THE IMPORTANCE OF YOUTH TOURISM

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Abstract: In an era full of challenges for the tourism industry, tourism for young people is a very important market segment, being a resource for change and innovation. World youth tourism industry is estimated to be approximately 190 million international travelers per year. According to UNWTO forecasts, 2020 will be about 300 million young people who will travel in a year, accounting for 320 billion dollars in market value. WISE (The World Youth Student and Educational) defines youth tourism as a form of tourism that includes independent travelers (young people are not accompanied by a parent or guardian personally) for periods of less than one year, with ages between 15 and 29 years. Individuals have the motivation for such movement willingness to construe experience vital to experience new culture and to benefit from new learning opportunities formal or informal in an unknown environment, different at normal everyday life. Educational tourism, traveling students and young people plays a very important role for world tourism. Around 90’s, young travelers have represented 15% of the tourist market. In the past decade has increased by 20% and in the near future is expected to increase by 25%. Young people today want to travel as far to go as long, resulting in more spending, but managed to keep in touch with home more than ever before. These wish to enrich their experience at all levels. A comprehensive study conducted by WISE for youth tourism sector explained the motivations behind the trips made by these young but have noticed a significant development for cultural tourism. For young people, travel is a form of learning, a way to meet other people, a way to have contact with other cultures, a source of career development, a means of self-development, an essential part of everyday life, a brief escape from reality. Young people are adventurous and want to develop their own knowledge. Often chooses to work in the places they choose to visit. They have an important role in attracting new visitors to their destination. Young people are adventurous and want to develop their own knowledge. They have a wide variety of forms of tourism for young people from which to choose. Each form itself helps to progress and evolve in different ways.

Keywords: young tourists, youth tourism, Work and Travel, educational tourism, travel, holidays.

JEL codes: M31, L83.

Introduction

In an era full of challenges for the tourism industry, tourism for young people is a very important market segment, being a resource for change and innovation. Young travelers increased level in decades since they first began to travel and the populations of countries that are developing. These trips are often made of raw relatively wealthy youth. World youth tourism industry is estimated to be approximately 190 million international travelers per year. According to UNWTO forecasts, 2020 will be about 300 million young people who will travel in a year, accounting for 320 billion dollars in market value.
1. What is youth tourism?

WISE (The World Youth Student and Educational) defines youth tourism as a form of tourism that include independent travelers (young people are not accompanied by a parent or guardian personally) for periods of less than one year, with ages between 15 and 29 years, individuals have the motivation for such movement willingness to construe experience vital to experience new culture and to benefit from new learning opportunities formal or informal in an unknown environment, different at normal everyday life.

The number of young travelers represent 20% of all international travel, being equal to 207 million people and accounting for 194 billion dollars. Young people spend more time on vacation compared to other categories of travel (about 53 days per year), spend more and travel several times a year, uses money with local suppliers. The trips are very important because young people are the future market for the future development of the young people themselves but also for the places they choose to visit. Young travelers influencing development patterns and dimensions of global tourism. Shape the future of youth travel is based on experiences accumulated over the time. The estimated budget for young travelers is about $40,000.

Educational tourism, traveling students and young people plays a very important role for world tourism. Around 90’s, young travelers have represented 15% of the tourist market. In the past decade has increased by 20% and in the near future is expected to increase by 25%.

Factors influencing young travelers are:
- Desire has more experience at international level;
- The price of transport has become more accessible;
- Number of cultural and political barriers is lower.

1.1 Purpose of youth tourist visit

Young people today want to travel as far to go as long, resulting in more spending, but managed to keep in touch with home more than ever before. These wish to enrich their experience at all levels. A comprehensive study conducted by WISE for youth tourism sector explained the motivations behind the trips made by these young but have noticed a significant development for cultural tourism. Young travelers wanting more than ever to enrich the cultural new experiences, meet new people, to enhance their chances for employment when they return home.
Youth aged between 15 and 29 years old travel for:
• 42 % holidays;
• 20 % education;
• 15 % visiting friends and relatives;
• 8% of business travelers;
• 6 % travel for employment;
• 9 % for other reasons.

