

GUIDELINES FOR EXPLORATION THE TOURISM POTENTIAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

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Abstract: *This paper examines ways to harness the tourism potential in the Republic of Moldova. The overall objective of the research is to highlight the issues and challenges involved in harnessing the tourism potential in the Republic of Moldova. To achieve the general objective of the research, we focused on a comprehensive research methodology, which includes methods such as: analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction, abduction, scientific abstraction, documentation, content analysis, etc. Based on the studies conducted, we highlight that although the Republic of Moldova possesses valuable, authentic, and attractive tourism potential, tourists nevertheless show reluctance to take advantage of the national tourism potential due to multiple issues related to high prices in tourist accommodation facilities, lower-comfort accommodation conditions in some tourist areas, and recreational services that are less adapted to tourists' needs.*

Keywords: *tourism, tourism potential, tourist accommodations, tourism heritage, authenticity of tourism potential.*

JEL Classification: *Q01, Q56, Z32.*

1. Introduction

In the context of globalization and increasing international mobility, tourism has become a dynamic and flexible sector that adapts to the growing demands of tourists, contributing significantly to the economic, social, and cultural development of nations. In this context, the Republic of Moldova is gradually establishing itself as an emerging tourist destination, capitalizing on a diverse and authentic tourism potential characterized by a blend of natural, man-made, and cultural resources.

Tourism is a viable, flexible sector with enormous potential for development in the near future. Our country stands out for its blend of attractive tourist destinations, offering visitors valuable options tailored to different types of tourists. Moreover, we must emphasize that the effective utilization of tourism potential can provide opportunities for increasing national revenue, creating new jobs, and strengthening the country's image as a tourist destination on the international stage.

Moreover, the Republic of Moldova possesses a valuable cultural and historical heritage, embodied in architectural monuments, archaeological sites, and other such landmarks, which shape the country's tourism identity.

The importance of tourism for the Republic of Moldova is evident on various levels. Thus, economically, tourism contributes to the accumulation of national income, on the one hand, and to the development of SMEs in the tourism sector, particularly in rural areas, on the other. The development of tourism infrastructure contributes to job creation, as well as to attracting both domestic and foreign investment.

Therefore, research into the country's tourism potential is a relevant area of study, given its strategic role in economic development as well as in strengthening the country's image on the international stage.

The overall objective of the research is to identify the issues and challenges involved in harnessing the tourism potential of the Republic of Moldova.

Thus, in order to achieve the general objective of the research, we have established the following *related objectives*, among which we highlight:

- O1: Research on conceptual frameworks related to tourism potential;
- O2: Identification of the main forms of tourism potential;
- O3: Identification of the main issues and challenges in harnessing tourism potential in the Republic of Moldova;
- O4: Identification of solutions to improve the effective utilization of tourism potential in the Republic of Moldova.

In line with the research objectives, we have formulated the following research hypotheses:

H1: Tourism potential encompasses all natural, historical-cultural, and socio-economic factors that can generate and sustain the development of tourism activities;

H2: Tourism potential includes both natural and anthropogenic potential;

H3: The main problem in harnessing the tourism potential of the Republic of Moldova is the lack of national tourism development policies;

H4: The main solution for harnessing the tourism potential of the Republic of Moldova is the development of a national tourism development strategy that would include concrete activities to support the development of the national tourism sector.

To achieve the aforementioned objectives, we employed a comprehensive research methodology, focusing on the use of a wide range of research methods, including: analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction, abduction, scientific abstraction, documentation, content analysis, etc.

2. Theoretical and methodological approaches to tourism potential

Taking a theoretical look at the conceptual framework of tourism potential, we can note that Bădăcean, M.G. and Lipan, G.F. (2023) approach tourism potential from the perspective of “...the capabilities and resources of a destination or region to attract and satisfy the needs of tourists” (Bădăcean, Lipan, 2023).

At the same time, Gojaeva, E. and Gutium, T. (2024) note that tourism potential includes “the totality of resources and conditions that support the development of tourism and contribute to economic growth and the development of tourist destinations” (Gajaeva, Gutium, 2024).

Furthermore, we can highlight that, according to Ghiorghilaș (2017), tourism potential “refers to the totality of natural, anthropogenic, economic, social, and cultural elements of a territory that can generate and sustain tourism activities” (Ghiorghilaș, 2017). Interpreting the author’s definition, we note that tourism potential includes a set of natural, economic, social, and anthropogenic elements of a tourist destination that attract tourists to the destination.

