

GASTRONOMY – A POTENTIAL TOURISM BRAND OF THE ROMANIAN DANUBIAN REGION

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Abstract

The present paper is set to identify, through a comparative study developed simultaneously, elements characteristic to the local gastronomy of six Danubian counties, whose county seats are passed through or bordered by the Danube River, in order to determine whether there is basis for the development of a local food tourism and for the creation of a destination brand for the Danube region which would have the local cuisine as element of reference. The conclusions of the research carried out illustrate a great lack of homogeneity among the selected counties, both in terms of the gastronomic aspect and of the touristic one, a fact that at present would make the creation of a unique brand of tourist destination of the Danubian cities very difficult, but not impossible, and which would have the local gastronomy as the central element.

Key words: brand destination; Danube; Danube cities; food tourism; gastronomy.

JEL Classification: Z32, M31, L66

I. INTRODUCTION

The Romanian sector of the Danube River spreads over 1,075 kilometres (Mitrică, Damian et al, 2016, p. 242) and includes the following 12 counties: Caraș-Severin, Mehedinți, Dolj, Olt, Teleorman, Giurgiu, Călărași, Ialomița, Constanța, Brăila, Galați and Tulcea (Mitrică, Damian et al, 2016, p. 244). Through its Romanian course, the Danube passes through mountainous areas as well as plains, these being endowed with fertile fields, suitable for both vineyard and agricultural activities. In other words, the Romanian Danubian region is rich in winery, agricultural, and obviously, fishing resources.

In a simplistic way, food is treated as a resource used to satisfy our need to feed, but food also has a cultural character because it may represent a key of identifying a nation. Thus, there are authentic and unique culinary dishes representative for each country with the ability to bring fame to those countries. In other words, culinary dishes and drinks can be considered true marketing elements and even tourist attractions. Starting from this assumption, the phenomenon known as “gastronomy tourism” appeared and developed, in which, besides drinks and culinary dishes, a true and special importance is held by the production ways of those certain culinary dishes, the producers and their customs, the history of the culinary dishes and of the producers, and other similar aspects. Being connected to the local communities and to their customs, it is inevitable for the gastronomy tourism not to be subject to sustainability, thus becoming a form of sustainable tourism.

According to the desideratum of finding out if gastronomy is a strong point regarding the creation of a brand of tourist destination for the Romanian Danubian region, the inventory of the traditional Romanian food products certified both nationally and at a European level has been created, as well as the statistics analysis of the main elements of the material resources of tourism. Therefore, the main sections of the current paper are the review of the specialised literature, in which the concepts of “gastronomy”, “destination brand”, “gastronomy tourism” and “sustainable tourism” will be presented, research methodology, in which the objectives and the research methods used will be presented, results and discussions which contain the data and their processing and the observations on the obtained results, as well as the conclusions and bibliographic references.

II. REVIEW OF SPECIALISED LITERATURE

The term « gastronomy » was formed through the merge of the Greek words “gaster” (stomach) and “nomas” (law) and comprises, in a simplified definition, the whole rules regarding food preparation. The term entered modern languages through French, at the beginning of the 19th century, “to indicate the art of cuisine,

the preparation of food, the way it is presented and tasted” (Petrini, 2007). In the definition given in the Italian encyclopaedia “Treccani”, Carlo Petrini also states that the term gastronomy refers “not only to the ways food is handled, to the supply with raw material, to the service, but to the whole historical and cultural, technical, and material elements that contribute to the process of food preparation, with its traditions and innovations” (Petrini, 2007). Gastronomy helps us discover which the best qualities of food are, by making a distinction between basic and accessory foodstuffs (Nistoreanu, Dorobanțu et al, 2013).

Together with the development of gastronomy, gastronomy tourism has spread more and more, a mainly modern phenomenon which consists in: “knowledge of a territory by exploring not only the monuments but also the scenery, the agricultural and food resources” (Montanari, 2014). According to a known definition, culinary tourism is an experimental journey in a gastronomic region, with recreational and entertainment purposes, which includes the visit to primary and secondary producers of foodstuffs, to gastronomic festivals, food fairs, events, food markets, cooking displays, tasting of quality products and any other touristic activity related to food” (Hall, Sharples et al, 2003). Research in the field have proved “that food and food-related industries can be central to the formation of regional identities, substantiating the theoretical link between identity and food” (Everett and Aitchison, 2008, p.16).

