



Case Study: The Importance of the Bucovina Region as a Tourist Attraction

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Abstract: *This study aims to evaluate the tourism potential of the Bucovina region through statistical research using a questionnaire-based survey. By analysing responses from 100 tourists, both domestic and international, the study identifies key factors influencing tourism in Bucovina, as well as tourist behaviour and preferences. Findings indicate that tourist attractions (38%) and traditional cuisine (33%) are the main reasons for visiting, while most tourists (60%) were visiting Bucovina for the first time. The study also highlights that social media and personal recommendations are the most effective marketing tools, whereas print media has significantly declined in influence. The analysis of tourist profiles reveals that the typical visitor is aged 24-50, married, and employed without higher education, staying predominantly in hotels or guesthouses. The study concludes that Bucovina has high tourism potential, currently underutilised, requiring greater investment and development to attract more visitors and enhance economic benefits for the region.*

Keywords: *Bucovina tourism; statistical research; tourist behaviour; tourist attractions; survey methodology; survey analysis; visitor demographics; tourism development.*

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1. Introduction

A first set of principles regarding survey procedures relates to the fundamental concepts of statistical knowledge. Statistical research aims to reveal the truth as a whole or as a particular unitary community, also known as a population.

This survey-based analysis system operates on the hypothesis of understanding such a reality by researching a representative sample extracted from society through a well-established scientific method.

The goal of statistical knowledge cannot be achieved merely by drawing an analogy from a part to the whole but rather by uncovering the characteristics of that whole through a complex intellectual transformation. (Francis, 2005)

Essentially, statistical research is based on reasoning and aims to reconstruct reality through adaptation by analysing a specific part of the whole. This understanding of statistics as a concept presents various specific challenges, such as defining the statistical population as a whole, estimating the population's magnitude, identifying particular units, and analysing their characteristics.

At the same time, conducting a survey raises several issues, such as determining the sample size, assessing the accuracy of the results, and specifying the originality constraints.

2. The Bucovina Tourist Area

The Bucovina tourist area is, in fact, a significant part of Suceava County, characterised by its stunning natural landscapes (mountain trails, green spaces, fortresses, rivers, etc.) and numerous monasteries. Bucovina is also known as the "Land of Beeches" due to its uniquely beautiful and artistic landscape.

The key colours (Wikipedia contributors, 2023) associated with this tourist area are:

- Red of Humor
- Blue of Voroneț
- Green of Sucevița

The Bucovina tourist area is predominantly represented by its numerous monasteries, including historic ones built by Ștefan cel Mare, Alexandru cel Bun, Petru Rareș, and Alexandru Lăpușneanu.

To highlight the region's rich cultural and natural heritage, the following section presents 12 tourist attractions in Bucovina, Romania (distinct from the Bucovina region in Ukraine).

3. Twelve Tourist Attractions in Bucovina

1. Voroneț Monastery is a UNESCO World Heritage site, famous for its unique and long-lasting blue pigment, known as the "Blue of Voroneț." Due to its exceptional frescoes, it is often referred to as the "Sistine Chapel of Eastern Europe." The monastery was built by Ștefan cel Mare in 1488 after a victory against the Ottoman Empire. (Am fost în vacanță, 2023)

2. Sucevița Monastery, a 16th-century historical monument and UNESCO site, features Moldavian medieval architecture and a fortress-like appearance. It is located near Câmpulung Moldovenesc.

3. Putna Monastery is a significant religious and cultural landmark in Romania. Founded by Ștefan cel Mare, it is referred to as the "Jerusalem of the Romanian Nation" by poet Mihai Eminescu. The monastery houses an impressive museum with valuable embroideries, manuscripts, and religious artefacts. Built in 1469, it is said that its altar stands where Ștefan cel Mare's arrow landed during a test of precision. The monastery was restored by Vasile Lupu in 1662.

4. Humor Monastery, built in 1530, is a significant medieval construction in Moldova. Unfortunately, photography inside is not allowed, and access is ticketed.