On the other hand, Certan, S. and Certan, I. (2014) note that “tourism potential represents the totality of natural, historical-cultural, and socio-economic factors that can generate and sustain the development of tourism activities in a region” (Certan, Certan, 2014).

In the same context, Cocean (2007) notes that “tourism potential represents the totality of natural and anthropogenic elements of a territory which, through appropriate development, can generate tourism activities” (Cocean, 2007). Interpreting the author’s approach, we observe that tourism potential represents a set of elements which, when appropriately combined, contribute to the generation of tourism activities in that territory.

On the other hand, researcher Glăvan (2003) highlights that tourism potential represents “a set of natural, anthropogenic, economic, and cultural resources that can be utilized through tourism activities, with the aim of satisfying the recreational needs of the population”

(Glăvan, 2003). Interpreting the author’s approach, we note that tourism potential comprises a set of interdependent elements designed to meet the recreational needs of the population. It is due to the existence of these elements that tourism develops in the given region.

In the same vein, Minciu (2004) defines tourism potential as “the capacity of an area to attract tourists, determined by the existence and quality of tourism resources, the specific infrastructure, and the degree of accessibility” (Minciu, 2004).

Another approach is found in Stănciulescu (2012), who defines tourism potential as “...the sum of resources and environmental conditions that can be transformed into tourism products and services through investment and appropriate organization” (Stănciulescu, 2013).

Thus, based on the definitions analyzed, we can highlight that tourism potential is the primary prerequisite for strengthening tourism in tourist destinations, since, thanks to the combination of natural and man-made resources and existing facilities at the destination, we can attract tourists and organize various tourism activities that stimulate the flow of tourists wishing to visit the area.

Upon reviewing the specialized literature, we note that tourism potential consists of two distinct elements, as shown in Figure 1.



Figure 1. Components of tourism potential

Source: Prepared by the author

In turn, natural tourism potential consists of numerous components, such as climate, topography, hydrological resources, biodiversity, and geological resources, which are summarized in Figure 2.

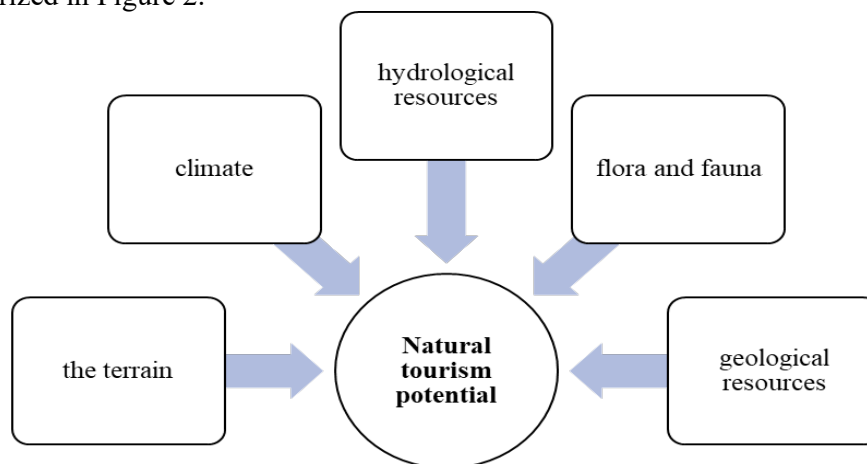


Figure 2. The basic elements of natural tourism potential

Source: adapted from STĂNCIULESCU, G. (2013). *Managementul agenției de turism*. București: Editura ASE.

The terrain—comprising mountains, hills, plains, valleys, and canyons found at the destination—is one of the elements that define the destination’s natural tourism potential. The role of the landscape in the attractiveness of a tourist destination is significant because it enables various forms of tourism at the destination, such as adventure tourism, sports tourism, or recreational tourism.

The climate, based on the overall atmospheric characteristics of an area—including temperature, precipitation, and humidity—determines the periods of peak tourism activity, such as the high season and off-season, and also contributes to increased tourist flows during certain times of the year.

Hydrological resources—including lakes, rivers, waterfalls, hot springs, seas, and so on—help enhance the appeal of tourist destinations, boost their image, and facilitate the development of various types of tourism, such as spa tourism, water-based tourism, and coastal tourism, which in turn leads to an increase in tourist flows to that destination.

Flora and fauna are elements of natural resources that underpin the attractiveness of a tourist destination. Thus, the presence of diverse flora and fauna at the destination constitutes a valuable resource for attracting tourists, fostering the development of various forms of tourism, such as ecotourism, agritourism, educational tourism, etc.

