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Les défis de développement pour les villes et les régions dans une Europe en mutation

## **Silver tourism – key factor for rethinking regional tourism. A case study in the South-east region of Romania**

**Mme Violeta PUSCASU**

University "Dunarea de Jos" Professor

111 Domneasca street 800217 Galati Galati Romania

violeta.puscasu@ugal.ro 0040723192324

### **Référence à la session / reference to the session**

B6, D7, S8

### **Résumé / Summary**

As a result of the growing ageing, senior tourists will become a powerful group in the near tourism future. According to this statement, our research assesses that the silver tourism could represent a real instrument for the regional development in the next years. The paper has two parts. The first one presents some theoretical issues related to the new syntagma „silver economy&silver tourism” and their evolution in the European context. Seeking into Romanian context, public agenda and recherche areas, we discovered that these terms are extremely rare. The second part focus on the south-eastern region of Romania – considered to be the most representative among eight regions, in terms of touristic potential. On the other hand, this region is not among the most developed in Romania. The aim of our study is to highlight the opportunity of capitalizing the aging phenomenon by the administrative institutions and local tour operators that might regenerate economically the southeast region. Methodologically, we used two different types of studies. The first one, which was previously done, revealing the region's tourist potential. The second one consists of a survey based on a questionnaire applied to a group of seniors enrolled at the „university of third age” Galati city. For now, this type of structure is unique in Romania. It provides a valuable dimension of touristic perspective because their relevant demographic characteristics - 160 respondents aged between 55 and 85 years. The questionnaire applied was adopted by the National Institute for Research-Development in Tourism, as part of the European project consortium EUROSEN. The results reveals the connections existing between the main options of elderly and the forms of tourism developed at regional level. Related to this aspect, our study highlights how small is the distance between regional tourism potential and touristic demand, on the one hand, and how weak is the attention to this segment, on the other hand, respectively why the institutions should pay more attention to this factor.

### **Bibliographie / Bibliography**

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