

RESEARCH ON THE EVOLUTION OF TOURIST RECEPTION STRUCTURES IN IAȘI COUNTY

MONENCI DENISA¹, CECLEA CARMEN MĂDĂLINA¹, SCHEIBLE ANDRADA¹,
ORBOI MANUELA DORA¹, DINCU ANA-MARIANA*¹

¹*University of Life Sciences "King Mihai I" from Timisoara,
Faculty of Management and Rural Tourism, Romania*

*Corresponding author's e-mail: anamariadincu@usvt.ro

Abstract: Tourist accommodation infrastructure is an important indicator describing the level of tourism development in a territorial administrative unit and providing, seasonally or permanently, mainly accommodation, restaurant and leisure services. In this paper is presented the evolution of tourist reception structures in Iași County. At regional level, Iași County ranks third in terms of tourist reception structures, the first place being occupied by Suceava County, and on the last place we find Botosani County.

Key words: *structures of tourist accommodation, Iasi County, tourists, tourism*

INTRODUCTION

An important indicator describing the level of tourism development in a region, county or locality refers to the accommodation infrastructure of tourists [17].

Therefore, the structure of tourist accommodation represents any construction and arrangement intended, by design and execution, to accommodate tourists, to serve meals for tourists, leisure, special transport for tourists, spa treatment for tourists, together with related services [3,4].

A county rich in landforms, historical monuments, cultural and religious buildings, natural tourist attractions, can have a special tourist affluence if it offers accommodation, food and leisure services of superior level, with the provision of modern infrastructures, as well as means of transport on tourist routes [1,2,5].

That is why we can say that the activity of accommodation units represents a set of actions that take place in hotels and other forms of accommodation, in order to ensure the conditions for overnight stay and rest of passengers (tourists), Romanian and foreign, as well as additional services provided in the annex units, according to the profile and category of classification and the requirements of passengers (tourists).

In this paper the authors present the evolution of tourist accommodation structures existing in Iași County. Iași County benefits from a spectacular built heritage, with 1,630 built heritage monuments registered, which places the county on the second place nationally, after Bucharest.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

For this article we consulted various scientific materials, documents and statistical data provided by local authorities and the National Institute of Statistics, as well as other sources of information. Therefore, as research methods were used: documentation, analysis, research of county and national statistical data, comparison and interpretation.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Iași County is located in the region of Northeastern Romania, bordered to the west by the Moldova River and to the east by the Prut River, which also constitutes the border with the Republic of Moldova. The location at the border with the Republic of Moldova provides an important bridge from a functional, economic and social point of view [7,16].

Iași County is located at the intersection of the Moldavian Plain and the Central Moldavian Plateau and is bounded, to the west and east, by the Siret and Prut rivers. Also,

the Jijia River crosses the county, and Iași is located on the banks of one of its tributaries, the Bahlui. In the west, the county is crossed by the Siret Corridor and the last fragments of the Fălticeniilor Plateau and also by Dealul Mare, with altitudes of over 500 meters.

At the same time, Iași County is part of the North-East Development Region, along with Botosani, Suceava, Neamț, Bacău and Vaslui counties [6,9,10].

Iași is one of the most beautiful counties in Moldova. It was the capital of Moldavia and the capital of the Kingdom of Romania between 1915 and 1918, during World War I. Precisely because it is among the most beautiful areas in the country, it is no wonder that many Romanian and foreign tourists come here regardless of the season, to enjoy the beauty of the place [11].

The tourism activity in Iași County, according to statistical data provided by INS Iași, is concentrated in the county capital, 93% of the total number of tourists arrived in October 2022 were accommodated in Iași: in October 2022, there were 43503 tourists in Iași County, of which 40522 tourists in the moldovian capital [15].

Next we will analyze the evolution of the tourist reception structures available to Iași County during 2015-2022.

At the regional level, Iași County, compared to the other counties, ranks 4th, holding a percentage of 3%, 90 units out of the total of 1478 accommodation units, as can be seen in figure 1.

