

## RESPONSIBILITIES OF ROAD TOURIST CARRIERS IN ROMANIA

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***Abstract:** One of the fundamental components of the tourist product is tourist transportation. Its importance is given by the need of the tourists to travel from their residence to the chosen holiday destination. So far tourist road transport is most popular with tourists due to price, flexibility and independence offered, followed by air transport.*

*Most of the tourists visiting Romania and of those who leave it for tourism use road transport modes. In this respect, tourist transport modes used are classified, and carriers have certain responsibilities.*

***Key words:** tourism, tourist carriers, transport modes, responsibilities*

### Introduction

As is well known, tourist transport is part of the tourist product, being a fundamental component. The important role of transportation in tourism results from the necessity of every tourist to travel from their residence to a chosen destination for leisure.

With the development of the transport infrastructure and transport means, the number of tourists has increased. New tourist destinations and types of tourism have appeared, and the time travel has decreased.

Currently, tourist transportation must provide a swift travel, comfortable, safe, with fixed deadlines and rates.

When choosing a means of transport one takes into account the distance, time, accessibility, comfort, security and regularity.

The road transport is the most popular with tourists, following the air, rail, and water transport; it can be done either individually or jointly.

Table 1 Advantages and disadvantages of tourist transportation

Advantages	Disadvantages
- accessibility;	- comfort;
- freedom of movement;	- duration of journey;
- cost of journey;	- dependence on the road network, their quality and equipment
- attractiveness of journey;	- seasonal agglomerations.
- landscape to be admired.	

Sava, Cipriana, Tourism economy,  
Eurostampa Publishing House, Timișoara, page 91

The factors influencing road tourist transport are:

- the price of fuel;
- the renting price of vehicles;
- road infrastructure (road network);
- customs, road and parking duties.

Travel agencies use (mostly) coaches and minibuses to transport tourists.

In Romania, European country with high tourism potential, but not fully exploited, it was found that the preferred mode of transport for tourists is the road transport.

### **Road tourist transports in Romania**

Worldwide, according to the data released by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the trend is the increasing use of air transport by tourists. Thus, in 2013 just over half of all tourists reached their destination by air (53%), while the rest travelled by land public transport (47%) road (40%), rail (2%) or water (5%).

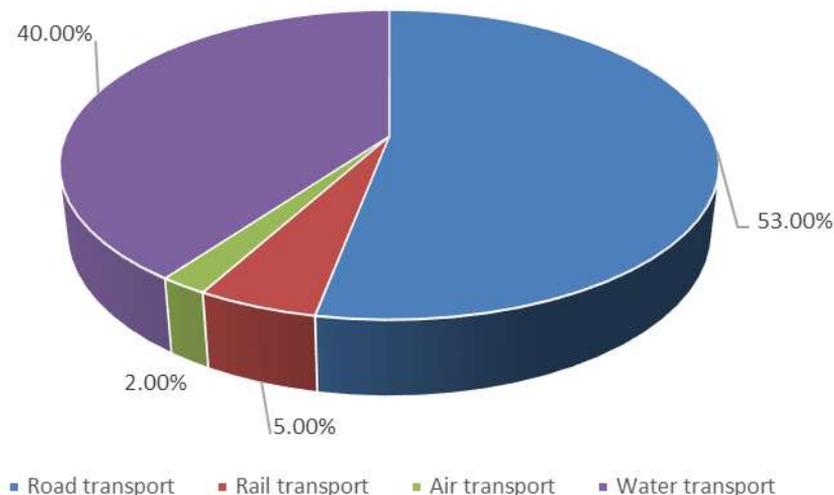


Fig. 1 Share of tourist arrivals worldwide according to the means of transportation used in 2013

In Romania the road infrastructure measured 29153 km in 2013, but the share of highways is extremely low, only 2.20% of the length of public roads, which is a big disadvantage for the development of Romanian tourism.

Table 2. Length of public roads and types of public roads km

Type of public road	Year 2011	Year 2012	Year 2013-
Total	26911	27665	29153
Highways	350	550	644
Roads with light asphalt coating	21909	22208	22191
Paved road	23456	23037	22495
Earth road	11462	11275	11048

Source [www.insse.ro](http://www.insse.ro) series Tempo-Online TRN 139A

Considering the data presented, it can be said that there is a dense network of roads with light asphalt clothing which crosses the country and enables the visiting of most existing tourist attractions, but these roads have speed limits and are quite busy being provided with only one lane in each direction.