![Purpose of visit](image)

**Fig.2 Youth arrivals by purpose of visit (15-29 year olds)**
Source: ABS

For young people, travel is a form of learning, a way to meet other people, a way to have contact with other cultures, a source of career development, a means of self-development, an essential part of everyday life, a brief escape from reality. Young people are adventurous and want to develop their own knowledge. Often they choose to work in the places they choose to visit. They have an important role in attracting new visitors to their destination. Youth Tourism creates a diverse social and cultural understanding and the possibility to interact daily between young people and their hosts. Networks and new technologies are powerful tools that facilitate communication and deployment plans they have for a trip. Young people wishing to easily research on future destination. The way they use technology to communicate and to book trips evolving rapidly and has a strong impact on the industry. Businesses, to evolve, need to satisfy the variety of youth tourists requirements.

The Internet is used by young people for references, reviews, rankings or recommendations and for travel planning. It is used more to investigate future travel destination than booking online. Online bookings made by youth showed a slower growth compared to bookings made at travel agencies, confirming the importance the largest travel agencies for youth. As shown in the picture below, the countries that have closed their color number over a thousand travel agents and the lightest color means that those countries have only a maximum of 50 travel agencies.

Travel agencies are a channel to promote youth, registering 80% of reservations made. To succeed in this competitive environment, travel agencies must adapt to the requirements of young people in order to better meet needs as they are most interested in new adventures. They are the ones who spend 25 euro to a hostel and 80 euro for bungee jumping.
As seen in the image above, countries with the fewest travel agencies are those most open color map. Some of these countries are: Afghanistan, Angola, Armenia, Bahamas, Belarus, Bosnia, Cuba, Dominica, Gambia, Guatemala, Haiti, Namibia, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Panama, Paraguay, Sudan, Uruguay, Zambia and Zimbabwe. These countries have only a maximum of 50 travel agencies.

Countries that have between 51 and 100 travel agencies are as follows: Algeria, Austria, Bolivia, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Egypt, Finland, Georgia, Ireland, Kenya, Libya, Moldova, Morocco, Serbia, Slovenia, South Africa, Sweden, Syria or Venezuela.

Countries that have between 101 and 200 travel agencies are as follows: Bangladesh, Ecuador, Estonia, Chile, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Switzerland and Tunisia.

Countries that have between 201 and 300 travel agencies are as follows: Belgium, Hungary, Bulgaria, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Nepal, Peru, Portugal, Saudi Arabia and our country, Romania.

Countries that have between 301 and 500 travel agencies are as follows: Canada, Colombia, Greece, Indonesia, Iran, Pakistan, Slovakia, Thailand, Ukraine and Vietnam.

Countries that have between 501 and 800 travel agencies are as follows: Argentina, Australia, Czech Republic, Hong Kong, Italy, Mexico, Poland, Spain and Turkey.

Countries that have more than 800 travel agencies are: Brazil, France, Germany, China, India, Japan, Russia, South Korea, Taiwan, UK and USA.

Countries that have the most travel agencies are those that have a higher number of inhabitants and tourism as it is more developed than countries with fewer travel agencies.
1.2 Forms of tourism for young people

Even if things are going wrong, for example economic crisis or economic, political or epidemics, young people continue to travel. In fact, these problems stimulates young people to travel for longer periods of time when the economy is weak, prices are lower home having fewer opportunities for employment young people find it preferable to travel and find there a temporary job. Youth markets are less volatile than the market as a whole tourism. WISE industry figures showed that youth sector has been affected by the crisis in general, but the decline was smaller and faster recovery than mass tourism.

The most important forms of tourism for young people for whom they may choose are:
- Holidays;
- Educational tourism;
- Work and Travel;
- Volunteering;
- Tourism practiced to study a foreign language;
- International Camps;
- Cultural tourism.

Figure 3. Purpose of trip


Every form of travel for young people is important and helps young people to develop the skills to adapt to new environments and cultures.