This concept is also confirmed in the second report of the World Tourism Organisation: “Linking gastronomy and tourism also provides a platform for the promotion of cultures through their cuisine. This not only assists in destination branding, but also helps to promote sustainable tourism through preserving valuable cultural heritage, empowering and nurturing pride amongst communities, and enhancing intercultural understanding. Through a visit to a food festival, cooking class or farm-to-table dining experience, tourists garner a better sense of local values and traditions” (UNWTO, 2017).

In other words, gastronomy tourism fully contributes to the promotion and development of local foodstuffs, and it also represents a generating factor of the multiplying effect of tourism. These things pose as advantages for the local community. In exchange, the tourists are willing to gather as many experiences, and gastronomy tourism can create memorable experiences by taking into account elements such as food and beverages, location, company (the people that accompany the tourists), the occasion on which food and beverages are consumed, the authenticity and the novelty of the food and of the places (Stone, Soulard et al, 2018). Thus, authenticity and novelty can form a brand.

Regarding the promotion of a certain tourist destination, gastronomy should not be isolated but included in the general promoting strategy of the entire region, together with its other sectors and activities (UNWTO, 2019). At the same time, any strategy must comprise the idea of sustainability (UNWTO, 2019). According to United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), “a destination brand is a place that has been characterized as attractive to visit” (UNWTO, 2009, p. 14).

An important definition of the concept of brand was given in the specialised literature by Simion Anholt (2007), who tackled this problem closely: “a brand is a product or service or organization, considered in combination with its name, its identity and its reputation”. At the same time, “branding is the process of designing, planning and communicating the name and the identity, in order to build or manage the reputation” (Anholt, 2007, p. 4).

With regard to our country, Anholt claims that, despite recording at present a better environment for investments and some important economic, social, cultural and industrial progress, in comparison with the period of Ceaușescu’s regime, Romania „has achieved little in the way of improving its reputation and still finds foreign investment, tourism and exports developing rather slowly [...] a country’s reputation stands still at the moment the world heard the last striking thing about it; and because bad or shocking news is generally more intriguing, more durable and more pervasive than good news, there is a strong tendency for national images to accumulate negative equity more easily than the positive kind” (Anholt, 2007, p. 117).

In this context, the traditional cuisine, included in an uncontaminated natural environment, could represent an important element in creating a local, regional, or national destination brand. This is due to the fact that “the basic principle of destination branding is that every act of promotion, exchange or representation needs to be seen not as an end in itself but as an opportunity to build the country’s image and reputation” (Anholt, 2010, pp. 92-93).

But more categories of stakeholders should contribute to the construction of a destination brand, not just the tourist agencies, the hotels, the authorities in the field of tourism and the museums, but also the locals: “their characteristics, behaviour and reputation could make a city more attractive to visitors, new residents, investors, and companies” (Braun, Mihalis et al, 2013, p. 18). There must be a very close collaboration between all of them.

In the specialised literature, there are however opposing views regarding the ability to build a brand having gastronomy as the main element, especially in the case of the localities or regions without tradition in this sense. „Not all destinations seem capable of providing authentic gastronomic experiences”, says Marie Eve

Férérol (Férérol, 2018, p. 36), resuming the thesis supported by Hjalager and Corigliano (2000), who think that the pre-existence of a cuisine, the result of a historical evolution in which both natural and cultural resources combine, is the essential condition to have success.