Geological resources—such as caves, cliffs, karst formations, volcanoes, and so on—also have a significant impact on the attractiveness of a tourist destination, as they help increase tourist traffic in those areas. Furthermore, they enable various forms of tourism, such as educational tourism, geological tourism, historical tourism, and so on.

On the other hand, anthropogenic tourism potential also has a significant impact on the attractiveness of tourist destinations, contributing to increased tourist flows. Thus, anthropogenic tourism potential, as shown in Figure 3, consists of multiple elements, such as cultural and historical potential, events, gastronomy, tourism infrastructure, and tourism services.

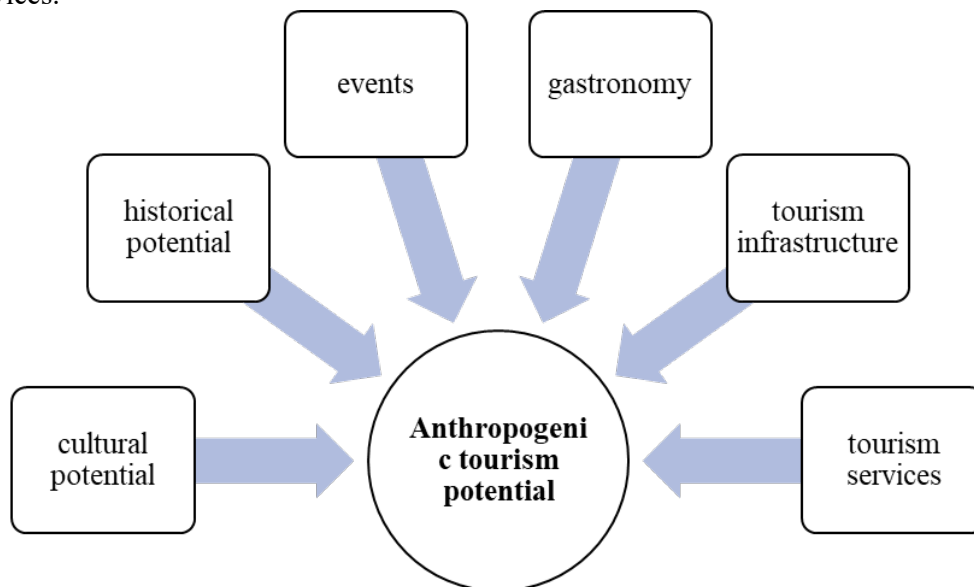


Figure 3. Basic elements of anthropogenic tourism potential

Source: adapted from STĂNCIULESCU, G. (2013). *Managementul agenției de turism*. București: Editura ASE.

The cultural potential is underpinned by museums, cultural centers, churches, and archaeological sites, which in turn attract tourists eager to discover the rich cultural heritage of these places. At the same time, cultural potential also consists of the traditions and customs cultivated by locals in tourist areas, which also encourage tourists to discover the culture of the region.

Historical potential consists of historical sites, fortresses, and historic buildings, which attract tourists to visit them and discover the historical significance of these places.

Events organized at the destination, such as concerts, festivals, exhibitions, competitions, and carnivals, help attract tourists to visit the destination during the time these events are held.

Gastronomy is also an important element of the destination's tourism potential, as it allows visitors to discover traditional dishes and local beverages specific to certain tourist areas. Thus, tourists often choose to visit these areas to explore the destination's culinary offerings and enjoy traditional dishes and distinctive beverages.

Tourism infrastructure is of paramount importance, as it supports the development of tourism by enabling tourists to stay in lodging facilities, dine at restaurants and cafes in the tourist area, and so on. Consequently, we can highlight that the presence of a well-established, high-quality tourism infrastructure at the destination encourages visits by various categories of tourists to engage in different forms of tourism.

Tourism services are also defining elements that help attract domestic and international tourists to discover the potential of the tourist destination. Thus, through tourism services such as transportation, accommodation, guided tours, and the organization of excursions, tourists have the opportunity to discover the beauty of the places and create special memories at the destination.

Based on an analysis of the work of researchers in the field, we can reiterate that tourism potential is classified according to various criteria, as summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Classification of tourism potential according to various criteria

Classification criterion	Types of tourism potential
Based on the nature of the available resources	a. Natural tourism potential b. Man-made tourism potential
Based on how the tourism potential is utilized	a. Exploited tourism potential b. Unexploited tourism potential
Based on the location of the tourism potential	a. Urban tourism potential b. Rural tourism potential c. Coastal or mountain tourism potential
Based on tourism significance	a. Strategic tourism potential b. Local tourism potential

Source: adapted from STĂNCIULESCU, G. (2013). *Managementul agenției de turism*. București: Editura ASE.

