National Statistical Institute and international sources, the authors examine tourist behavior, preferred destinations, seasonality, travel expenses, and motivations of Romanian tourists. The findings highlight the need for a targeted marketing strategy, adaptation of tourism products, and improvement of infrastructure in Bulgaria as a destination for the Romanian outbound market. Special attention is given to the role of digital communication channels and the importance of flexible tourism offers for successful positioning on the Romanian market. The study provides practical insights for the tourism sector and outlines strategic directions to better position Bulgaria in alignment with the expectations and travel patterns of Romanian tourists.

Key words: *Romanian tourism market, outbound tourism, tourist behavior, Bulgaria, destination positioning*