

Annex
to the decision of Chisinau Municipal Council
no. ____ from _____2022

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY FOR 2022-2026
"CHISINAU - THE TOURIST CAPITAL"

Chisinau 2022

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ABBREVIATIONS:

ANTRIM – National Association for Inbound and Domestic Tourism from Moldova

ANTIM - National Association of Young Historians from Moldova

AIRM - Agency for Inspection and Restoration of Monuments

ADR - Regional Development Agency

AI - Investment Agency

ANG - National Association of Guides

ANTAI - National Association of Business and Industrial Tourism "Pro Turism Moldova"

AGLT - Association of Guides, Lecturers and Translators

APL – Local Public Authority

APIT - Employers' Association of the Tourism Industry

A.O. - Public Association

ASP - Public Services Agency

BNS – National Bureau of Statistics

CIT - Tourist Information Center

CMC - Chisinau Municipal Council

DAJ - Legal assistance department

DC – Culture Directorate

DGAURF - General Directorate of Architecture, Urban Planning and Land Relations

DGF - General Directorate of Finance

DGECT - General Directorate of Economy, Trade and Tourism

DGETS - General Directorate of Education, Youth and Sports

DGLCA - The general housing-communal and improvement directorate

DGTPCC - General Directorate of Public Transport and Communications

DMF - Financial management department

DRE - External relations department

DRPBC – Department of public relations and civil budget

GCPC - Civic Group for Cultural Heritage

IGP - General Inspectorate of Police

Î.M. RTEC - M.E. Chisinau electric transport directorate

Î.M. DPCO -.M.E. Directorate of Culture and Recreation Parks

ÎMM - Small and medium enterprises

Î.M. – Municipal Enterprise
MICE - Meetings, Incentives, Conferences & Exhibitions
MC – The Ministry of Culture
ONG – Non-governmental organization
PG – General mayor
PMC - Chisinau City Hall
PUA – M. E. The urban park of buses
PIB – Gross domestic product
SRL - Limited liability company
UAT - Administrative-territorial unit
VP – profile deputy mayor
ZDT – Tourist Development Zone

Introduction

This Strategy represents the main planning document for the tourism sector in the municipality of Chisinau for an average period of 2022-2026 in order to strengthen the image of the municipality of Chisinau as the tourist capital of the Republic of Moldova. The recipients of the Strategy are the representatives of the municipal and local public administration (localities in the municipality of Chisinau), entrepreneurs in the field of tourism, hotel services and public catering, event organizers, representatives of ethnic minorities, NGOs in the field of culture, education, tourism, representatives of universities and scientific institutions in the field, development partners, citizens and potential visitors of the municipality of Chisinau.

The strategy aimed at analyzing the existing situation as well as at identifying trends, challenges, vision development, strategic objectives, action plan for 2022 – 2026 years and monitoring and evaluation mechanism. The strategy highlights the strengths as well as the weaknesses of the municipality of Chisinau, identifies the opportunities and risks of the external environment.

The strategy was developed by the team of the General Directorate of Economy, Trade and Tourism within APL in Chisinau, with the support of the National Association of Inbound and Inland Tourism from Moldova (ANTRIM), with the involvement of the structural subdivisions of APL in Chisinau and the town halls of the suburb of Chisinau, of experts in the field of urban architecture, history, representatives of the business environment.

Several research methods and tools have been used in the development of the Strategy: statistical data collection and processing, development and processing questionnaires from APL and the holders of tourist resources, holding workshops, PERT and SWOT analysis, situation and trends analyses in 2 large cities in the region: Iasi and Odessa, public consultation and approval of the Strategy by the Chisinau Municipal Council.

1. Current situation analysis

1.1. Localization

Chisinau is the capital and largest city of the Republic of Moldova, its main economic, financial, transport, administrative, scientific, educational and cultural center, where more than 20% of the country's population live. The socio-economic situation in Chisinau largely determines the state of the country as a whole, and the challenges and development opportunities of Chisinau mark the development trends of the country.

The municipality of Chisinau consists of the city of Chisinau and 34 suburban localities, within 18 administrative-territorial units of the first level (6 cities and 12 communes/villages).

From a geographical point of view, Chisinau is located in the center of the country, being placed on the edge of the southeastern slope of the Central Plateau of Moldova, in the forest-steppe area, being crossed by the Bac river, a right tributary of the Nistru river. Like other European capitals (Rome or Kyiv), Chisinau is located on 7 hills, thus giving it a special geographical aspect. Also, Chisinau represents an important transport and infrastructure nucleus, ensuring the connection with the country's main external routes (car and road): from Ukraine (Odessa) and Romania (Iasi), as well as an important connecting pole between East and West through via Chisinau International Airport. Any traveler, with the destination Republic of Moldova, will necessarily pass through Chisinau - an opportunity that needs capitalization - to extend the stay in Chisinau from 1-2 days to 3-4 days minimum.

While working on the Strategy, a Tourism Heritage Evaluation Questionnaire was developed for the town halls in the suburbs. 4 local LPAs participated in completing the questionnaire: Stauceni, Gratiesti, Cricova and Vatra, the respective information being used in each chapter separately.

1.2. Nature capital

1.2.1. Green spaces

Green spaces occupy an important place in ensuring a clean and healthy environment for recreation of the inhabitants and visitors of a locality. According to statistical data, in 2020, in the municipality of Chisinau, the total area of urban green spaces was 4,397.2 ha. Compared to the total population of the municipality - 738.5 thousand people, it is found that for each person there is 5,954 m². European standards recommend at least 9 m² of landscaped green

spaces for each inhabitant. However, the municipality of Chisinau has sufficient green spaces to ensure ecological and environmental protection functions. The tenth part, respectively - 10.34% of the total green spaces (454.5 ha), is intended for tourist and recreational areas.

However, not only the total amount of public recreational space, but also its spatial distribution throughout the city is important. And here it is noted that the most compact green areas are located in the north and west of the city of Chisinau, and green areas are mostly found in 2 administrative sectors - Ciocana and Rascani and less in the other 3 administrative sectors: Centru, Buiucani and Botanica. The green recreational areas within the city (road verges, parks, forest-park) are located within not more than an 8-10 minutes' walk from the residence. The most popular parks in the city of Chisinau are: "Valley of the Mills", "Valley of the Roses", Cathedral Park, Public Garden "Stefan cel Mare", "La Izvor", "Alunel", Botanical Garden, Technical University Park and the Dendrarium.

Also, the areas of interest in the municipality of Chisinau include forests with landscape, scientific and recreational potential which are also found in the suburbs of the city: such as Scorteni, Condrita, Durlesti; lakes and ponds - Chisinau, Ghidighici, with opportunities for hunting and fish farming. These areas can be exploited from the point of view of ecotourism, also taking into account the proximity of Chisinau.

As well as that, in the suburbs of the municipality, green areas are set up - three in Cricova (Aleea Domnitorilor, the road verge near the Obelisc, Park in P. Ungureanu street), one in Vatra (the recreation area adjacent to the Ghidighici reservoir) and two - in Stauceni (public lane from Pacii street and the road verge from Gratiesti street). Several undeveloped green areas are highlighted - in Cricova (the area around the Ichel river), Stauceni (the Public Park in A.Mateevici str., the public park in Unirii str.), in the Gratiesti commune (the Park in the village of Gratiesti and the Park in Hulboaca). Vatra, taking into account the large area of Lake Ghidighici and the territory adjoining to it, could not provide us with complex information.