Upon analyzing the table, we can see that there are several categories of tourism potential:

- *natural tourism potential* – this consists of all the natural resources used to promote tourism. This category includes resources such as: topography, climate, fauna and flora, hydrological resources, and geological resources, which enable the development and practice of various forms of tourism in the tourist area. At the same time, these resources enhance the image and attractiveness of the tourist destination.

- *anthropogenic tourism potential* – encompasses all anthropogenic resources such as: cultural and historical potential, events, gastronomy, infrastructure, and tourism services, which enable the development of the destination’s natural tourism potential. These resources attract tourists through the quality of the services offered, the uniqueness of the infrastructure, and the elements of the tourist destination’s cultural and historical heritage.

- *developed tourism potential* – encompasses all tourism resources that have already been developed for tourism purposes and are equipped with tourism infrastructure and services that tourists can access when visiting the destination.

- *untapped tourism potential* – encompasses all tourism resources that have not yet been utilized for tourism purposes, for various reasons such as environmental protection, biodiversity conservation, etc., but which could be developed in the future.

- *urban tourism potential* – includes historical and cultural elements, buildings, museums, monasteries, churches, theaters, parks, and urban infrastructure. The presence of this type of potential offers the possibility of developing various forms of tourism, such as cultural, historical, and religious tourism, etc.

- *rural tourism potential* – encompasses the entirety of natural resources, traditions, values, cuisine, and landscapes in rural areas. The presence of this tourism potential offers the opportunity to engage in various forms of tourism, such as: ecotourism, agritourism, etc., which are most often practiced in rural areas.

- *strategic tourism potential* – encompasses the totality of tourism resources within a tourist destination that can be leveraged over a longer period. The presence of these resources offers the opportunity to design and implement various strategic tourism projects that enable development and strengthening the tourist destination.

- *local tourism potential* – encompasses all the tourism resources present in a specific tourist area, within a region, village, municipality, etc., that are utilized by tourists for tourism purposes.

3. Ways to Harness Tourism Potential

Harnessing tourism potential refers to the process by which natural and man-made resources, as well as tourism infrastructure, are utilized for tourism purposes in order to generate various types of benefits: economic, social, and cultural (Ritchie, Crouch, 2003).

The basic principles that must be taken into account in harnessing tourism potential are shown in Figure 4.



Figure 5. Basic principles for harnessing tourism potential

Source: adapted from FERREIRA, D.I., SANCHEZ-MARTIN, J.M. (2021). The Assessment of the Tourism Potential of the Tagus International Nature Reserve Landscapes

Using Methods Based on the Opinion of the Demand. In: *Land*, MDPI, vol.1., 2021, pp. 1-25. ISSN 2073-445X.

Sustainability – this principle boils down to the responsible development of tourism potential in order to provide future generations with opportunities to benefit from that potential and access to tourism resources. In this regard, in recent years there has been an increasing emphasis on harnessing tourism potential alongside protecting biodiversity, ensuring ecosystem balance, etc. Thus, reducing pollution, protecting resources, and conserving resource consumption are key objectives for harnessing tourism potential.

Diversity—this principle encompasses various forms of tourism, such as ecological, cultural, historical, and experiential, with the aim of attracting different categories of tourists to meet their travel expectations. Consequently, tourism organizations design various tourist routes and itineraries that include diverse attractions offering opportunities to engage in these forms of tourism.

Community integration – this principle focuses on involving various stakeholders in the economic, social, cultural, and environmental development of tourist areas. Thus, effective collaboration with stakeholders can ensure the development of tourist areas, as well as strengthen the area’s tourism potential.

Strategic planning – this principle focuses on the effective identification of development priorities for the tourist area and the effective planning of activities to harness tourism potential in order to maximize positive effects and minimize negative effects.

The main changes that have affected the harnessing of tourism potential are shown in Figure 6.