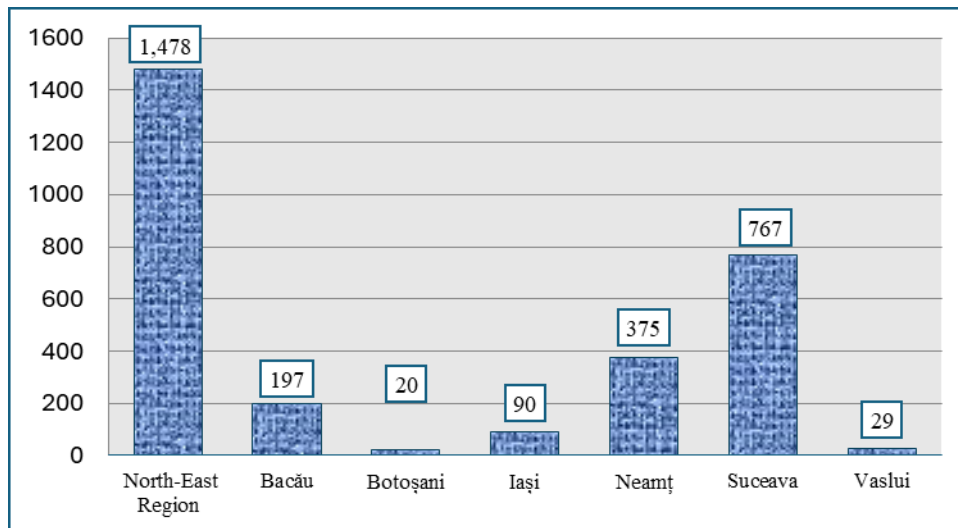


Figure 1. Existing tourist accommodation structures in the North-East Region, 2022

In terms of tourist reception structures in Iași County, in 2022, there were 90 units, 9 less than in 2021, of which: 32 hotels, 16 farm stays, 19 tourist pensions, 4 hostels, 11 apartments and rooms for rent, 2 motels and one tourist villa type unit, tourist cottages, campsites, camps for pupils and preschoolers and tourist stops.

Regarding apartments and rooms for rent for tourism purposes, during the same period concerned, there is a total lack of establishment of such units, between 2015 and 2020, and then, during 2021, a number of 17 apartments and rooms for rent were established, and during 2022 their number decreased to 11 units. An interesting evolution also has tourist cottages, in the sense that between 2020 and 2022 only one such tourist reception structure was established.

Table 1.
The evolution of tourist accommodation structures, 2015-2022
-number-

Types of structures of tourist accommodation	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total	99	96	85	82	84	86	99	90
Hotels	30	30	30	29	30	31	30	32
Hostels	4	2	4	5	5	4	4	4
Apartments and rooms for rent	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	11
Motels	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Tourist villas	7	7	6	4	4	4	2	1
Tourist huts	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
Bungalows	12	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
Campgrounds	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Tourist stops	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1
Tourist cottages	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Camps for pupils and preschoolers	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Tourist pensions	28	25	25	19	20	21	19	19
Farm stays	12	14	14	18	19	19	20	16

Source: <http://statistici.insse.ro:8077/tempo-online/#/pages/tables/insse-table> [14]

Although attempts have been made to set up a new and innovative tourist reception structure, namely bungalows, statistics show that during 2015-2016 a number of 12 such units were established, but then they ceased to function.