To be used to their full potential, public spaces must be safe, friendly and accessible to all ages. The regeneration of green urban spaces offers opportunities to (re)create cultural and recreational functions (conversion of abandoned areas into coworking spaces, theaters, schools, "street art parks", museums or exhibition halls, etc.), reducing transport distances and stimulating walking and cycling. At the same time, the development and arrangement of these green spaces is to be

carried out around the green belt of the capital, which is the riparian area of the Bac river, which starts from Temeleuti village (Calarași district) and is the tributary of the Nistru river.

1.2.2. Hydrography

The hydrographic basin of the city is formed by the Bac river and its tributaries: Durlesti, Malina Mica, Valea Trandafirilor, Nagornai, Valea Cirstei, Tiganca, Hulbocica, Ciocana 1 and Ciocana 2.

The water situation in the municipality of Chisinau is worrisome - the latest chemical research carried out on the waters of the Bac river shows that the river is in an advanced degree of pollution. In the context of improving the image of the city, it is important that the river bed is properly cleaned and landscaped. During the last few years, projects have been implemented to clean and develop the bed of the Bac river, which includes the portion from Petru Rares Street to the bridge on Cantonului Street.

The strategic plan for the City of Chisinau called "Chisinau - Green City - Strategic Planning", developed by the Municipality of Chisinau with the support of a team of international consultants, experts in various fields of environmental protection and sustainable urban development mentions that the natural water reservoirs located on the territory of the municipality are very polluted. The National Public Health Agency issues constant warnings about swimming in lakes that originally had recreational purposes.

An important balneo-climatic area in the municipality is the town of Vadul lui Voda, located on the bank of the Nistru river, 25 km from the city. For the Nistru River, the share of samples for sanitary-chemical parameters assigned to class IV (polluted) was 15% in 2019 and for class V (highly polluted) to 32% - 2019. These indices speak of the danger to the health of people who choose to rest on the bank of the Nistru river. Most tour guides and representatives of travel agencies recommend avoiding the consumption of tap water in the capital, others suggest that in modern hotels in Chisinau, tap water is safe and can be consumed. This aspect directly influences the safety of travelers. And it also has sustainability and waste considerations, as tourists (and locals) who regularly buy bottled water will contribute to more plastic waste.

1.2.3. Relief

Chisinau is assigned as a "city located on 7 hills" like Rome, Edinburgh, Lisbon, Prague, Brussels, Athens, Barcelona, Budapest, Istanbul, Kyiv or Iasi. Panoramic views of Chisinau are available from the Centru, Telecentru, Ciocana and Botanica neighborhoods, but there are no other landscaped viewpoints, except for the panoramic road verge on Maria Dragan Street in the Ciocana sector. Relief is a factor that must be taken into account especially when analyzing the possibility of creating an infrastructure for cyclists, as it is recommended to avoid routes with too high or too low an altitude.

Chisinau is not without natural landscapes to be able to attract tourists, especially in the conditions of the new ecological tourism trend, in which tourists choose ways of traveling with as little impact on the environment as possible, but also to destinations with respect for environmental protection.

Generated by human activity, a tourist destination in this category which has great potential as a tourist attraction and image is the Stone Mine. S.A. "Mina Chisinau" deals with the extraction of limestone and was established in 1969. The mine is located on the outskirts of Chisinau, in the Rascani sector, and is in working order. The mine stretches over a distance of 4500 m, with a depth of up to 98 m from the ground level and reaches the area of the Cricova cellars, being mostly flooded (about 60%). This could be a strong impetus in the development of adventure tourism and industrial tourism in Chisinau. The arranged tourist route, of course, requires security and marking standards.

1.2.4. Environmental quality

The most polluted regions of the city are: Ciocana sector (M. Manole, Ginta Latina, Vadul-lui-Voda streets), Botanica sector (Gradina Botanica, Muncesti, Grenoble streets), Buiucani sector (Calea Iesilor street) and Centru sector (bd. Stefan cel Mare si Sfânt). In the rating of the "healthiest" European capitals, the city of Chisinau ranks only 29th out of 45. This fact is caused by the reduction of green areas and the increase in the number of vehicles and, respectively, the volume of exhaust fumes, which creates an unfavorable environment for the health of the inhabitants of the capital in the first place.

The problems of Chisinau's urban environment are mostly generated by anthropogenic activity: the increase in the volume of production and household waste, air and water pollution, degradation of natural ecosystems. Today, environmental problems also considerably confine the development of the municipality, the urban and overall image of the city.

Ecological tourism is the direction that suffers the most due to the environmental situation in the municipality. The municipality needs an efficient urban greening system capable of fulfilling the functions of the urban ecological framework, as well as recreation, microclimate regulation, decorative, planning and landscape design functions. It is also necessary to control the ecological, social and economic burden as well as the activities of land development, to create a comfortable urban environment, to restore the area of the banks of the Bac river, to control hazardous waste emissions with ecological monitoring of enterprises, to regulate the management system of household waste with proposals for a recycling system and ecological and separate disposal of waste, to suggest measures to reduce the anthropogenic impact.

1.3. Socio-human capital

While statistical data show that the population of the Republic of Moldova is continuously decreasing over the years, the population of Chisinau is constantly growing. The latest data provided by the BNS show that the municipality has a population of approximately 738.5 (thousand/2020) inhabitants, which is about a third of the entire population of the country.

Given that there is a trend of population growth, the municipality faces the overloading of public utility systems and a high level of maintenance costs of these systems. Disproportionate planning dates back to the Soviet era – the rate of population growth and the capacity of utility networks as well as infrastructure has been outsized. The *consequence* is an underdeveloped urban infrastructure and a significant degradation of the quality of the surrounding environment.

Chisinau is an important university center in the region, which allows the training of specialists in the field and the existence of an important human potential. The factors that have a negative impact on the quality of education and professional training services were identified, such as the lack of collaboration between universities, public institutions and economic agencies (refusal to host students for specialized internship, etc.), the request from recent graduates to have work

experience as the main criterion for employment, as well as limited opportunities for continuous training.

Currently, there are a satisfactory number of public and private institutions offering higher education in tourism and hospitality, including undergraduate and postgraduate programs as well as vocational training courses. In Chisinau, university programs (bachelor's degree) are offered in fields relevant to tourism in 7 state and 5 private educational institutions; postgraduate programs (master's degree) - in 5 state and 3 private educational institutions, and professional training courses and programs - in 9 vocational schools and educational centers. However, the decrease in the number of students is increasingly noticeable, especially due to the massive emigration of the young population.

Labor remuneration in Chisinau is the highest in the country, being 25-35% higher than in Balti or other urban centers in the country. Thus, in the third quarter of 2021, the nominal gross average monthly salary of an employee in the economy of the municipality of Chisinau was 10,892.6 lei, up by 14.8% compared to the third quarter of 2020 and by 18.7% higher than the national average (9175.7 lei).

1.4. Economic capital.

1.4.1. The municipal budget for tourism purposes

The budget of the municipality of Chisinau includes the budget of Chisinau (5 sectors) and the local budgets of the villages (communes) and towns within the municipality (6 towns and 12 communes/villages). In August 2020, the Municipal Council approved the establishment of the General Directorate of Economy, Trade and Tourism, for the first time including tourism in the structure of the local public authority. The new structural subdivision was established as a result of the merger of the General Directorate of Trade, Public Food and Services and the General Directorate of Economy, Reforms and Patrimonial Relations. At the same time, the Regulation on the organization and operation of the newly created subdivision was also approved. The following table shows the allocations from the municipal budget for the activity of the specialized subdivision responsible for the field of tourism in the municipality of Chisinau.