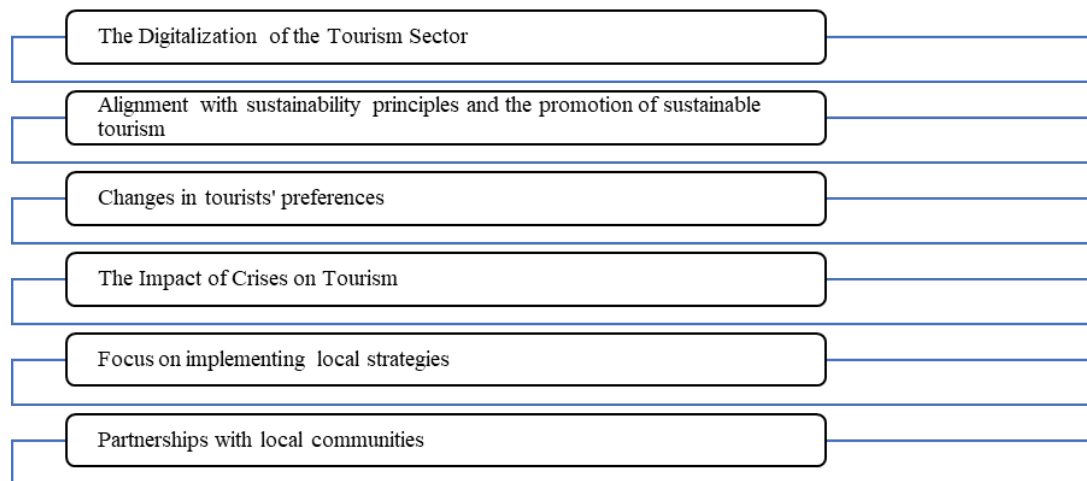


Figure 6. Major changes affecting the realization of tourism potential

Source: adapted from FERREIRA, D.I., SANCHEZ-MARTIN, J.M. (2021). The Assessment of the Tourism Potential of the Tagus International Nature Reserve Landscapes Using Methods Based on the Opinion of the Demand. In: *Land*, MDPI, vol.1., 2021, pp. 1-25. ISSN 2073-445X.

One of the main changes that has impacted the functioning of the tourism industry, on the one hand, and altered the way tourism potential is harnessed, on the other, is the digitization of the tourism sector, which has had a significant impact on the field in recent

years. Thus, as digitization has gained momentum, so too has digital tourism, the use of augmented reality, AI, and IoT in the tourism sector. At the same time, tourism has shifted from the traditional concept of leveraging potential—which involves the need to leave one's place of residence to visit and experience tourism—to "Tourism 4.0," a new way of practicing tourism that does not require leaving one's residence and offers the possibility of capitalizing on tourism potential using digital means such as AR, VR, AI, IoT, etc.

In addition, another change that has impacted the development of tourism potential is the emphasis on sustainability and the promotion of sustainable tourism. As a result, in recent years, the development of tourism potential has placed particular emphasis on natural potential—the unique natural resources available to the tourist destination—as well as cultural resources that must be managed responsibly to ensure that future generations also have the opportunity to benefit from them. As a result of tourism companies aligning with sustainability principles, numerous changes have taken place in the tourism industry, such as: the need for responsible consumption of tourism resources, the need to ensure ecosystem balance, and the reduction of pollution and the carbon footprint, among others, which have a negative impact on tourism potential.

Another factor affecting the realization of destinations' tourism potential is the shift in tourist preferences, which has become increasingly common in recent times. There is a growing demand from tourists for authentic, personalized travel packages, as opposed to the mass tourism that was preferred by tourists several decades ago.

Crises, likewise, have had an impact on the tourism sector, necessitating the reorganization of destinations, a rethinking of how to harness tourism potential, and a reevaluation of how tourism resources are utilized, through the lens of digital technologies and the integration of sustainable business models into the tourism sector.

Another change that has affected the functioning of the tourism sector is the focus on implementing local strategies, which involve strengthening culture, values, and traditions, as well as preserving the authenticity and identity of local communities. De asemenea, putem observa o concentrare pe consolidarea parteneriatelor cu comunitățile locale în vederea valorificării unui management al destinațiilor la nivel local. Totodată, se pune un accent mai mare pe adoptarea politicilor regionale de dezvoltare și valorificare a potențialului turistic la nivelul regiunilor, care dețin un potențial turistic mai slab valorificat.

The Republic of Moldova is a country with valuable, impressive, and extremely attractive tourism potential that draws tourists with the natural beauty, depth, and undeniable value of its tourist destinations. The valuable tourism potential of our country offers tourists the opportunity to engage in various forms of tourism: rural tourism, agritourism, religious tourism, etc.