Things are not quite like this in reality, many studies proving that a destination brand having gastronomy as the main element can be developed around some new elements, made up through a well elaborated marketing plan, such as, for example, an event that did not previously exist. We mention here the example of success of Stockton Asparagus Festival which shows that a well organised event, even if it has as the main element just one food product, can attract many representatives of the gastronomy tourism (Lewis, 1997; Hillel, Belhassen et al, 2012). Another interesting paper sets out to analyse if it is possible to create a territorial gastronomic brand in a multicultural territory lacking a well-defined local cuisine, in Sankt Petersburg respectively. The affirmative conclusions of the research carried out by Valery Gordin and Julia Trabskaya were presented to the Committee of Tourism Development in Sankt Petersburg, which decided to develop the proposal of creating a gastronomy tourism in that area starting from the solutions they presented (Mariani, Czacon et al, 2016, pp. 87-109).

According to UNESCO, which in 2004 launched a project through which it created the network of creative cities, for a city to be recognised as a UNESCO creative city in the field of gastronomy, it has to fulfil the following conditions: “Well-developed gastronomy that is characteristic of the urban centre and/or region; Vibrant gastronomy community with numerous traditional restaurants and/or chefs; Endogenous ingredients used in traditional cooking; Local know-how, traditional culinary practices and methods of cooking that have survived industrial/technological advancement; Traditional food markets and traditional food industry; Tradition of hosting gastronomic festivals, awards, contests and other broadly-targeted means of recognition; Respect for the environment and promotion of sustainable local products; Nurturing of public appreciation, promotion of nutrition in educational institutions and inclusion of biodiversity conservation programmes in cooking schools curricula” (UNESCO, 2013).

At the same time, UNWTO has also made a very useful publication, “Guidelines for the Development of Gastronomy Tourism”, which includes recommendations for the development of a gastronomy tourist destination: „In this context, a key step for the development and management of gastronomy tourism in a territory is to identify, inventory and analyse the potential and degree of development of the various elements in the value chain of gastronomy tourism: producers in the primary and secondary sector, firms in the tertiary sector, the catering offer, accommodation, specialist trade, firms providing gastronomic activities and services (cookery workshops, tasting schools, etc.), knowledge venues such as cookery and hospitality schools, markets, wholesale markets, auctions, and venues for the dissemination of gastronomic culture, trade fairs, festivals and events, and also natural and cultural resources” (UNWTO, 2019). These aspects are grouped in Fig. 1.

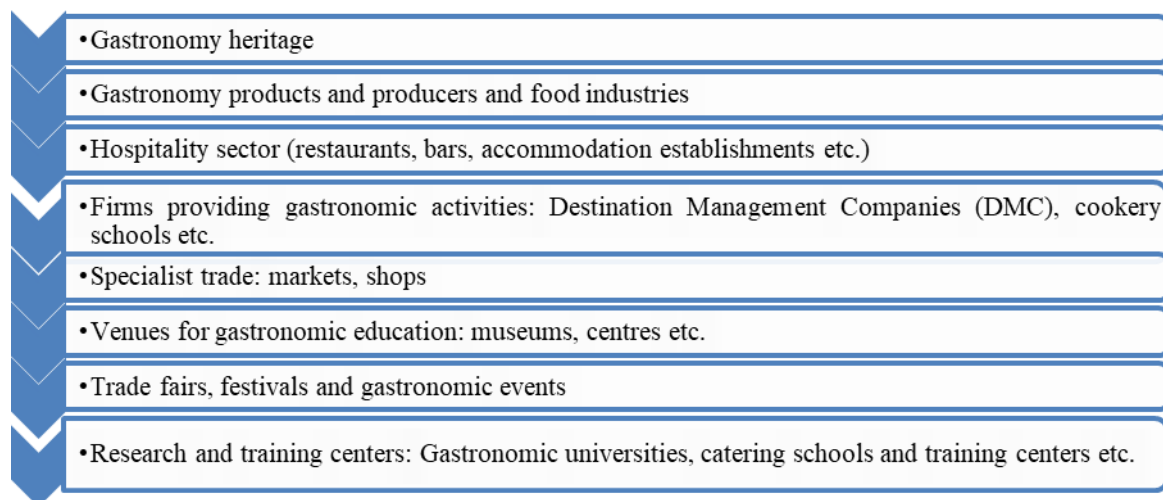


Figure 1 – Elements for analysing a destination’s resources, products, and gastronomy

Source: UNWTO, 2019, Guidelines for the Development of Gastronomy Tourism, <<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284420957>> [Accessed on October 21 2021].