Thus, starting from 2021, the budget of the municipality of Chisinau had a larger financial component dedicated to infrastructure and tourism activities. Table 2 shows the main activities in

the field of tourism development and promotion financed from the municipal budget during 2021. However, this budget is very small, being only 4.14% (1.15 million lei in 2021) of the Directorate's total budget general economy, trade and tourism, but which was doubled for the year 2022, to 2 million. lei.

Table 1. The budget of the General Directorate of Economy, Trade and Tourism in dynamics

Name of subdivision	Total expenses (thousand lei)	
	2022	2021
General Directorate of Economy, Trade and Tourism	24 787,20	27 790,0

The use of resources intended for tourism, referred to several activities and soft or hard projects.

Table 2. Use of the municipal budget on tourism projects

Year	Investment amount	Destination of public investments
2021	1150,0 (thousand lei)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrangement of places for the sale of handicraft items in the perimeter of the "Eugen Doga" pedestrian street; • Design of "Chisinau 585" logo • Launching and organizing excursions with the Tourist Trolleybus • Chisinau Sightseeing Trolleybus • Launching of the informative site visit.chisinau.md dedicated to tourist Chisinau • Renewal of the Chisinau tourist map • Organization of thematic excursions, dedicated to notable personalities (Karol Schmidt, Al. Bernardazzi, Al. Plmadeala) or important events (77 years since the end of the Iasi-Chisinau Operation, Chisinau on 585 years)

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Get to know the city with Santa Claus" project • Development and arrangement of a tourist route at the Chisinau Mine.
2022	2000,0 (thousand lei)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects in the field of tourism development and promotion of the municipality of Chisinau as a tourist destination, development of the trade and tourism strategy.

On the balance sheet of the General Directorate of Education, Youth and Sports there are 3 municipal camps for minor children - "Poienita Vesela" and "Alunelul" - DETS Botanica and "Ciresarii" - DETS Centru, which are located on the territory of Vadul lui Voda.

For the summer period 2022 it is expected (estimated data in the table below):

Table 3. Summer camp activity

Name of the children's camp (07-15.99 years)	Total no. of shifts for 2022	No. of days in a shift	Maximum no. of children in a shift	Total no. of children in all shifts	Price per person (lei)	Price paid by parents (lei/%)	Price paid by municipality (lei/%)
Poienita Veselă	7	12	500	6000	3840	770/20	3070/80
Alunelul	6	12	200	2400	3840	770/20	3070/80
Ciresarii	7	10	250	1750	3200	640 /20	2560/80

In the last summer season, 2021, children's rest in the capital was organized only on the basis of day camps and at 50% capacity, considering the pandemic situation due to the infection of COVID-19. Thus, 13 day camps for 1140 students were opened on the basis of primary, secondary education institutions cycle I, II. The budgetary sources provided for this purpose constituted about 2.2 million lei for the year 2021. The cost of the ticket in the above mentioned camps was (on average) 2200 lei, for 15 days, and the parents' payment constituted 440 lei or

20% of the amount per total. 20% of the rest tickets reserved in the day camps were issued free of charge to children from socially vulnerable families.

The camps operated in two shifts: June 7-25 for the I shift and June 28 - July 16 – the II shift.

For the day camps within the Lyceum with a technological profile for children with low vision and the pilot Complex of Curative Pedagogy "Orfeu", the cost of the ticket (worth 2540 lei) was fully paid from the municipal budget. Children from the boarding school no. 3, with the status of "children left without parental protection" or "children temporarily left without parental protection", who are in the records of the General Directorate for the Protection of Children's Rights, were placed in the "Poienita vesela" camp (159 minors), with full payment exemption.

Also, in the premises of 8 schools with a sports profile, camps were organized (between June 1 and 30) for students from these institutions, and vocational camps were opened in the creative centers (extracurricular institutions). At the same time, on the basis of the art schools subordinated to the Directorate of Culture, 3 camps of the respective profile were created.

Thematic camps will be organized in 27 community centers for children and young people, and based on the branches of the Municipal Library "B. P. Hasdeu", it is planned to organize stays with the theme "Summer Challenges", dedicated to the knowledge and promotion of the history and culture of Chisinau.

As for the activity of the Municipal Youth Center, it provides for the permanent organization of summer camps for students from the Municipal Student Council, as well as for the volunteers of the Municipal Center.

Other projects with indirect reference to the development of the tourism sector relate to the modernization of urban infrastructure and roads, street lighting, development of green spaces, granting of subsidies for small entrepreneurs, construction of sports and recreational facilities, such as "La Izvor" Park (one of the most modern country parks). Some of the most important actions, carried out or in the process of being carried out, for 2021-2022, are presented in the table below:

Table 4. The main infrastructure projects related to tourism

no.	Actions	Costs (lei)
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	Ciocana Sector Praetorship	
1.	Completion of bd. Mircea Cel Batran alley	1 500,0 thousand
2.	Development and rehabilitation of the Forest - "Rascani" Park	4 600,0 thousand
3.	Development of the "Panoramic" road verge from 44 M. Dragan St. (stage II)	5 000,0 thousand
Buiucani Sector Praetorship		
1.	Arrangement of Alunelul Park	6 492,0 thousand
2.	Road verge on Bucuriei St.	
3.	Arrangement of pedestrian area Alba-Iulia St., no. 200-206	
4.	Arrangement of the road verge on I. Pelivan-Suceava St.	
5.	Re-arrangement of „La Izvor” Park	
6.	Arrangement of „Riga” road verge	
Central Sector Praetorship		
1.	Arrangement and rehabilitation of „Miorita” road verge	4 000,0 thousand
2.	Arrangement and rehabilitation of „La Tamara” spring from Valea Morilor Park	5 000, 0 thousand

3.	Repair and lighting of the „Chisinau” inscription at the entrance of the city	1 300,0 thousand
4.	Development of a project for the repair of the Summer Theater	2 000, 0 thousand
Botanica Sector Praetorship		
1.	Arrangement and rehabilitation of "Sarmisegetusa" road verge	6 500,0 thousand
2.	Landscaping of the "Rose Valley" Park (stage II)	9 700,0 thousand
3.	Repair and lighting of the inscription "Chisinau" at the entrance to the city	300,0 thousand
4.	Arrangement of the "St. Dumitru" road verge	400,0 thousand

In general, Chisinau attracts up to 80% of investments in fixed assets of the tourism field. However, the analysis of the Google Trends service confirms the low interest of tourists towards Chisinau: in the last 12 months, international tourists have never searched for hotels in Chisinau through Google.

1.4.2. Infrastructure

The physical infrastructure of a locality is important to ensure the necessary comfort and security for its residents and visitors.

Roads and transport

Part of the roadway in the municipality of Chisinau is in a damaged or serious condition and requires renewal and development according to modern standards, including the development of

sidewalks with a sufficient width. The city's transport network is overstretched and unable to cope with the constant population growth in the municipality.

A concern, especially for independent travelers, is the availability and public transportation ease of use. Many travelers mentioned when leaving the country the difficulty of using public transport to travel, especially that they could not find a timetable or a map of the routes, published in an international language. Public transport drivers do not speak a foreign language (and few taxi drivers). Many vehicles are poorly maintained. Also, in the case of taxis, the difficulty of ordering a taxi through the available mobile applications, due to the condition of having a Moldovan mobile phone number, but also the refusal of drivers to accept orders to popular destinations outside Chisinau such as the Cricova or Milestii Mici wineries have been reported countless times. In the Market Segmentation Study for the country's tourism offer, carried out by the Competitiveness Improvement Project II (PAC II), financed by the World Bank and published in July 2021, 88% of respondents mentioned wineries and wine cellars, and, in particular - Cricova (71%), followed by the Milestii Mici underground galleries (19%) as the first tourist attractions visited in Moldova. The lack of public transport routes that would make a regular route to them presents an important shortcoming for tourism in the municipality.