However, foreign tourists arriving in Romania for tourism, used road transport means in most cases.

Table 3 Arrivals of foreign tourists in Romania, according to the means of transport used thousands of people

Year	Total foreign tourists arrivals	Road transport	Rail transport	Air transport	Water transport
2011	7611	5676	258	1509	168
2012	7937	6027	255	1469	186
2013	8019	6244	232	1347	196

Source: www.insse.ro series Tempo-Online TUR 107A

Table 4 Share of foreign tourists arriving in Romania according to the means of transport used %

Year	Total foreign tourists arrivals	Road transport	Rail transport	Air transport	Water transport
2011	7611	74,57	3,39	19,83	2,21
2012	7937	75,94	3,21	18,51	2,34
2013	8019	77,87	2,89	16,80	2,44

In the analysed years the trend is to increase the number of foreign tourists arriving in the country, in correlation with the increasing of the share of road transport means. Using road transport means is explained by lower tariffs, freedom of movement, flexibility of schedule, the possibility to go directly to the desired destination.

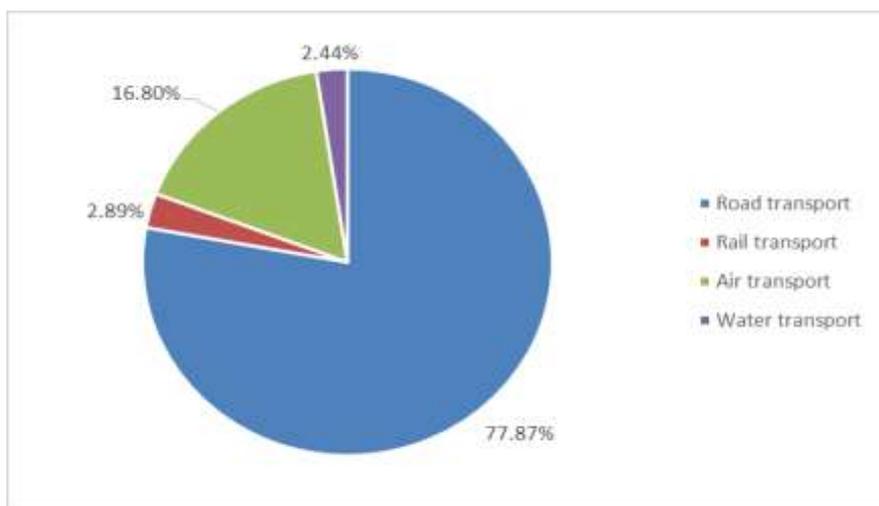


Fig. 2 Share of foreign tourists arriving in Romania according to the means of transport used in 2013

Departures of Romanian tourists abroad were made predominantly with all transport means, for the same reasons.

Table 5 Departures of Romanian tourists abroad depending on the means of transport used thousands of persons

Year	Total of Romanian tourists who went abroad	Road transport	Rail transport	Air transport	Water transport
2011	10936	7920	216	2780	20
2012	11149	8464	201	2461	23
2013	11364	8794	187	2360	23

Source: www.insse.ro series Tempo-Online TUR 108A

Table 6 Share of Romanian tourists who went abroad according to the means of transport used %

Year	Total of Romanian tourists who went abroad	Road transport	Rail transport	Air transport	Water transport
2011	10936	72,4	2	25,4	0,2
2012	11149	75,9	1,8	22,1	0,2
2013	11364	77,4	1,6	20,8	0,2