As in the cited papers there are many elements mentioned that cannot be completely included in the present paper, we will analyse some of the aspects that come to define a gastronomy tourist destination. We will focus our research firstly on the traditional foodstuffs that are part of the cultural heritage of each analysed county.

Regarding sustainable tourism, there is a possibility that what sustainable tourism means today may not be valid in the future. Postma, Cavagnaro et al, (2017, p. 16) proposed four scenarios for sustainable tourism for 2040. In case conventional resources will be the basis of the activities, and the economic position of the European Union will be strong, it will be considered that mass tourism is more sustainable than the tourism done on a smaller scale. In case conventional resources will be the basis of the activities, but the economic position of the European Union will be weak, it will be considered that the environment will be more and more exposed to risks. In case the new sustainable resources will be the basis of the activities, and the economic position of the European Union will be strong, it will be considered that innovations will represent the main means for development and that sustainability is an important condition for development. In case the basis of the activities will be the new sustainable resources, and the economic position of the European Union will be weak, it will be considered that smaller scale tourism will be more sustainable than mass tourism (Postma, Cavagnaro et al, 2017, p. 17). According to these scenarios, it can be noticed that sustainable tourism is connected to terms such as resources, environment, economy, innovation, development. These terms merge harmoniously in the definition given by Liu (2003, p. 462): “sustainable tourism implies the sustainable increase of the contribution of tourism to the economy and the sustainable use of the resources of the environment”.

Being in a complete connection with the sustainable development, a comprehensive definition of sustainable tourism is given by the World Tourism Organisation and the United Nations Environment Programme (2005, p. 12) as it follows: “sustainable tourism is the tourism that takes into account its present environment and socio-economic impact, by tackling the needs of the tourists, of the tourist industry, of the environment and of the host communities”. According to the previous definition, it is inherited that any form of tourism can become sustainable tourism. Juganaru and Anghel (2008) identify more forms of sustainable tourism, that is: green tourism, ecotourism, soft tourism, rural tourism, community-based tourism, equitable tourism, and solidarity tourism. A clear distinction between what forms of tourism can be considered sustainable and what forms of tourism cannot be considered sustainable is done by Gherco and Trandafir (2014, p. 209), who state that sustainable tourism is “separate from mass tourism and associated with alternative forms such as: ecotourism, rural tourism, green tourism, business tourism, automobile tourism”. In other words, sustainable tourism does not go under mass tourism.

What differentiates mass tourism from the sustainable tourism are the features of the last one. Among the features of sustainable tourism, we mention: “the involvement of the local community in the touristic development, the limiting of excessive use of natural resources, generating economic benefits for the local community, maintaining biodiversity, ensuring natural resources for posterity, the training and the involvement of residents to be professionals, the integration of an ample plan, generating efficient information, carrying out marketing actions responsibly” (I Made Suniastha, I Made et al, 2018, p. 250). In its essence, sustainable tourism represents “all the activities that involve the management and development of tourism through maintaining socio-economic and natural integrity and through the guarantee of preserving natural and cultural resources” (Niedziolka, 2012, p. 160). A more sceptical point of view regarding the essence of sustainable tourism is offered by Butler (2018, p. 10), presenting it as a real paradox, arguing that, in relation to the environment, the real sustainable tourism would mean that the number of touristic travel tends to be zero, but this would affect the socio-economic needs and benefits of both the present and the future host communities.

In accordance with the fact that gastronomic activities represent a contribution of the destination and of the host community respectively, some authors consider that sustainable tourism is also a contribution of the destination as sustainable tourism also represents “the ability of the tourist destination to be attractive for tourists, to be competitive, no matter the situation, to remain unique from the cultural point of view and to be in balance with the environment” (Gherco and Trandafir, 2014, p. 209), and due to these aspects, the tourist can gain memorable experiences. In line with the previous considerations, it can be admitted that gastronomy can be an activity from the sphere of sustainable tourism.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the present paper is that of identifying, through a parallel and comparative study, characteristic elements of the local gastronomy from counties whose capital cities are bordered or crossed by the Danube River, in order to establish if there are basis for the development of a destination brand based on a common element, gastronomy. Thus, the two objectives of the present paper are the inventory of the traditional products certified nationally and at a European level and the statistical analysis of two elements of the material resources of tourism, more precisely the number of accommodation units and the number of places for accommodation. The main research methods used in the writing of this paper were the reading of speciality literature, with the analysis and the synthesis of the main concepts of theoretical inclusion of the material: gastronomy – gastronomy tourism – sustainable tourism, and the inventory of the main gastronomic products