A revealing analysis in assessing the utilization of tourism potential is the dynamics of tourism organized by travel agencies based on the purpose of visits by tourists participating in outbound tourism. The summary data are presented in Table 2. Thus, during the 2020–2024 period, the majority of tourists participating in tourism did so for the purpose of rest and relaxation.

Table 2. Travel agency activity by purpose of visit, 2020–2024

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	24/23	23/22	22/21	21/20
Total number of foreign visitor arrivals in the country	6950	24006	29008	43597	67631	24034	14589	5002	17056
Vacations, recreation, and leisure	6612	22457	26499	41837	65368	223531	15338	4062	1545
Business and professional reasons	238	1467	914	1389	1852	463	475	-553	1229
Other purposes	100	82	1595	371	411	-330	-1224	1513	-18
Total number of departures of Moldovan visitors abroad	74708	217678	324584	362440	396933	34493	37856	106906	142970
Vacations, recreation, and leisure	73725	216498	323473	360161	394531	34370	36688	106975	142773
Business and professional reasons	538	714	677	989	1385	396	312	-34	176
Other purposes	445	466	434	1290	1017	-273	856	-32	21
Number of tourists and day-trippers participating in domestic tourism	42848	79196	123559	97662	91295	-6367	-25897	44363	6348

Source: Compiled based on data from the National Bureau of Statistics, 2025. Available: https://statbank.statistica.md/pxweb/pxweb/ro/40%20Statistica%20economica/40%20Statistic a%20economica_11%20TUR_TUR030/?rxid=af1bdd19-60e4-4712-8f44-bbf70fe6e524

When analyzing the number of foreign visitor arrivals in the country by purpose of visit for the period 2020–2024, we can see that the vast majority of tourists come for recreation and leisure, accounting for 96.6% of the total number of tourists who visited our country. Thus, while 6,612 tourist entries were recorded in 2020, by 2024 this number had risen to 65,368 tourists. Thus, between 2020 and 2024, we observed a roughly tenfold increase in the number of visitors who took advantage of the country's tourism potential.

In addition, analyzing the number of Moldovan visitors traveling abroad, we can note that the vast majority of Moldovans travel to other countries for recreation and leisure, accounting for 99.44% of the total number of tourists leaving the country. At the same time,

we reiterate that during the 2020–2024 period, the number of tourists leaving the country for recreation and vacation purposes recorded a significant increase, approximately 5.31-fold, from 74,708 tourists leaving in 2020 to 396,933 tourists leaving in 2024.

In addition, we note that between 2020 and 2024, the number of domestic tourists is projected to double, from 42,848 tourists recorded in 2020 to 91,295 domestic tourists recorded in 2024.

Another important aspect of Moldova’s tourism potential is the tourism infrastructure that provides tourists with accommodation and enables them to experience the country’s tourism potential. Thus, in Table 3, we have summarized the dynamics and structure of registered tourist accommodation facilities in the Republic of Moldova for the period 2020–2024.

Table 3. Dynamics and structure of registered tourist accommodation facilities in the Republic of Moldova for the period 2020–2024

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total number of accommodation establishments, of which:	272	280	289	303	300
Hotels and motels	112	115	115	123	120
Tourist and agritourism guesthouses	38	43	47	56	57
Visitor lodges	3	5	6	6	8
Recreational facilities	7	7	7	7	7
Vacation villages and other recreational facilities	59	60	61	58	56
Children’s vacation camps	53	50	53	53	52
Total number of rooms, of which:	8119	8010	8333	8707	8649
Hotels and motels	2832	2853	2845	3137	3096
Tourist and agritourism guesthouses	492	559	645	729	742
Visitor lodges	170	184	186	186	268
Recreational facilities	1089	1094	1094	1094	1094
Vacation villages and other recreational facilities	1404	1426	1453	1418	1382
Children’s vacation camps	2132	1894	2110	2143	2067
Total number of beds, of which:	24666	23881	24709	25386	25418
Hotels and motels	5351	5400	5341	5813	5706
Tourist and agritourism guesthouses	1061	1221	1430	1632	1658
Visitor lodges	545	591	507	507	730
Recreational facilities	1970	1970	1976	1976	1976
Vacation villages and other recreational facilities	3641	3676	3730	3655	3570
Children’s vacation camps	12098	11023	11725	11803	11778

Source: Compiled based on data provided by the National Bureau of Statistics, 2025. Available:

https://statbank.statistica.md/pxweb/pxweb/ro/40%20Statistica%20economica/40%20Statistic%20economica_11%20TUR_TUR030/?rxid=af1bdd19-60e4-4712-8f44-bbf70fe6e524