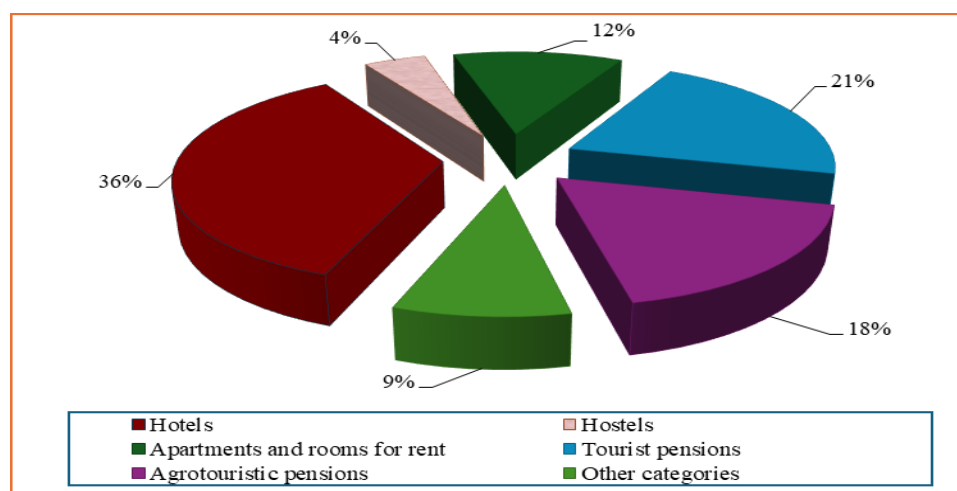


Figure 2. Share of tourist accommodation structures in Iași County in 2022

According to figure 2, it is found that hotels hold the largest share (36%) of the total tourist reception structures, followed by tourist pensions with a percentage of 21%, it should be noted that agrotouristic pensions hold a percentage of only 18%. On the last places we find apartments and rooms for rent (12%), other categories (9%) and hostels (4%).

The table below presents the evolution of tourist accommodation structures in Iași County by each locality and by areas of origin, during 2015-2022. According to statistical data provided by the National Institute of Statistics, it can be found that in Iași County there is a diversity in terms of the number of tourist reception structures established, this share being more developed in the urban area compared to the rural area, here registering only a share of 33.33%, compared to 66.67% in the urban area. Tourism in Iași County is 90% concentrated in the county seat, with a peak of arrivals and overnight stays in tourist

accommodation structures registered in October each year, when the Iași holidays and pilgrimage to the relics of Saint Parascheva take place. Most touristic-cultural-religious objectives are concentrated in Iași, representative being the Palace of Culture framed by the Palas commercial ensemble, historical cathedrals and monasteries, as well as universities.

Table 2.
Tourist accommodation structures in Iași County, by localities and by areas of origin, between 2015-2022

Populated places	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total	99	96	85	82	84	86	99	90
Iași Municipality	59	55	54	48	49	50	61	54
Pașcani Municipality	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	4
City Podu Iloaiei	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
City Târgu Frumos	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Aroneanu	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Baltati	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Barnova	1	2	2	2	2	3	2	3
Buffaloes	0	0	1	1	1	1	1	1
Braesti	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Butea	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Deleni	0	0	1	2	2	2	1	1
Dobrovăț	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0
Holboca	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Ion Neculce	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	2
Letcans	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3
Lungani	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0
Miroslava	2	1	2	2	3	3	3	3
Mogosesti-Siret	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Motca	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Movileni	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Popricani	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Raducăneni	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Redium	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Tomești	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2
Wolf Valley	2	4	4	3	5	5	4	3
Hunters	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Victoria	13	13	0	0	0	0	0	0
Urban	64	59	59	54	54	55	66	60
Rural	35	37	26	28	30	31	33	30
Urban Share	64,65	61,46	69,41	65,85	64,29	63,95	66,67	66,67
Rural Share	35,35	38,54	30,59	34,15	35,71	36,05	33,33	33,33

Source: https://insse.ro/cms/files/Publicatii_2022/74.Turismul_romaniei_breviar_statistic/turismul_romaniei_2019-2021_breviar_statistic.pdf, [12]