registered nationally and at a European level by consulting the site of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and of the site designed by the European Commission and the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO). The data regarding the elements of the material resources of tourism was taken from the site of the National Institute of Statistics. The processing of the data was done using the formulas of the average indicators: the average, the annual average increment, and the average rhythm (Anghelache and Manole, 2012).

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Regarding the local gastronomy, the Romanian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development issues the National Registry of Traditional Products, in accordance with the regulations of Order number 112 from 2020, which modifies Order number 724 from 2013. According to the mentioned order, “traditional product” is that food product for which local raw materials are used, it does not have in its composition any food additives, has a traditional recipe, a traditional production and/or processing method and which distinguishes itself from other equivalent products belonging to the same category.

The Romanian traditional products certified by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development for the counties with capital cities crossed or bordered by the Danube River are presented in Table 1 (see Appendix). According to the Table 1, the most intensive activity regarding the certification of the traditional Romanian products is found in Tulcea County, as between 2014 and 2020 there were 22 foodstuffs certified as traditional Romanian products. Călărași County is on the opposite side because during the studied period no traditional Romanian product was certified. It can be noticed that in Tulcea County the majority of the traditional Romanian products are fish based, while in Galați County the majority of the traditional Romanian products are based on pork. Although both counties are crossed by the Danube River, fish-based products are predominant in Tulcea County because Danube Delta is found on the territory of this county, which represents an appropriate environment for a large variety of fish species. This aspect can be correlated with the fact that on the territory of Tulcea County there are also the so called Local Gastronomic Points. More precisely, there are 29 local gastronomic points (The Sanitary Veterinary and Food Safety Authority Tulcea, 2021). The National Sanitary Veterinary and Food Safety Authority (2016, p. 4) defines local gastronomic points as private kitchens found especially in the rural areas, which use local raw materials, and which obtain culinary products based on the recipes specific to the area.

Besides the national certification that the traditional Romanian products have, there are also the certifications at a European level, regulated through: EU regulation no. 1151/2012 for foodstuffs, EU Regulation no. 1308/2013 for wines, Annex III of the EC Regulation no. 110/2008, together with the EU Regulation no. 787/2019 for spirits and EU Regulation no. 281/2014 for flavoured wines. The Romanian products from the studied counties, certified and protected at European level, are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Traditional Romanian products certified at European level

Products Counties	Product denomination	Category	Registration year
Mehedinți	Mehedinți PDO	Wine	2007
	Dealurile Olteniei PGI	Wine	2007
Giurgiu	Terasele Dunării PGI	Wine	2007
Călărași	-	-	-
Brăila	Însurăței PDO	Wine	2011
	Terasele Dunării PGI	Wine	2007
Galați	Dealul Bujorului PDO	Wine	2007
	Dealurile Moldovei PGI	Wine	2007
	Nicorești PDO	Wine	2007
Tulcea	Colinele Dobrogei PGI	Wine	2007
	Babadag PDO	Wine	2007
	Sarica Niculițel PDO	Wine	2007
	Scrumbie de Dunăre afumată (Smoked Danube mackerel) PGI	Foodstuff	2016
	Salată cu icre de știucă Tulcea (Tulcea luce roe salad) PGI	Foodstuff	2018
	Plăcintă dobrogeană (Dobrogean pie) PGI	Foodstuff	On-going certification

Source: Made by the authors based on the data taken from the site of the European Commission and European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), available at <<https://www.tmdn.org/giview/gi/search>> [Accessed on October 24, 2021].