In Chisinau there is no infrastructure dedicated strictly to cyclists, while bicycle tourism has been enjoying increasing popularity lately. Connecting parks and green spaces with a network of bike lanes and adequate infrastructure, as well as bike sharing systems, is an important element for the future attraction of tourists, but also for the quality of life of local residents. The involvement of local residents in this context is decisive - increasing awareness of the importance of ecological transport for the city, but also reducing chaotic parking in public spaces - a fact that reduces the safety of cyclists and detracts from the positive image of the city. Circulation with alternative transport (especially in the case of electric scooters) must be strictly regulated, prohibiting high-speed circulation in leisure spaces, introducing fines for circulation that endangers the lives of pedestrians or traffic safety, etc.

One of the biggest challenges of Chisinau today is parking. The coefficient of availability of parking spaces in Chisinau today is 0.7 per apartment, when it should be at least 1/1. Also, in the city center it is impossible to find a parking lot for tourist coaches, which would allow guided tours by means of transport.

The municipality is currently implementing an important transport infrastructure project "Move it like Lublin" which is expected to solve existing problems. The project is in its first year of implementation and is to be completed in 2024, having three main objectives:

- Improving municipal public transport policies and regulations
- Strengthening the institutional capacity of the General Directorate of Public Transport and Communication;
- Modernization of the road traffic management system in Chisinau.

Internet

A strength of the infrastructure is the strong IT sector, with high speed internet and generally fast broadband connections (a demand of today's traveler is access to quality internet). In 2021, the Republic of Moldova ranks 43rd in the world in terms of internet speed, with 91.38 Mbps. Also, in Chisinau, travelers can have access to a series of free wi-fi networks in public spaces and energy sources for recharging mobile phones, scooters or electric bicycles (CIT, "Mircea cel Batran" Alley, "Grigore Vieru" Alley ", etc.). And mobile phone coverage is considered very good, with 99% of the population having access to the mobile network.

Tourism infrastructure

According to the 2020 Tourism Competitiveness Index, the Republic of Moldova ranks 103 out of 140 countries in terms of the competitiveness of the tourist services infrastructure. Several objectives in the municipality are in an unsatisfactory condition and require investments in renovation. Also, most of the rest areas, accommodation units located in Vadul lui Voda, or Condrita date back to the Soviet period and require investments in renovation and equipping with modern technologies. Chisinau, as a capital city with a population of over 800,000 inhabitants, requires a mobile application that would compile all the data related to public transport, useful for both tourists and locals. It should perform the following functions:

- Integration of all public transport routes;
- Ability to track the means of transport in real time, with waiting time timing.

Other infrastructure-related problems are the lack of signage in designated tourist areas, as well as insufficient street lighting. Destinations that are signposted, or have unclear indications and erroneous data, or information only in Romanian. Tourist signs are located only in the downtown area.

1.5. Built capital

1.5.1. Monuments

Currently, the Register of Monuments of the Chisinau Municipality counts 236 objects with state-protected monument status, on which plates have been installed or will be installed indicating the name/type of the building and the historical period from which they date, out of a total of over 950 monuments of architecture. The immovable heritage of the Old Center (Historical Core) of Chisinau is in a continuous state of degradation, there are cases of demolition of architectural monuments, and a good part of the immovable heritage of the municipality is in a state of damage. Also, several heritage architectural edifices have suffered considerable illegal structural interventions, which have damaged the authenticity and integrity of the monuments and their protection zones. The chaotic interventions in the Historic Center of Chisinau (str. A. Mateevici – M. Viteazul – I. Zaikin – Albisoara – Cheiului – Ismail – Stefan cel Mare si Sfânt – Ciuflea) also lead to traffic congestion, the restriction of parking spaces, the crowding of the area and the inability of the existing space to respond to the needs of the population. Heritage degradation and destruction also contribute to the loss of urban and local identity. What is missing today is a development vision for the Old Center, a Regulation of interventions and a General and Zonal Urban Plan. Another difficulty in the development of the city is the excessive centralization of tourist attractions in one sector - the Center.

The "Eugen Doga" pedestrian street can serve as an example of creating micro-zones where tourist services are concentrated - restaurants, cafes, monuments, architecture, galleries, etc.

Decongestion of the flow of people can be achieved by creating such pedestrian areas in every sector of the city. This would more evenly distribute the socio-economic benefits from tourism to other neighborhoods in the city. The street also hosts a space for the sale of handicrafts and souvenirs. Stands were installed for 21 places of trade. In the absence of souvenir sellers, they can be used as urban furniture. Stylistic elements of the country brand "Pomul Vietii" can be found both on the installed supports and on the vertical stands. The street connects with the Moldovan Carpet, made of paving stone, and the Cathedral Park, being an attraction for tourists and a suitable space for outdoor concerts, exhibitions, festivals and other cultural events.

A problem of the built capital are the buildings - monuments that are not used, nor are they maintained in any way by their owners, being in an advanced state of deterioration. Examples in this regard are: the Zemstva Museum, the Herta House, the "Guguta" Cafe, the Moara Rosie, the Public Bath on Cosmescu Street, the Urban Villas on Sfatul Țării Street, A. Mateevici and M. Eminescu and many others. Although they are under the management of the Ministry of Culture, the municipality could facilitate their use. From 1993 until today, Chisinau does not have a functional built heritage protection system. This led to the deplorable state in which the Historic Center is: listed historical buildings, architectural monuments, even of national importance, left in disrepair.

Also, due to the lack of clear regulations regarding the constructions in the Historic Center, the new buildings are not functionally and visually integrated with the old buildings. Chaotic constructions also lead to overcrowding of the area and the inability of the existing space to respond to the needs of the population.

The persistent problem in the case of built capital is the lack of sufficient funding for monitoring the situation, for the reconstruction and restoration of architectural monuments, but also the lack of legal mechanisms that would oblige the owners of architectural monuments to maintain them. It is also proposed to continue the initiative to install monuments dedicated to the authentic culture and history of the country and the city (Statue of Lovers, Shepherd, etc.), by installing monuments that have stood out in history or culture, e.g. such as: Maria Biesu, Barbu Lautaru, Nicolae Sulac, Ion Ungureanu, Mihai Volontir, Grigore Vieru, Glebus Sainciuc and Valentina Rusu-Ciobanu et al.

1.5.2. Muzeums, galleries

Chisinau is also the cultural center of the country, home to the most important museums, galleries and cultural institutions. Today in Chisinau there are 10 museums accessible to the general public according to their working hours, of which 5 are national (the National Museum of History of Moldova, the National Museum of Ethnography and Natural History, the National Museum of Art, the National Museum of Literature "Mihail Kogalniceanu", the Museum of Books within the National Library), and 5 - of local importance (Museum of History of the City of Chisinau, Museum of the History of the Moldovan Railway, "Alexandr Pushkin" House-Museum, "Alexei Șciusev" Memorial House, Village Museum, "Museum Gloria of Labour, RTEC". Also, other museums are available in Chisinau with prior appointment (Museum of Natural Sciences from USM, Cosmonaut Museum (set up within the Technical Creation Center for children and adolescents "Politehnic"), the Technical Museum of calculation as part of the Institute of Mathematics and Computer Science).