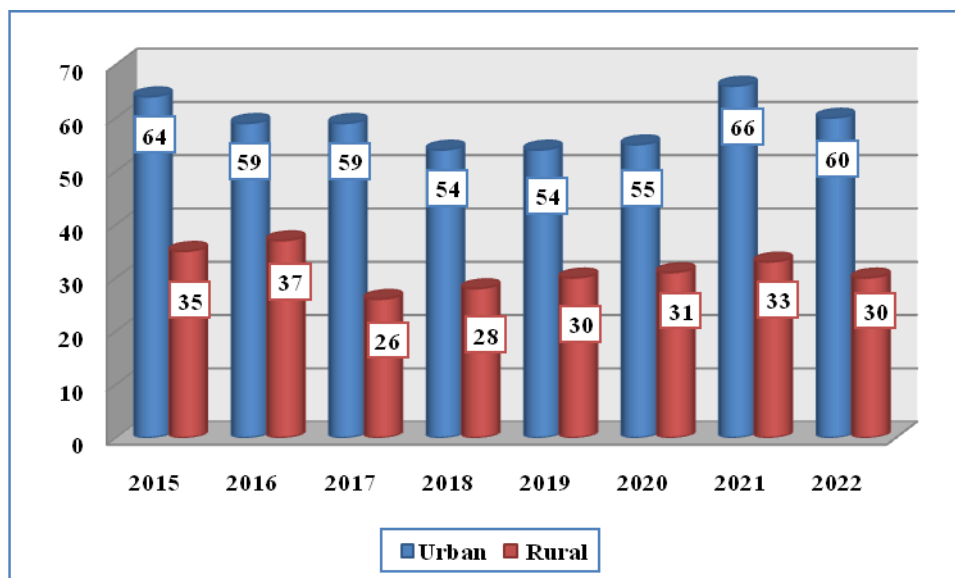


Figure 3. The evolution of the structures of tourist reception by means of origin

At the same time, it is important to mention that within the county we can identify both well-developed areas, where a considerable number of tourist reception structures have been established, being the city of Iași itself, but there are also less developed areas in this regard, such as: Podul Iloaiei city, Aroneau, Balti, Dobrovăț communes, Lungani, and Victoria, in which no tourist accommodation structure has been established so far.

It can be noted that the urban area occupies a much higher share than the rural area, and in 2021, in the urban area, there were 66 accommodation units, while in the rural area most accommodation units are found in 2016.

In table 3 we presented the tourist accommodation capacity in operation by types of tourist accommodation structures, during 2015-2022.

Table 3.

Evolution of accommodation capacity in operation by types of tourist reception structures

-number of places-days-

Types of structures of tourist accommodation	2015	2017	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total	1445261	1490230	1457099	1109143	1461446	1512309
Hotels	1039668	1063592	1042412	831771	1020456	1075392
Hostels	21609	15822	45335	14171	35913	42726
Apartments and rooms for rent	0	0	0	0	93467	82112
Motels	50370	48844	46734	35460	47658	45990
Tourist villas	40508	50336	23930	13210	11552	11388
Tourist huts	9855	9855	10165	4509	9855	9018
Tourist stops	1472	0	1842	3852	2090	1674
Camps for pupils and preschoolers	21312	23976	46900	4440	15964	26456
Tourist pensions	184301	190354	148069	124035	141050	124373
Farm stays	71750	87451	91712	77695	83441	93180

Source: <http://statistici.insse.ro>, [8]

As we know, the accommodation capacity in operation represents the number of accommodation places that are made available by accommodation units to tourists. According to the data presented in Table 3, it is found that, during the analyzed period, the

accommodation capacity in operation varied from one year to another. As the first locality with tourism potential, we find the city of Iasi, where during the targeted period the threshold of over 1 million occupied accommodation places was reached, except during the pandemic, more precisely during 2020, but with a share of occupancy close to the initial value.