According to the previous table, of all the studied counties, Tulcea county is on the first place regarding the certification of traditional products at a European level. Călărași county is on the opposite side, meaning that on the territory of this county there are no traditional Romanian products certified at a European level. Another observation would be that most of the traditional Romanian products certified at a European level from the studied counties are part of the spirits category, more precisely wines. On the other hand, Mehedinți, Brăila, Galați and Tulcea counties represent not only a gastronomic potential, but they also present a winegrowing potential. Moreover, it is obvious the fact that the gastronomic potential and the winegrowing potential cannot be exploited without tourists and adequate touristic material resources.

As mentioned above, the selection criterion of the studied Danubian counties was that of the Danube River crossing or bordering the capital cities of the counties. Thus, based on this criterion, the following capital cities of the counties, and ports, can be enumerated: Drobeta Turnu-Severin, Giurgiu, Călărași, Brăila, Galați and Tulcea.

According to the Romanian International Association (2011, p. 2), Drobeta Turnu-Severin, Giurgiu and Călărași ports are river ports, and Brăila, Galați and Tulcea ports are river-maritime ports. In accordance with the same association, the features of the mentioned ports are the following (Romanian International Association, 2011, pp. 1-41):

- Drobeta Turnu-Severin – size 113,485 mp (square meters); it is connected to roads and railways; it does not have passenger berths;
- Giurgiu – size 394,077 mp; it has road and railway connections; it has 4 passenger berths;
- Călărași – there is a mooring ramp for touristic ships in the working point Chiciu; it has access to roads and railway;
- Brăila – size 389,630 mp; it does not have passenger berths; it has road and railway connections;
- Galați – size 864,131 mp; it does not have passenger berths; it has road and railway connections;
- Tulcea – size 82,762 mp; it has a terminal for passengers and facilities to transport the tourists in the Danube Delta; it has road and railway connections.

It can be noticed that there are possibilities to receive tourists only in the ports of Giurgiu, Călărași and Tulcea. This is due to the fact that the six ports presented have a predominant industrial destination, in the sense that their usefulness is represented by the unloading, the loading and storage of merchandise. Thus, it can be inferred that the number of tourists arrived in these ports is infinitesimal or inexistant. Under these conditions, the tourists that visit these port-cities use other means of transport than river transport. In 2020, the number of tourists that visited the port-cities analysed is: Drobeta Turnu-Severin – 38,162 tourists; Giurgiu – 3,123 tourists; Călărași – 9,498 tourists; Brăila – 32,063 tourists; Galați – 37,929 tourists; Tulcea – 39,018 tourists (The National Institute of Statistics). There is a contrast regarding the number of tourists of the studied port cities, and that is the fact that most of the tourists visit the last county capital city on the route of the Danube River (Tulcea) and the first county capital city (Drobeta Turnu-Severin).

The statistics of the material resources of tourism in the analysed counties is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Accommodation units and the number of accommodation places in the counties on the Danube River

Years	Material resources of tourism (A – Accommodation units; N – Number of accommodation places)	Mehedinți County	Giurgiu County	Călărași County	Brăila County	Galați County	Tulcea County
2014	A	45	11	17	40	32	141
	N	1,804	570	843	2,544	1,541	4,361
2015	A	55	12	29	42	40	140
	N	2,118	586	843	2,551	1,994	3,873
2016	A	59	13	17	42	40	138
	N	2,174	636	868	2,551	2,074	3,754
2017	A	71	17	29	43	42	127
	N	2,315	817	885	2,453	2,053	3,946
2018	A	70	17	29	43	43	328

	N	2,302	809	885	2,498	2,067	7,919
2019	A	83	18	30	43	43	298
	N	2,429	817	894	2,501	2,095	7,522
2020	A	96	27	27	43	51	316
	N	2,661	843	864	2,532	2,196	7,912

Source: Made by the authors based on the data taken from the site of the National Institute of Statistics, available at <<http://statistici.insse.ro:8077/tempo-online/#/pages/tables/insse-table>> [Accessed on 12.09.2021].

Regarding the number of accommodation places, in the period analysed, Tulcea county stands out as it has the greatest number of accommodation places in contrast with the other counties. Giurgiu county is on the opposite side having the fewest accommodation places.