Among the art galleries we can mention the following: "Constantin Brancusi" Exhibition Center, OU Art Gallery, and "Alexander" Art Gallery. Overall, Chisinau does not have a wide range of museum and exhibition spaces available to the general public, especially considering that museums of primary importance, such as the Museum of History of the City of Chisinau, do not work on Mondays and Sundays, the National Museum of History does not work on Friday - that is, on the most demanded days for city breaks, Friday - Sunday. Another important reason is that in the city area, only the Museum of Ethnography can offer guided services in English with a prior appointment. Thus, the accessibility of these museums for foreign tourists is sporadic. Also, museums do not provide tourists with information, brochures, leaflets in international languages. Tickets to these museums cannot be purchased online, payment by card is not accepted at the ticket office, and there is still no website for the Chisinau City History Museum, where information about it can be consulted in an international language – there is just a page on a social networking site.

Following the successful example of many European cities is the creation of a "full city card", which would allow the tourist to travel by public transport, as well as to visit several museums and galleries. This opportunity deserves to be analyzed and implemented as soon as possible. At the same time, the possibility of creating a Municipal Gallery of Art and Design is being examined.

1.5.3. Concert and theatrical halls

The cultural heritage of the city is completed by several concert institutions (Organ Hall, National Palace "Nicolae Sulac", Palace of the Republic) and theaters (National Theater of Opera and Ballet "Maria Biesu", National Theater "Mihai Eminescu", Republican Theater "Luceafarul", National Theater "Eugene Ionesco", Russian State Drama Theater "A.P. Chekhov", Republican Puppet Theater "Licurici", Theater "Alexei Mateevici", Epic Theater of Ethnography and Folklore "Ion Creanga", Culture and Art Center "Ginta Latina", State Dramatic Theater for Youth "De pe strada Trandafirilor", Theater without Name, Theater "Spalatorie", Geneza Art Theatre, National Satiricus Theater "I.L.Caragiale", Municipal Theater "Guguta").

The concert and theatrical institutions in Chisinau offer a variety of shows and events that can be the purpose of a trip to Chisinau, which, however, are not sufficiently and correctly promoted. These events can be an important strength of Chisinau. An example of this is the city of Odessa, where going to the opera is a "must do" during your stay. In order for these practices to be adopted by Chisinau tourists, first of all, it is necessary to translate the program into other languages.

Also, the impossibility of increasing the staff with the introduction of a museum, theatrical, cultural marketing position, etc., the impossibility of using the billboards in the municipality in order to promote the cultural agenda of the city (all billboards are privately owned), the impossibility of reinvesting the money collected from the sale of souvenirs or tickets in the development of the institution, are important impediments for the promotion of Chisinau as a "cultural capital".

The capacity of closed spaces for concerts and other events does not exceed 1,700 seats (Palace of the Republic), but a strong point of the city is the existence of the Green Theater in the "Valea

Morilor" Park, which can host events for about 7,500 people. This space is suitable for attracting international festivals and concerts. However, the Green Theater requires urgent repairs.

Monuments, museums, cultural-artistic institutions, such as concert halls, theaters, can become generators of innovative, interactive, attractive tourist experiences, which organize events and collective experiences to attract local and foreign visitors, and to create an image of the city, an authentic cultural brand.

II. The situation of the tourism industry in the municipality

Tourism represents a potential point of increase in the well-being of the inhabitants and local economic development, in the situation of increasing the competitiveness of cities among themselves for financial resources, labor, partnerships, industries and services, technologies. The tourism competitiveness of localities refers to their ability to attract tourists, offer tourism goods and services, create a diversity of tourism products and an environment conducive to the development of tourism to a greater extent than the cities with which they are compared. At the same time, tourism competitiveness is oriented towards the creation, development, promotion of public recognition of the positive image of the respective locality for potential tourists.

At the municipality level, tourism is found in the priority directions of the city's development. The new City Socio-Economic Development Strategy came up with a series of recommendations, also in the direction of tourism development, pointing out the main opportunities and threats of the industry.

Despite the existence of basic indicators and their regular presentation by the NBS, the statistical coverage is not sufficient. First, a large part of the accommodation sector (especially rental apartments, which are widely used) does not provide any information about visitors. And information on most foreign visitors, who cross the border by road, is limited to the individuals' citizenship and arrival/departure dates.

Also, public exit surveys are not carried out regularly, the last one was carried out in 2018. Such research is necessary for both public authorities and the private sector, in order to understand the market and follow the changes in the offer request, as well as visitors' new preferences. There is insufficient information on the average length of stay by purpose and the estimation of the

average expenditure of the tourist during the stay period. They must be estimated by extrapolation from the annual gross revenues and the total number of tourists arriving.

2.1. Accessibility of destination

2.1.1. Air access

A strong point of Chisinau, which facilitates the flow of tourists, is the operation of Chisinau International Airport. Currently, 16 international companies operate regular and charter flights through the Airport to more than 40 destinations. The air operators that performed most of the flights during the years 2020-2021 are: Air Moldova, Wizz Air, Fly One and Turkish Airlines. Other operators that have also become visible on the aviation market in the Republic of Moldova are: Austrian Airlines, Belavia Belarusian Airlines, HySky, Aeroflot, Lot Polish Airlines, Deutsche Lufthansa AG, S7 Airlines, TAROM, Ukraine International Airlines, etc.

Low-cost airlines create the opportunity to promote Chisinau as a destination for an affordable and unique city break/long weekend. This could involve marketing campaigns in cities with direct low-cost flights or even social media campaigns with the airline operating the flight.

According to the latest available complete data, in 2020 (during the pandemic), 241,322 thousand passengers arrived in the Republic of Moldova by air. Compared to 837,826 thousand in 2019, a considerable decrease generated by the pandemic situation is observed. A recovery was also observed in the first half of 2021 (January - August) - 325,198 thousand passengers. Chisinau is an easily accessible destination from Europe. A flight from Bucharest lasts on average 1 hour, Berlin - 2h15, Paris - 3h, London - 3h20 - which determines another important factor in choosing the destination for a stay.

Table 5. Number of state border crossings, ENTRY direction by air by foreign citizens and length of stay in Moldova - by border crossing points.

Criterion	2019 (thousand)	2020 (thousand)	2021 January – August (thousand)
Less than a day	71.720	14.329	16.830
1-7 days	298.425	58.863	62.090

8-30 days	275.868	70.306	130.820
31 – 90 days	103.343	36.937	66.578
> 90 days	88.470	60.887	48.880
Total	837.826	241.322	325.198

The increase in the flow of passengers in recent years is also due to the fact that to enter the territory of the Republic of Moldova citizens of the EU, USA, and other countries in the world do not need visas.

2.1.2. Rail access

Chisinau only has rail connections to Bucharest via Iași (13 h) and to Odessa (3.5 h). However, much of the railway infrastructure is outdated and operated in poor conditions, according to the views expressed by the focus groups. The network is not electrified, the average speed of trains being 35-40 km/h, including stops. Passengers have to change carriages at the border with Romania due to the different railway gauge.

Traveling by train is the least popular way to travel to the Republic of Moldova, but rail access represents an opportunity worth capitalizing on in the context of low-impact tourism, especially as more travelers choose low-emission travel options. carbon.