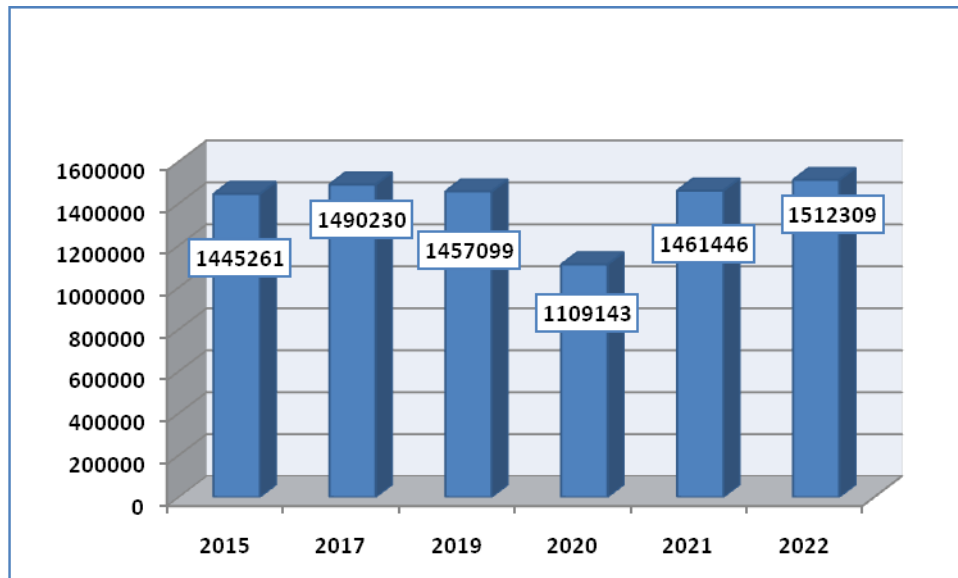


Figure 4. Accommodation capacity in operation, 2015-2022

Most accommodation places are found in hotels, followed by tourist pensions and farm stays, and since 2021 apartments and rooms for rent have appeared that hold a fairly large number of accommodation places, taking into account that they did not exist until 2021. The evolution of the index of net use of accommodation places in Iași County is shown in the chart below.

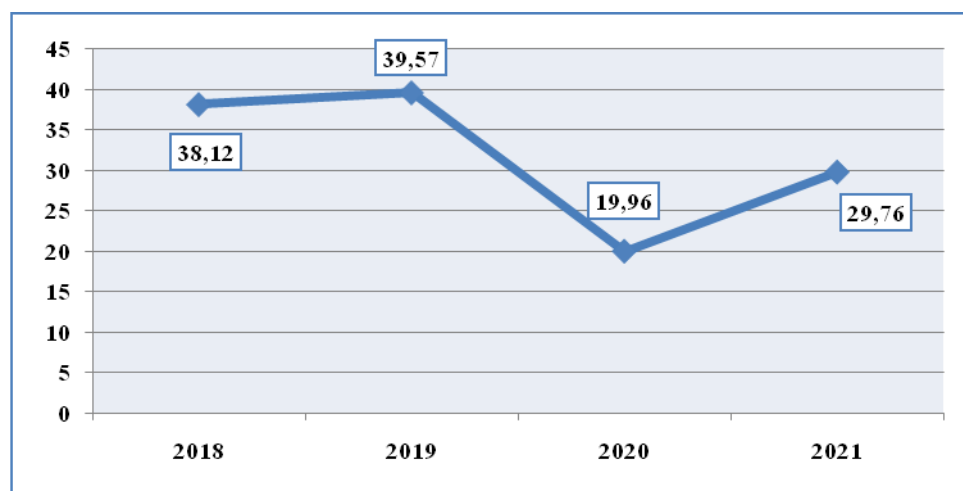


Figure 5. Index of net utilization of tourist accommodation capacity in Iași county, 2018-2021

According to the evolution of the average index of net use of tourism capacity, we can observe the increase by 9.8 percentage points of the value of the indicator in 2021 compared to 2020, the indicator improving compared to 2019 (-9.81 percentage points). This analysis actually reflects the start of the recovery process of the tourism sector, which has been significantly affected by the pandemic crisis. It is also noted that 2020 marks a halving of the average index of net use of tourism capacity.