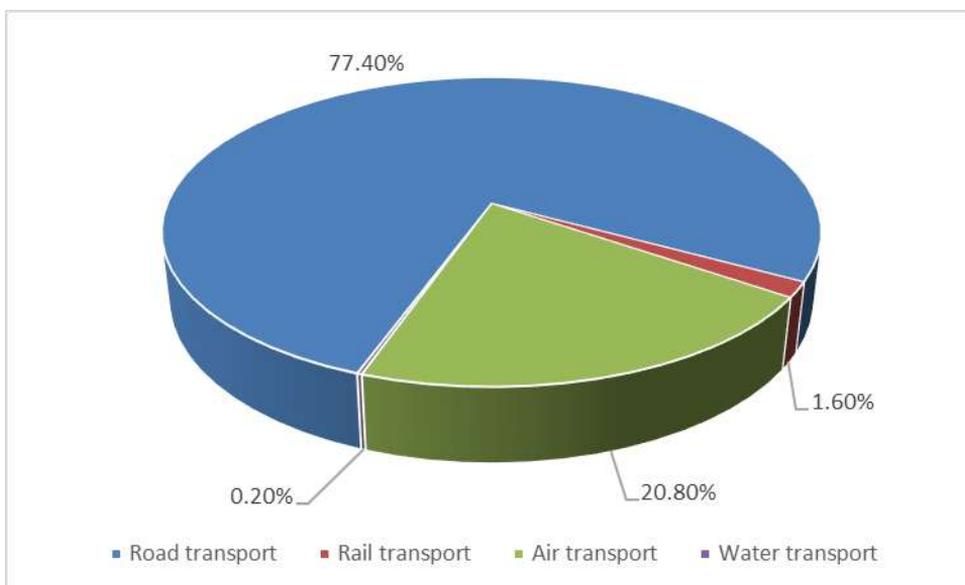


Fig. 3 Share of Romanian tourists who went abroad according to the means of transport used in 2013

Both foreigners coming to Romania and Romanians going abroad for tourism prefer road public transport, followed by air transport. Thus, a network of highways, upgrading of existing airports and providing new destinations by direct flights would help Romanian and foreign tourists.

### **Responsibilities of road tourist carriers in Romania**

Romanian travel agencies must classify their coaches in order to offer domestic and international road transport services, which aims at increasing the quality of tourist services. Methodological norms on classification of tourist buses used for domestic and international traffic and for passenger public transport in international traffic were approved by Order 254/1996 and consolidated by Order 1359/2004.

Coaches are classified on stars, from one to four, by a committee of the Romanian Auto Register (RAR), based on criteria contained in the law, which use the International System IRU (International Road Transports Union). Classification can be done individually or by the manufacturer of buses and is valid one year, after which a new review for classification is requested.

The classification criteria on stars of coaches aim at the following aspects:

- engine power;
- braking;
- suspension;
- driving comfort;
- air conditioning;
- heating system;
- side windows;
- interior lighting;
- sound system;
- trunks;
- plumbing;
- refrigerator.

Providing a quality tourist transport service is one of the responsibilities of travel agencies.

For passenger safety the transportation companies must have their bus fleet insured. The required insurance covers accidents of tourists in domestic and international traffic, damage and theft of vehicles,

CASCO and TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE in case of accident, property damage liability (RCA).

The first insurance perfectly fits into what implies responsibility of road tourist carriers and it insures travellers, organized groups attendants and drivers who are traveling with the vehicles specifically mentioned in the insurance policy, in case of accidents.

The European Union has issued some regulations related to the rights of tourists traveling by coach. In this respect, the Romanian Government issued Decision 425 of 26 June 2013 laying down measures for the enforcement of Regulation (EU) No. 181/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 February 2011 concerning the rights of passengers traveling by bus and coach and amending Regulation (EC) nr.2006/2004. This provides a visible display of passenger rights, a registry of complaints with solutions and a document for the types of disability for which they are able to provide free assistance at the transport company, the terminal and travel agency. Among the rights stipulated we mention:

- non-discriminatory tariffs;
- providing assistance to passengers in the event of accident;
- non-discriminatory conditions for access to the means of transport;
- free assistance for persons with reduced mobility or disabilities;
- assistance to passengers in the event of cancellation or delay of a journey;
- providing information on the conditions of transport and passenger rights;
- notifying tourists who filed a complaint within the established time limits.

All these are obligations of tourist carriers for a successful holiday tour.

### **Conclusions**

More people spend their free time in a domestic or foreign tourist destination. Foreign tourists visiting Romania have an upward trend, but still shy, their number was 82,000 higher in 2013 than in the previous year.

Part of the package tour, transportation plays a major role by providing transfer for the tourists from their residence to the tourist destination of choice, so it is important to achieve the best conditions of

comfort and security. At national level road tourist transport leads in the tourist preferences.

Currently, in Romania it can be said that the responsibilities of road tourist carriers are well highlighted.

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