5. Completed in 1537, Moldovița Monastery is renowned for its stunning exterior frescoes, which have stood the test of time.

6. The Suceava Fortress (Cetatea de Scaun a Sucevei) was built in the 14th century near Suceava and served as the residence of Moldavian rulers. Neglected for many years, it underwent restoration in 2004. Today, it functions as a museum and also hosts medieval festivals during summer.

7. The Marginea Pottery Center is globally renowned for its unique ceramic crafting technique. Visitors can observe the entire pottery-making process.

8. Țugui Ioan and Elisabeta Spoon Collection. This small museum houses approximately 5,000 wooden spoons from around the world, showcasing various artistic styles.

9. Mocănița at Moldovița. Built in 1888, the Mocănița steam train was initially used for transporting wood but is now a popular tourist attraction. The scenic route passes through Poiana Zigreva.

10. Cacica Salt Mine is a unique salt mining site and tourist attraction, featuring an artificial salt lake (Lacul Sărat) and a dance hall created by miners.

11. Moara Dracului Gorges is one of Bucovina's most spectacular natural attractions. The trail leads to the peak of Rarău Mountain, offering breath-taking views and abundant flora and fauna.

12. Vatra Dornei. Nicknamed the "Pearl of Bucovina," Vatra Dornei is located in the Dorna Depression and is famous for its mineral springs and therapeutic peat mud. It is also a popular winter sports destination, combining natural beauty, hospitality, and a favourable climate.

4. The Questionnaire Used in Statistical Research

The present questionnaire was conducted in 2022 on a sample of 100 individuals, representing both tourists from Romania and other countries visiting the Bucovina tourist area. The purpose of this survey was to conduct statistical research on Bucovina as a tourist destination, during the period June 10-15.

The questionnaire consists of 14 well-defined questions, aiming to analyse tourist behaviour and the touristic image of the Bucovina region.

Personally, I have visited the Bucovina tourist area, and with the help of a tablet and the SurveyPlanet (SurveyPlanet, 2023) platform, the following questionnaire was created:

1. What is the reason for your visit to Suceava County?

- Tourism
- Business trip
- Work/Business
- Other

The highest response frequency, with 50 responses (50%), is for tourism, followed by 19% for business, 17% for business trips, and 14% for other reasons (visits to friends, relatives, etc.).

2. What influenced your decision to choose Suceava?

- Hospitality of the locals
- Traditional cuisine
- Tourist attractions
- Other

The result of this question indicates that Suceava is no longer perceived as highly hospitable, as only 12% of respondents chose to visit the area due to its hospitality. The main reasons for visiting are tourist attractions (38%), followed by traditional cuisine (33%). Only 12% cited other reasons for their visit.

3. How many times have you visited Bucovina before?

- 1 time
- 2-6 times
- More than 6 times

This question aims to determine the frequency of visits to the Bucovina tourist area by tourists. 60% of respondents stated that they were visiting the area for the first time, followed by 21% who had visited 2-6 times, and 19% who had visited more than 6 times. It is noteworthy that

the distribution of responses for 2-6 visits and more than 6 visits is nearly equal, with a difference of only 2 respondents.

4. Which season do you prefer for your stay?

- Spring
- Summer
- Autumn
- Winter

This multiple-choice question successfully illustrates the beauty of the Bucovina tourist area across all seasons, as the responses are almost evenly distributed.

- 75 respondents prefer summer,
- Followed by 70 respondents choosing autumn,
- 67 respondents prefer spring and winter equally.

This suggests that Bucovina is an attractive destination year-round, with no significant seasonal preference among tourists.

5. Where did you stay during your visit? (most frequently)

- Hotel
- Motel
- Cabin
- House
- Guesthouse
- Camping
- Relatives
- Friends
- Other

The majority of tourists prefer staying in hotels or guesthouses during their stay. 41% of respondents chose hotels, while 20% opted for guesthouses. The remaining responses are less significant for interpretation but serve as guiding insights.