In October 2022, the index of net use of tourist accommodation capacity in Iași County was 55%, due to the large number of tourists coming for the city days and for the patron saint of St. Parascheva.

CONCLUSIONS

Iași County, as a result of the above, has a very high tourism potential, but insufficiently capitalized and ranks 4th regionally, holding 3% of the total number of tourist reception structures.

Iași County is a region with a very well developed infrastructure, and from a tourist point of view, the tourist accommodation capacity has increased in the last decade, reaching in 2022 a value of 1,310,741 in urban areas and 201,568 in rural areas.

Regarding the total number of tourist reception structures existing during 2015-2022, we conclude that it had fluctuations from one year to another, the peak being 99 units, reached in the first phase in 2015, and then, although it suffered significant decreases, it returned to the same value in 2021.

Regarding the number of tourist reception structures by area of origin, the urban area compared to the rural area holds the largest share, 66.67%, and the urban area holds a share of 33.33%.

Whether you are a nature hiking enthusiast or a lover of history and architecture, Iași County can offer you something special.

The studied area is insufficiently promoted from a tourist point of view, and is based on short-term tourism, city break, weekend, ecumenical, for business, participation in academic, cultural and artistic events.

REFERENCES

- [1]. **DINCU ANA-MARIANA, GHERMAN REMUS, SÎRBULESCU CLAUDIA, POPESCU GABRIELA, BRAD IOAN**, 2016, Analysis of tourist activity from Romania, 16th International Multidisciplinary Scientific GeoConference SGEM 2016, Book5, vol. 3, pp. 35-42
- [2]. **DINCU ANA-MARIANA, BRAD IOAN, SÎRBULESCU CLAUDIA, GHERMAN REMUS, GAVRUTA ADRIAN**, 2017, Study regarding the rural tourism activity from Romania, 4th International Multidisciplinary Scientific Conference on Social Sciences and Arts SGEM 2017, Book 1, vol. 4, pp.743-750
- [3]. **DINCU ANA-MARIANA**, 2015, Management în turism, Editura Eurostampa, Timișoara
- [4]. **GRUIA ROMULUS**, 2017, Management și dezvoltare în industria turismului, Editura Lux Libris, Brașov, pp. 236
- [5]. **STAVROSITU STERE**, 2014, Managementul calității serviciilor și ospitalitatea în restaurante, gastronomie, hoteluri, Editura Polirom, București, pp. 492
- [6]. ***Agenția pentru Dezvoltare Regională Nord-Est;
- [7]. ***Direcția Județeană de Statistică Iași, Geografie și statistici, disponibilă online: <https://iasi.insse.ro/despre-noi/desprejudetul-iasi/geografie-si-statistici/>, la data 02.11.2023
- [8]. ***Institutul Național de Statistică, <http://statistici.insse.ro>
- [9]. ***Strategia de Dezvoltare a Județului Iași 2014-2020, Analiza diagnostic, pp. 6
- [10]. ***Strategia de dezvoltare a județului Iași, 2021-2027, pp. 28
- [11]. ***<https://bunadimineata.ro/de-dimineata/travel-calatorii/10-cele-mai-frumoase-locuri-din-judetul-iasi/>

- [12].***https://insse.ro/cms/files/Publicatii_2022/74.Turismul_romaniei_breviar_statistic/turismul_romaniei_2019-2021_breviar_statistic.pdf
- [13]. ***<https://locuridinromania.ro/judetul-iasi>
- [14]. ***<http://statistici.insse.ro:8077/tempo-online/#/pages/tables/insse-table>
- [15]. ***<https://vesteaiasului.ro/2023/07/06/a-fost-demarata-realizarea-strategiei-pentru-dezvoltarea-turismului-in-judetul-iasi/>
- [16]. ***https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jude%C8%9Bul_Ia%C8%99i
- [17]. ***<https://www.ziaruldeiasi.ro/stiri/iasi-versus-cluj-o-comparatie-privind-sectorul-turismului--357446.html>