The interpretation of the number of accommodation places from the statistic point of view, using the formulas of the average indicators: average, the average annual increment, the average index and the average rhythm (Anghelache & Manole, 2012), is the following:

- In Brăila County, for the period 2014-2020, the number of accommodation places decreased on average by 2 accommodation places, that is a decrease of 0.999 times, with a rhythm of 0.08%, given the fact that the average number of accommodation places is 2,518.
- In Călărași County, for the period 2014-2020, the number of accommodation places increased on average by 3.5 accommodation places, that is an increase of 1.004 times, with a rhythm of 0.4%, given the fact that the average number of accommodation places is 868.
- In Galați County, for the period 2014-2020, the number of accommodation places increased on average by 109 places, that is an increase of 1.060 times, with a rhythm of 6%, given the fact that the average number of accommodation places is 2002.
- In Giurgiu County, for the period 2014-2020, the number of accommodation places increased on average by 725 places, that is an increase by 1.067 times, with a rhythm of 6.7%, given the fact that the average number of accommodation places is 725.
- In Mehedinți County, for the period 2014-2020, the number of accommodation places increased on average by 142 accommodation places, that is an increase of 1.066 times, with a rhythm of 6.69%, given the fact that the average number of accommodation places is 2,257.
- In Tulcea County, for the period 2014-2020, the number of accommodation places increased on average by 591 accommodation places, that is an increase of 1.104 times, with a rhythm of 10.43%, given the fact that the average number of accommodation places is 5,612.

The fact that Tulcea county is on the first place, taking into account the number of accommodation places and the other counties analysed, it is also supported by the rates of the average indicators, Tulcea county recording an increased rhythm of the accommodation places of 10.43%.

V.CONCLUSIONS

The results obtained after the research illustrate a great lack of homogeneity between the selected counties, both in terms of the gastronomic aspect and of the touristic one, a fact that it would now make it exceedingly difficult to create a unique brand of tourist destination of the Danubian cities which would have as the central element the local gastronomy.

In this sense, from the gastronomic point of view, a very intensive activity is noticed in Tulcea and Galați counties, which can be considered as models of good practices for the other Danubian cities. Mehedinți county could have a good potential, but it must identify and catalogue the local traditional products (for example, those that were produced on Ada Kaleh island), which they should then certify and sell nationally and internationally. The other counties must start a process of identification of the local identity products which differentiates them from other areas of the country and make them culinary attractive.

The eclecticism of the data leads us to the conclusion that a unique gastronomic brand cannot be created along the Romanian course of the Danube, but regional brands could be created by grouping several counties, such as Giurgiu-Călărași or Brăila-Galați-Tulcea. Moreover, because in some counties the number of traditional products certified at national or European level is very small, we consider that the gastronomic activity does not represent a driving force of sustainable development for the tourism in the Romanian Danubian region.

Obviously, the research has also certain limits because not all aspects related to the inclusion of an area in the definition of gastronomic destination have been analysed, such as: restaurants, bars, industrial food units, markets, fairs, events dedicated to the promotion of local gastronomy, etc. All these aspects could be tackled in a future research that would contain more useful elements to support the development of a potential project for the

development of a destination brand.