Table 6. The number of crossings of the state border, the direction of ENTRY by land - rail, the Moldovan-Romanian border, by foreign citizens and the period of stay in Moldova - at border crossing points:

Criterion	2019 (thousand)	2020 (thousand)	2021 January – August (thousand)
Less than a day	7,007	2,231	478
1-7 days	7,743	1,237	22
8-30 days	3,083	328	2
31 – 90 days	1,535	116	1
> 90 days	1,667	592	0
Total	21,035	4,504	503

Table 7. The number of crossings of the state border, the direction of ENTRY by land - rail, the Moldovan-Ukrainian border, by foreign citizens and the period of stay in Moldova - at border crossing points:

Criterion	2019 (thousand)	2020 (thousand)	2021 January – August (thousand)
Less than a day	24,419	5,712	1,846
1-7 days	10,916	1,460	83
8-30 days	11,059	735	39
31 – 90 days	5,323	130	12
> 90 days	4,552	893	13
Total	56,269	8,930	1,993

From the statistical data it can be seen that the train route Chisinau - Odessa enjoys much greater popularity. The relatively small distance (approx. 190 km) makes several Ukrainian travel agencies include Chisinau, along with the Purcari Winery and the region on the left of the Dniester, in the tourist offer for a tour of Moldova by train.

2.1.3. Road access

Although the state of the infrastructure is desolating, however, the Republic of Moldova is doing well in terms of road connections. Currently, several international routes are operated from Chisinau to the neighboring countries: approx. 19 minibuses leave for Iași per day, 9 for Odessa, which makes it possible to create regional tourism offers that include these destinations.

In the period 2019-2020, the flow of people, who crossed the state border in the direction of entering the Republic of Moldova, decreased by 2 times.

Table 8. The number of crossings of the state border, the direction of ENTRY by land - by car, the Moldovan-Romanian border, by foreign citizens and the period of stay in Moldova - at border crossing points:

Criterion	2019 (thousand)	2020 (thousand)	2021 January – August (thousand)
Less than a day	1,430,198	358,822	291,298
1-7 days	655,481	224,552	286,992
8-30 days	333,394	133,804	226,458
31 – 90 days	134,078	71,067	96,323
> 90 days	107,170	96,556	73,527
Total	2,660,321	884,801	974,598

Table 9. The number of crossings of the state border, the direction of ENTRY by land - by car, the Moldovan-Ukrainian border, by foreign citizens and the period of stay in Moldova - at border crossing points:

Criterion	2019 (thousand)	2020 (thousand)	2021 January – August (thousand)
Less than a day	664,660	168,301	94,498
1-7 days	241,015	62,550	54,833
8-30 days	77,631	16,462	27,490
31 – 90 days	31,563	6,347	11,857
> 90 days	37,555	15,685	11,935
Total	1,052,424	269,345	200,613

2.2. Trends and specifics of tourism development in large cities in the region

The competitiveness of the tourist destination is the element that facilitates its ability to increase its revenues from tourism, increasing the well-being of citizens and preserving the natural and cultural capital for future generations. Competitiveness has several dimensions: economic, socio-cultural and environmental. The market segmentation study for the country's tourism offer, carried out by the Competitiveness Improvement Project II (PAC II), financed by the World Bank and published in July 2021, noted that many longer itineraries (10-14 days) in the region often include a combination of offers from Ukraine, Romania and Moldova.

In this context, the current comparative analysis of the tourism competitiveness of the city of Chisinau with the nearest large cities in the region, which have experience in promoting and implementing different local strategies and policies in the field of tourism: Iasi (Romania) and Odessa (Ukraine)). Both cities are located within a radius of 160-170 km from Chisinau, and have direct connections with the municipality by railway or road. At the same time, each of these cities has its own specificity and approach to the development of the tourism sector.

2.2.1. Iasi and the metropolitan area

The city of Iasi, located in the eastern part of Romania, near the Republic of Moldova and having a population (together with the metropolitan area) of approx. 600 thousand inhabitants, slightly smaller than the municipality of Chisinau, it is a locality with a rich cultural-historical and diverse architectural heritage, with several possibilities of access and transport, accommodation and catering units, spaces for organizing large-scale events and leisure. Iasi from the period of pre-accession to the European Union and until now has implemented/implements various projects for the development of the technical-building infrastructure, the rehabilitation of cultural and historical buildings, urban transport, urban planning, waste management, etc. This allowed the improvement of the quality of life and the modernization of the physical infrastructure, the diversification of public services.

In this context, Iasi has been promoted for a long time as the "Cultural Capital of Romania", being also considered the "Athos of Romania", as one of the most important pilgrimage centers of Orthodox Christianity in the country. Respectively, tourism develops with 3 basic forms related to:

- i) History and heritage (20 museums, memorial houses, guided trails, promenade spaces);
- ii) Pilgrimage and religious tourism (over 100 important churches and monasteries);
- iii) Art and culture (theatres, opera, philharmonic, 500 monuments, fairs). Recently in Iasi, the launch of the city's brand identity took place with the new motto "Iasi - shapes the time". Based on the analysis of the statistical indicators, the city of Iasi can be placed at the beginning of the third stage of the life cycle of the tourist destination, the development stage, characterized by the emergence of a well-defined tourism

market, an important tourist function, with major investments in infrastructure, accentuating the tourist season, increased advertising, etc.

From the analysis of statistical data on demand, some basic elements for the development of the tourism sector are identified:

- Increasing the share of tourists from the total number of passengers disembarked at the Iași International Airport through supported campaigns to promote the destination in the catchment areas of the airports with which Iași is connected by direct flights.
- Increasing the length of stay in Iași by investing in health tourism, strengthening a network of camps for children, encouraging business tourists to stay longer through complementary cultural-recreational packages.
- Increasing occupancy by optimizing the "shoulders" of peak periods through specific stay packages, directing a more balanced calendar of events throughout the year.
- Supporting the MICE sector (business meetings, conferences, events) during the low season (December - March) and indoor infrastructures.
- Making large investments in tourism-specific infrastructure, with resonance and national scale, in order to give the destination an important impetus and place it in full development stage. Tourism is a strong stake in the development of Iași and Iași's direct competitors (other large urban centers in Romania) have demonstrated that tourism's contribution to the local economy can be significant. If in 2001, Iași was on the 5th place in the hierarchy of urban tourist destinations in Romania, with 20% more tourists than Cluj Napoca or Sibiu, in the period 2015-2018, the growth rate of tourist activity in Iași was lower than the cities competitors. That is why the local administration aims to return Iași to the top 5 cities - destinations in Romania and to revitalize itself through tourism. Thus, for the next period, Iașul proposes to diversify the tourism sector, by consolidating efforts towards other forms of tourism, than the existing ones. The development of the tourism sector, according to the Tourism Strategy of the city of Iași and the metropolitan area of Iași 2018-2030, will be carried out in 2 stages.

In the first stage, in the short term (2 years), efforts will be directed towards:

- Business and conferences, with an emphasis on event rooms (conferences, congresses, workshops), negotiation rooms, commercial spaces, conference rooms, summer schools.