Educational tourism offering scholarships abroad, trips, courses, summer schools, camps nationally and internationally. In Romania, this is developing, and young people should know at least two languages.

International Camps offers participants campuses, apartments, hostel, hotels, depending on the type of program and age preferences. It facilitates learning by imitation and repetition, these two being the best schools for youth.

Young people can also opt to travel in studying a foreign language. The time needed for such a trip is 5-6 weeks, participants' age is decreasing. The most important destination to study a foreign language is considered to be the UK. This form of tourism is very important for those countries that have English as an official language or Spanish language.
Volunteering programs offers young people the opportunity to know other countries and cultures. The period of activity ranging from a few weeks to a year can be reached. Young people receive accommodation, meals and pocket money. The amount received varies from country to country. In Romania, the amount received is 80 euro. In Italy young people receive 162 euro. In Romania, there are associations that provide language training or IT disadvantaged people. A recent study showed that the number of volunteers worldwide is 1.6 million per year and the amount received by these is between 1.7 and 2.6 billion dollars (Richards, G., 2008). The areas where the volunteers can work are diverse: environmental protection, culture, sports, recreation and art. These camps volunteer help the young people involved to develop their communication interacting with local communities or simply to know things and new people. In Romania should be adopted and implemented policies to stimulate volunteerism, volunteering must be promoted and citizens should be more involved in such activities.

Work and Travel is a common form of tourism is globally. It is particularly popular in North America, Western Europe and Australia. Dominant place is occupied by the United States followed by Australia, Britain, France, Spain or Greece. Young people participating in such a program gaining experience in a new cultural environment, establish new contacts with people around the world, visiting new places and earn some money. Holidays meet the young tourists' specific needs regarding their spare time. It helps young people to develop their personality, gives the opportunity to discover new jobs, different cultures and ways of life. Holidays are a little bit of freedom, a little bit of history, culture and relaxation. They help to develop communication skills and the ability to accommodate to specific places. According YTI Magazine in July 2010, Southeast Asia is and remains the number one destination for young people. Percentage vacations highest recorded value of all journeys practiced by young people.

Factors influencing youth tourism market are:
- Increase the distance traveling buses for trips for young people;
- The employment contracts of a short period of time;
- A growing number of suppliers for specific products or students traveling youth;
- Overall development of the Internet, which young people learn the latest information on new destinations are promoted so places will want to visit and recommend to others;
- A desire of young people to obtain funds travel for those who choose to study or work.

Social, economic and cultural development of young people and students is recognized by employers and educational institutions and tourism by governments worldwide. The tourism industry is undergoing rapid change. We are entering a new economy more flexible, young people are often at the forefront of such innovation because they are willing to cross borders to try new things.

Conclusion
Tourism currently is considered to be the most developed industry across Europe, with considerable economic impact, with the highest annual growth rate: between 2 to 4.5 % in terms of turnover. Youth tourism market is a market for a particular purpose; They do not want common products and common activities, generally offered to the population; they try to discover new adventures in this sector, to find out new things.

In conclusion, we can say that youth tourism plays a very important role in the economy of each country. But most important is for young people. It is considered to be a resource for change and innovation. The young people began to travel more often and for longer periods of time. They choose to stay gone longer than any other age group of global travel, spend more with local suppliers. Young travelers are extremely important for themselves. It helps to develop the cultural point of view, better learn a foreign language, knows different cultures and new things about the place that I have chosen as the destination. They
choose to enrich their experience at all levels. They want more than ever to enrich the cultural new experiences, meet new people, to enhance their chances for employment when they return home. For young people, travel is a form of learning, a way to meet other people, a way to have contact with other cultures, a source of career development, a means of self-development, an essential part of everyday life, a brief escape from reality. Young people are adventurous and want to develop their own knowledge. They have a wide variety of forms of tourism for young people from which to choose. Each form itself helps to progress and evolve in different ways.

In the last decade, tourism has undergone fast such as increasing demand and supply, gathered new markets by diversification of tourism for young people. Young tourism occupied an important place in the global tourism market.

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