VI.APPENDIX A

Table 1. Certified traditional Romanian products

Years	Mehedinți County	Giurgiu County	Călărași County	Brăila County	Galați County	Tulcea County
2014	-	-	-	-	-	Salată "Deltaica" cu icre de crap ("Deltaica" carp roe salad) Salată "Deltaica" cu icre de știucă ("Deltaica" luce roe salad); Pastramă "Deltaica" de crap argintiu("Deltaica" silver carp pastrami) ; Sardeluță "Deltaica" marinată în ulei ("Deltaica" marinated sardine in oil); Sardeluță "Deltaica" marinată în ulei picant ("Deltaica" marinated sardine in chilly oil); Batog "Deltaica" de crap argintiu ("Deltaica" silver carp cod); Pastramă "Deltaica" de somn ("Deltaica" wels catfish pastrami) Total: 7
2015	-	-	-	Borș Dinu. (Dinu Borsch) Total: 1	-	-
2016	-	-	-	-	-	-
2017	-	-	-	-	-	Zacuscă Moesis (Moesis eggplant paste); Tocană de legume Moesis (Moesis vegetable stew); Gem de prune Moesis (Moesis plum jam); Dulceață de Cireșe Moesis (Moesis cherry jam); Dulceață de vișine Moesis (Moesis sour cherry jam) Total: 5
2018	-	-	-	-	-	Dulceață de trandafiri Moesis (Moesis rose jam); Dulceață de nuci Moesis (Moesis walnut jam); Cornulețe cu rahat Moesis (Moesis Turkish delight pastry); Cornulețe cu unt și nucă Moesis (Moesis butter and walnut pastry); Biscuiți de casă Moesis (Moesis homemade biscuits); Telemea de capră Picurariu din Stejaru (Goat cheese Picurariu from Stejaru). Total: 6
2019	-	Plăcintă cu Căpriță din Herăști (Herăști cheese wild spinach pie). Total: 1	-	-	Mușchi de porc Ilinca (Ilinca pork tenderloin); Costiță afumată Ilinca (Ilinca smoked bacon); Cotlet Haiduceș a lui Zamfir (Zamfir traditional pork chops); Cârnați porc a lui Ignat (Ignat pork sausages). Total: 4	-
2020	Bragă „La Bairam” („La Bairam” braga);	Plăcintă cu Căpriță din Herăști. (Herăști	-	-	Slăninuță țărănească Zimbra (Zimbra rustic bacon);	Tocană de legume Moesis (Moesis vegetable stew); Gem de prune Moesis (Moesis plum jam); Dulceață de cireșe Moesis

	Dulceață de Smochine „Trikule” (“Trikule” fig jam). Total: 2	cheese wild spinach pie Total: 1			Piept Haiduceșc Zimbra (Zimbra outlaw chest); Cotlet Zimbra în untură (Zimbra chop in lard); Salam Zimbra (Zimbra salami); Purcel copt la jar Zimbra (Zimbra piglet baked in hot coal); Jambon Zimbra în untură; (Zimbra ham in lard) Tobă Zimbra (Zimbra toba); Cârnați de porc Zimbra în untură (Zimbra pork sausages in lard); Jumări Zimbra (Zimbra scrapes); Jambon Zimbra (Zimbra ham); Mușchiuleț de porc Ilinca (Ilinca pork tenderloin); Costiță afumată Ilinca (Ilinca smoked bacon); Cotlet Haiduceșc a lui Zamfir (Zamfir traditional pork chops); Cârnați porc a lui Ignat (Ignat pork sausages). Total: 15	(Moesis cherry jam); Dulceață de vișine Moesis (Moesis sour cherry jam); Cozonac Comoara Măcinului (Comoara Măcinului spongecake); Cornulețe cu rahat Moesis (Moesis Turkish delight pastry); Cornulețe cu unt și nucă Moesis (Moesis butter and walnut pastry); Biscuiți de casă Moesis (Moesis homemade biscuits); Salată Deltaică cu icre de crap (Deltaica carp roe salad); Salată Deltaică cu icre de știucă (Deltaica luce roe salad); Pastramă Deltaică de crap argintiu (Deltaica silver carp pastrami); Sardeluță Deltaică marinată în ulei; (Deltaica marinated sardine in oil) Sardeluță Deltaică marinată în ulei picant (Deltaica marinated sardine in chilly oil); Batog Deltaică de crap argintiu (Deltaica silver carp cod); Batog Deltaica de somon (Deltaica wels catfish cod); Pastramă Deltaica de somon (Deltaica wels catfish pastrami); Telemea de capră Picurariu din Stejaru (Goat cheese Picurariu from Stejaru). Total: 17
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Source: Made by the authors based on the data taken from the site of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, available at <https://www.madr.ro/industrie-alimentara/produse-traditionale-romanesti/implementarea-ordinului-nr-724-2013-privind-atestarea-produselor-traditionale.html> [Accessed on 10.09.2021].

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