Analyzing the trends in tourist accommodation establishments in the Republic of Moldova for the period 2020–2024, we can highlight that during this period there is an upward trend in the number of tourist accommodation establishments, from 272 establishments recorded in 2020 to 300 establishments recorded in 2024. Most of these are hotels and motels, which, between 2020 and 2024, showed an upward trend, from 112 establishments in 2020 to 120 establishments in 2024. At the same time, in addition to hotels and motels, our country offers tourists tourist guesthouses for accommodation, which also saw a significant increase between 2020 and 2024, rising from 38 units in 2020 to 57 units in 2024.

On the other hand, the total number of rooms offered by tourist accommodation establishments also showed an upward trend between 2020 and 2024, rising from 8,119 rooms in 2020 to 8,649 rooms in 2024. The largest share, at 35.8%, in 2024, is held by rooms in hotels and motels, followed by children’s vacation camps, which account for 23.9% in 2024, and then by rooms offered by vacation villages, which account for 12.6% of the total number of rooms.

At the same time, the number of beds offered by tourist accommodation establishments in the Republic of Moldova during the 2020–2024 period increased from 24,666 beds in 2020 to 25,418 beds in 2024.

Consequently, Figure 7 provides an overview of the occupancy of tourist accommodation establishments in the Republic of Moldova for the period 2020–2024.

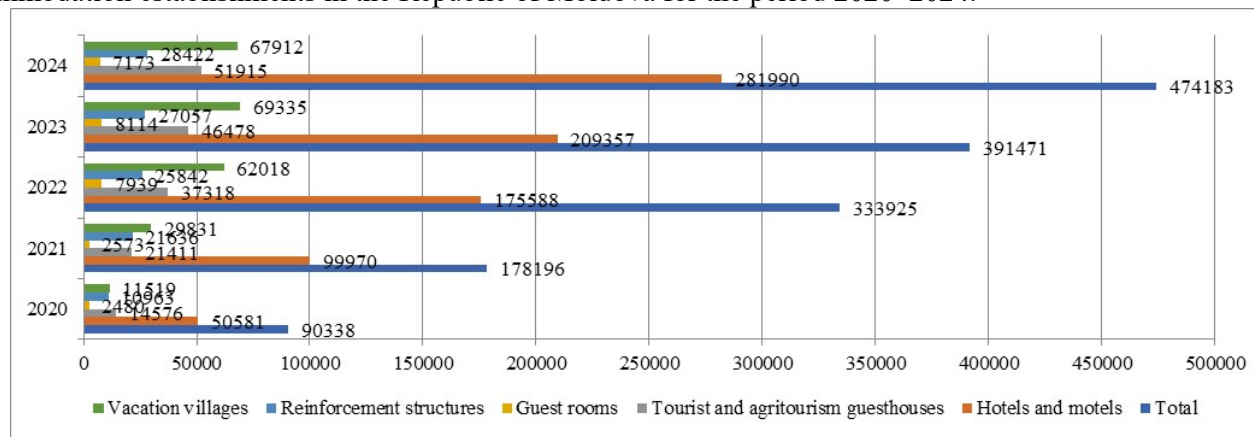


Figure 7. Overnight stays at accommodation establishments in the Republic of Moldova, 2020–2024

Source: Compiled based on data from the National Bureau of Statistics, 2025. Available: https://statbank.statistica.md/pxweb/pxweb/ro/40%20Statistica%20economica/40%20Statistic%20economica_11%20TUR_TUR030/?rxid=af1bdd19-60e4-4712-8f44-bbf70fe6e524

Analyzing the data in Figure 7, we observe that between 2020 and 2024, there was an increase in the number of visitors to tourist accommodation facilities of approximately 5.2 times, from 90,338 overnight guests in 2020 to 474,183 tourists accommodated in 2024.

The most significant increase is observed in hotels and motels, where between 2020 and 2024 there is an increase of approximately 5.6 times, from 50,581 tourists staying in motels and hotels in 2020, to 281,990 tourists staying in these tourist accommodation establishments by 2024.

The trend in overnight stays by non-resident tourists in tourist accommodation establishments is shown in Figure 8. According to the data in the figure, we observe that during the 2020–2024 period there is a positive trend, an increase of approximately 7.1 times, in overnight stays by non-resident tourists, from 70,385 non-resident tourists staying in 2020 to 501,318 non-resident tourists staying in 2024.