- Urban lifestyle – gastronomy, events, music festivals, shopping, nightlife, bars, restaurants, visually hidden places, climbing halls, fitness, swimming, escape rooms.
- Gastronomy and wine - wine tastings, local brands, national gastronomy, live music. In the second stage, in the long term (over 5 years), attention will be paid to the development of sectors, which currently still do not have a significant weight in tourism:
- Active tourism - sports events (running, cycling, enduro), camping & hiking or birdwatching cycle tourism, equestrian tourism (leisure riding)
- Niche tourism - communist heritage, dark tourism - tours and walks through cemeteries, cellars, catacombs.
- Culture/creativity - independent theatre, street art, local artists, industrial revitalization, contemporary art, creative district, art festivals. Iasi, for the development of different forms of tourism, is delimited in 3 distinct areas:
 1. Center, where, as in the case of Chisinau, the highest density of material heritage and tourist infrastructure is located. Classic tourism for an urban locality develops here - visiting the most important historical and cultural attractions, shopping, restaurants with local gastronomy.
 2. The pericentral area, strongly influenced by architecture from the communist period, with buildings - historical monument. The area offers a series of tourist experiences, aimed at those who want to discover something other than the classical heritage - a ride on the Communism tram, restaurants with local specifics or wine tastings, an industrial area transformed into an independent theater with contemporary civic and artistic events, etc.
 3. The Iasi Metropolitan Area offers a great diversity of unique rural landscapes, authentic local products, natural landscapes in the southern area. However, from a tourist point of view, it is a little popular. In particular, several points of interest are outlined, based either on the presence of religious edifices (monasteries) or on leisure infrastructures (Hamak, Ciric). Through development measures and promotion of products intended for light adventure tourism, wine tastings, outdoor events or rural experiences, the Metropolitan Area will orient itself to become an area of permanent tourist attraction.

Strategic vision for the development of the city of Iasi - a top urban tourist destination of Romania, a true capital of the Moldova region ("Romania was born in Iași"), with a strong

identity based on the young generation, creative culture and the IT sector, with a well-welded community of actors offering a range of differentiated, distinctive and impactful tourism experiences.

The strategic directions of tourism development are in accordance with the strategic development vision:

1. Building the brand image and promoting the destination Iași - building, managing and promoting the brand.
2. Convergence of actors in Iași tourism - participative management of the tourist destination, increasing the quality of human resources.
3. Developing visitors' experiences - improving the utilization of tourist resources, designing innovative tourist products, creating branded events for the image of the city of Iași.
4. Development of tourist infrastructure: implementation of major tourist infrastructure projects, support of SMEs and entrepreneurship, improvement of tourist signage, technical infrastructure development.
5. Urban revitalization - recovery of material heritage, revitalization of green spaces in Iași, reactivation of neglected areas in the tourist center of the city, valorization of creative industries.

2.2.2. *Odessa* - balneo-tourist recreational center

Odessa and its suburbs (with a population of over 1 million inhabitants) are an important center of recreation and tourism in Ukraine. The comfortable natural and climatic conditions, natural and recreational resources (Black Sea, approx. 30 km of beaches, therapeutic mud, mineral waters), in combination with the historical and architectural monuments and cultural specifics of Odessa, have created favorable premises for the priority development of tourism balneoclimatic and cultural. Under these conditions, Odessa enters the top of the 3 Ukrainian cities, which annually serve more than 1 mln. of tourists. As in the case of the city of Iași, the field of tourism is at the stage of development and consolidation. The biggest problem for the development of the tourism sector is that in Odessa the tourist season is dependent on the warm period of the year (May-October). In this context, the priority direction of the city's development in the field of tourism, according to the Economic and Social Development Strategy of the city of Odesa 2013 - 2022: hospitable city (development of all types of tourism) - formation and development of a

competitive tourism sector in the city, promotion of the product urban tourism in tourism service markets, city branding.

The strategic objectives are the following:

1. Improving the quality of the tourist product:

- Expanding the range of tourist services - active development of cultural, entertainment, sports, scientific, business and other types of tourism;
- Development of new tourist products;
- Improving the tourist infrastructure;
- Building new modern tourist infrastructures (comfortable hotels, modern conference rooms, etc.);
- Increasing the level of professional training of specialists in the tourism industry to bring the quality of services to world standards;
- Creation of open-air museums, ethno-cultural complexes for the purpose of conservation, rational use, promotion and development of the ethno-cultural heritage of the city.

2. Development of the information infrastructure for tourist services:

- Development of a tourism portal and promotion of city branding;
- Creation of an extensive network of information and services of tourist services and tourist marking (routes, tourist objectives, etc.);
- Opening branches of the tourist information center in places of mass tourism.

3. Promotion and positioning of the city as an international tourist center, interesting to visit throughout the year:

- Formation of an integral system of tourist services that meet the standard needs of tourists;
- Promoting the development of domestic tourism;
- Attracting domestic and foreign investors to the development of the tourism sector;
- The annual organization in the city of forums of tour operators from other countries of the world;
- Assistance in the formation and development of the tourist cluster;
- Support in the organization of mass cultural events (exhibitions, festivals, etc.);
- Organization of Odessa Days in the cities of Ukraine and other countries of the world.

Conclusions:

Considering the above, the following can be concluded:

1. The municipality of Chisinau is at the stage of exploring the life cycle of the tourist destination. Designing a well-defined tourist season requires the use of all primary infrastructure elements for the development of the sector.
2. Both cities - Iasi and Odessa, propose the diversification of forms of tourism and a more active promotion on the internal market and, in particular, on the external market. This fact is important for increasing the level of competitiveness. In this context, the municipality of Chisinau should develop its own marketing and promotion strategy.
3. As in the case of the cities of Iasi and Odessa, it is important to revitalize and put into the economic circuit some tourist routes, specific to the locality, with urban rehabilitation projects and the improvement of public infrastructure.
4. An opportunity would be to create a partnership in the field of tourism between these 3 important urban centers (which are also twin cities with Chisinau), in order to jointly identify and promote some regional tourist packages, which would include cross-border tourist routes.

2.3. Tourist activity of tourism agents and tourist operators from Chisinau

2.3.1. Visitors and income

The status of an administrative, economic and cultural center and the fact that Chisinau has the only active international airport means that approximately 80% of all enterprises of this type in the Republic of Moldova are located specifically in the municipality of Chisinau. According to statistical data, in January 2022, 619 travel agencies and tour operators were active in the municipality of Chisinau.

The activity of travel agencies and tour operators in the municipality is dominated by outbound tourism - both in terms of the number of tourists and related revenues. Thus, in 2019, a number of 253.5 thousand people went abroad for tourist purposes through the tourism agencies in the municipality of Chisinau, which generated revenues of almost 1.8 billion lei. In the period 2014-2019, revenues from outbound tourism increased by an average annual rate of 10.3%, and the number of tourists increased by an average of 9.3% annually.

Domestic tourism had a slower evolution during the same period, with an average annual increase of 3.3% in the number of visitors and an increase of only 1.1% in receipts from tourism

activity. The Covid-19 pandemic and the imposed travel restrictions have led the residents of the Republic of Moldova to further explore the local tourism potential. Thus, in 2020 domestic tourism increased by 4.1%, being the only segment that increased in 2020, in terms of the number of visitors.

Table 8. Tourist activity organized by travel agencies and tour operators in the municipality of Chisinau, 2014-2020 (number of visitors, people)

Indicators	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	RACC ¹ 2014- 2019
TOTAL	197,398	210,437	195,082	242,658	268,168	297,681	92,291	8.6%
Inbound tourism (reception of foreign citizens in the country) – total	13,580	14,573	14,670	16,404	17,661	19,078	6,802	7.0%
Of which, for the purposes of:								
rest, recreation and leisure	8,091	9,715	11,047	13,329	14,805	16,715	6,593	15.6%
business and professional	4,913	4,194	3,041	2,986	2,854	2,327	197	-13.9%
medical treatment	80	14	36	89	2	36	12	-14.8%
Other purposes	496	650	546	0	0	0	0	
Outbound tourism (movement of residents of the Republic of Moldova abroad) – total	162,510	171,059	160,311	208,784	232,348	253,543	59,391	9.3%
Of which, for the purposes of:								
rest, recreation and leisure	160,280	169,580	158,574	206,433	229,684	248,234	58,505	9.1%
business and professional	1,099	569	780	1,324	1,355	1,905	448	11.6%
medical treatment	1,053	749	957	1,027	1,309	3,404	438	26.4%
Other purposes	78	161	-	-	-	-	-	-

¹ Rata Anuală Compusă de Creștere este o rată medie anuală de creștere a unui indicator într-o perioadă determinată de timp.