6. How did you find out about the Bucovina tourist area?

- Radio
- Television
- Social media
- Internet
- Print media
- Friends
- Other

Analysing these responses, we can conclude that the print media no longer holds the influence it once had, with only 16 selections. Direct recommendations, chosen by 73 people, the internet by 70 people, television by 64 people, and social media by 61 people, represent the main marketing channels of the current decade for promoting a tourist area.

7. What type of entertainment do you prefer?

- Shows
- Festivals
- Clubs
- Pilgrimages
- Hiking
- Other

The most preferred forms of entertainment among tourists are: 75 people prefer festivals, 72 people prefer shows, 71 prefer hiking, 35 people prefer clubs, 31 people prefer pilgrimages, and 16 people prefer other activities.

8. How do you rate the quality of services provided?

- Excellent

- Very good
- Good
- Neither good nor bad
- Poor
- Bad

43% rate the quality of services as "Excellent," followed by 22% as "Very good," 14% as "Good," 9% as "Neither good nor bad," 5% as "Poor," and 7% as "Bad."

9. What impressed you the most during your stay?

- Landscape
- Tourist attractions
- Festivals
- Monasteries
- Hospitality
- Traditions
- Other

This question illustrated a relatively balanced distribution of tourists' impressions during their stay. The results were as follows: 17% for festivals and traditions, 16% for landscapes and monasteries, 15% for hospitality, 13% for tourist attractions, and 6% for other aspects.

10. What is your age group?

- 0-24
- 24-50
- 50-65
- 65+

Out of a total of 100 tourists, 49% are between the ages of 24 and 50, 19% belong to the 0-24 age group, 18% fall within the 50-65 category, and 14% are aged 65 and above.

11. Marital status:

- Married
- Single
- Prefer not to answer

44% are married, 35% are unmarried, and 21% prefer not to answer (they may be divorced or have other reasons).

12. Occupation:

- Student
- Employed (without higher education)
- Employed (with higher education)
- Freelancer
- Unemployed
- Retired
- Other

32% are employed without higher education, 18% are employed with higher education, 15% are students, 13% are retirees, 12% are self-employed, 7% are unemployed, and 3% fall into other categories.

13. Nationality:

- Romanian
- Foreign

According to the graph above, 88% of the tourists are Romanian, while the remaining 12% are foreign visitors.

14. On a scale from 1 to 10, how important do you consider Bucovina as a tourist attraction?

From the average of the 100 surveyed individuals, the importance of the Bucovina region as a tourist attraction was rated 7.47 out of 10.

5. Conclusion

This study aimed to conduct statistical research using a questionnaire to illustrate the tourism potential of the Bucovina region while also analysing tourist behaviour.

Regarding tourism, in response to the question "How many times have you visited Bucovina?" the majority—60%—stated that they were visiting the area for the first time, indicating that Bucovina is of interest to many tourists. It is also noteworthy that 88% of the tourists are from Romania, with foreign tourists showing less interest in the region.

Concerning tourist behaviour, an analysis of the collected data allows for the creation of a tourist profile. The typical tourist is between 24-50 years old, married, and employed without higher education, choosing Bucovina for its tourist attractions. This tourist is visiting Bucovina for the first time, is open to traveling in any season, relies on the internet, particularly social media, and consults friends when planning their itinerary. Most tourists stay in guesthouses or hotels.

The majority of tourists are impressed by the entertainment options available in Bucovina and appreciate many of its tourist attractions. Additionally, 43% of respondents rated the quality of services as "Excellent."

The study concludes with a final question regarding the importance of the Bucovina tourist area, which resulted in an average rating of 7.47 out of 10. From this, we can conclude that Bucovina has enormous tourism potential, which is not yet fully exploited. The region requires greater investment and more serious involvement to enhance its importance, attract more tourists, and increase state revenue through tax collection.

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