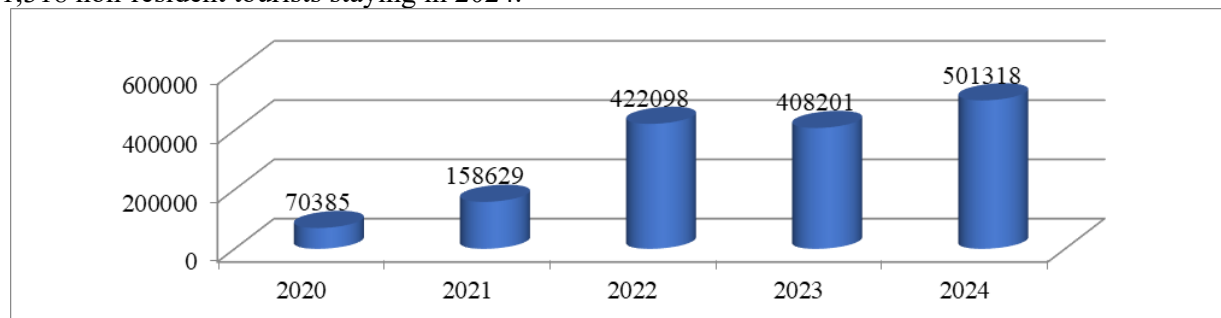


Figure 8. Trends in overnight stays by non-resident tourists staying in tourist accommodation establishments in the Republic of Moldova, 2020–2024

Source: Prepared based on data from the National Bureau of Statistics, 2025. Available: https://statbank.statistica.md/pxweb/pxweb/ro/40%20Statistica%20economica/40%20Statistic%20economica_11%20TUR_TUR030/?rxid=af1bdd19-60e4-4712-8f44-bbf70fe6e524

On the other hand, Table 4 shows the trend in the net occupancy rate of tourist accommodation establishments in the country for the period 2020–2024.

Table 4. Trend in the net occupancy rate of tourist accommodation establishments in the Republic of Moldova, 2020–2024, %

	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	24/23	23/22	22/21	21/20
Total:	13,0	20,3	29,5	28,8	31,5	2,7	-0,7	9,2	7,3
Hotels and motels	6,9	13,5	25,4	23,8	27,6	3,8	-1,6	11,9	6,6
Tourist and agritourism guesthouses	9,7	12,1	19,5	12,7	16,7	4	-6,8	7,4	2,4
Visitor lodges	62,2	51,3	46,7	42,3	42,1	-0,2	-4,4	-4,6	-10,9
Recreational facilities	30,7	48,6	54,1	57,1	58,4	1,3	3	5,5	17,9
Vacation villages and other recreational facilities	4,1	10,1	19,4	21,9	20,8	-11	2,5	9,3	6
Vacation camps	3,0	13,3	28,1	31,7	34,1	2,4	3,6	14,8	10,3

Source: Compiled by the National Bureau of Statistics, 2025

An analysis of the data in Table 4 reveals that, between 2020 and 2024, there was a significant increase in the net occupancy rate of tourist accommodation establishments in the country, from 13.0% in 2020 to 31.5% in 2024. This is largely due to the sector's recovery following the pandemic crisis, which had previously limited its development opportunities.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

Based on the research conducted, and with a view to strengthening the utilization of the Republic of Moldova's tourism potential, we consider the following recommendations imperative:

- *Developing a national tourism development strategy*—given that the Republic of Moldova possesses valuable tourism potential, we consider it necessary to develop a national tourism development strategy, which would contribute to intensifying the development of tourism in the country.

- *Development of tourism infrastructure* – to promote tourism in the Republic of Moldova, we consider it necessary to develop tourism infrastructure, including: repairing access roads to tourist destinations, installing signage along the entire route, increasing investment in accommodation facilities, and developing tourist trails and rural areas.

- *Promoting entrepreneurship in the tourism sector* – to increase the sector's appeal, we believe it is necessary to provide tax incentives for entrepreneurs in the tourism sector to encourage them to open businesses in rural areas and tourist destinations.

- *Developing an action plan to promote domestic tourism* – to increase the flow of tourists who take advantage of Moldova's tourism potential, we believe it is necessary to develop an action plan that includes concrete activities to help realize the country's tourism potential.

In conclusion, we reiterate that implementing the proposed recommendations would support the process of strengthening the country's tourism potential, on the one hand, and increasing the country's attractiveness as a tourist destination, on the other.

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