Indicators	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	RACC ¹ 2014- 2019
Domestic tourism (movement of residents of the Republic of Moldova inside the country, for tourist purposes)	21,308	15,805	20,101	17,470	18,159	25,060	26,098	3.3%

Source: National Bureau of Statistics data and authors' calculations

Even though the number of foreign tourists who visited Moldova through tourism agencies in the municipality of Chisinau increased from 13.6 thousand people in 2014 to 19.1 thousand in 2019, their share registered a slight decrease during this period, from 6.9% to 6.4%.

Inbound tourism stood out the most in terms of revenues, which recorded an average annual growth rate of 27.3%. The share of receipts of travel agencies and tour operators in the municipality of Chisinau from inbound tourism increased from 2.1% in 2014 to 4.1% in 2019.

The number of foreign tourists and hikers who benefited from the services of travel agencies and tour operators in 2019 amounted to 19,078 people, of which 16,715 people or 87.6% of the total arrived for purposes of rest, recreation and leisure; 2,327 people (12.2%) - for business and professional purposes, and 36 people (0.2%) - for treatment purposes.

Table 9. Income from the tourist activity of travel agencies and tour operators in the municipality of Chisinau, years 2014-2020, thousands of lei:

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total	1,153,079	1,331,039	1,261,733	1,658,322	1,797,286	1,916,434	584,542
Inbound tourism	23,680	48,474	46,481	56,486	71,389	79,120	6,573
Outbound tourism	1,112,548	1,267,235	1,200,453	1,587,915	1,706,391	1,819,479	569,494
Domestic tourism	16,852	15,331	14,798	13,921	19,506	17,836	8,475

Source: NBS data

The pandemic hit extremely hard the tourist activity of travel agencies and tour operators in the municipality of Chisinau. In 2020 receipts from outbound tourism, the most important segment, decreased by 69%, those from receiving tourism by 92%, and even if the flow of domestic tourists increased by 4.1% in 2020, receipts also decreased by 52% .

2.3.2. Foreign tourists and excursionists who arrived in the Republic of Moldova

Romania, Austria, Germany, the Russian Federation and Ukraine were in the top 5 countries of origin (source), according to the number of tourists arriving in Moldova in 2019, with a share of 51.2% of the total. In the period 2014-2019, the most dynamic source markets of foreign tourists were China, with an average annual growth of 77%, Austria (58%), Japan (45%), Finland (30%). Other markets with sustained growth were Germany, Poland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on inbound tourism. In 2020, only 6,802 people (-64%) visited our country through travel agencies and tour operators from the municipality of Chisinau, and 90% of them were from neighboring countries - Romania (75%) and Ukraine (15%).

Table 10. The number of foreign tourists and excursionists, arrived in the Republic of Moldova through travel agencies and tour operators from the municipality of Chisinau in 2014-2020

#	Country	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Average no. of arrivals 2014-2019
1.	Romania	2,917	2,823	3,563	2,601	3,513	3,317	5,086	3,122
2.	Austria	269	133	114	801	1,641	2,622	5	930
3.	Germany	678	536	1,363	1,159	1,407	1,569	14	1,119
4.	Russian Federation	1,627	1,238	1,871	1,354	1,467	1,200	184	1,460

#	Country	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Average no. of arrivals 2014-2019
5.	Ukraine	1,452	1,639	1,560	1,060	1,319	1,069	1,017	1,350
6.	Poland	429	632	572	1,100	1,090	986	31	802
7.	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	418	512	380	820	442	957	77	588
8.	China	49	83	204	550	644	841	8	395
9.	Italy	509	460	463	378	517	528	23	476
10.	USA	562	677	775	574	384	480	17	575
11.	Netherlands	325	300	356	542	504	438	9	411
12.	Japan	68	277	436	520	476	431	5	368
13.	Turkey	658	714	455	345	388	330	57	482
14.	Sweden	234	482	156	194	189	286	7	257
15.	Finland	76	142	203	372	407	276	0	246
16.	France	186	290	290	347	214	228	10	259
17.	Switzerland	45	182	138	146	186	213	5	152
18.	Czech Republic	35	159	46	199	53	210	2	117
19.	Israel	506	456	554	195	182	199	10	349
20.	Lithuania	166	127	101	97	78	185	6	126

#	Country	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Average no. of arrivals 2014-2019
21.	Other countries	2,371	2,709	2,067	3,050	2,560	2,713	229	2,578
	TOTAL	13,580	14,571	15,667	16,404	17,661	19,078	6,802	16,160

Source: NBS data and authors' calculations

2.4. The tourism industry from an entrepreneurial perspective

The importance of Chisinau for the Moldovan tourism industry is vital. For example, during 2019-2020, the municipality of Chisinau contributed with:

- 60% of the companies anchored in the tourism industry (61% in 2020);
- 68% of the number of employees in the tourism industry (68% in 2019);
- 82% of tourism turnover (75% in 2020).

2.4.1. Tourist enterprises

Eurostat - the EU's statistical service, which consolidates data collected by national authorities and harmonizes them to guarantee that each indicator - for example the value of unemployment or tourism - is calculated in the same way in all member states - divides the tourism industry into 2 broad categories: Mostly Tourism and Partially Tourism.

Next to each category are assigned several economic activities that can be found in the Classifier of Economic Activities from Moldova (Annex no. 1).

The number of businesses in predominantly tourist activities registered an average annual increase of 2.1% in the period 2017-2020, from 477 to 507 businesses. In 2020, in their structure, the largest part belongs to travel agencies and tour operators with 381 units, of which the active rate is 67.7%. This category also includes 116 companies with a basic activity in accommodation facilities (of which only 77 are active) and 10 companies with a passenger air transport profile, of which only 2 were active in 2020. Enterprises partially anchored in tourism activities recorded

an annual increase of 1.4% in the period 2017-2020, and most are oriented in the public catering activity.

Table 11. The (total) number of enterprises from tourism in the municipality of Chisinau

Indicators	2017	2018	2019	2020
Predominantly Tourism	477	497	511	507
Air passenger transport	14	16	17	10
Accommodation facilities	89	100	112	116
Agents and tour operators	374	381	382	381
Partly Tourism	1,237	1,287	1,276	1,289
Land transport	195	196	203	208
Restaurants and Bars	903	938	909	913
Car rental and others	139	153	164	168
TOTAL Tourism Industry	1,714	1,784	1,787	1,796

Source: NBS data and authors' calculations

The impact of the pandemic on the sector can be attested by analyzing the active enterprises in the sector, or in 2020 the rate of active enterprises worsened in almost all subsectors.

Table 12. Number of (active) tourism enterprises in the municipality of Chisinau

Indicators	2017	2018	2019	2020
Predominantly Tourism	309	331	358	337
Air passenger transport	10	9	8	2
Accommodation facilities	58	67	77	77
Agents and tour operators	241	255	273	258
Partly Tourism	852	875	879	881
Land transport	146	154	162	172
Restaurants and Bars	619	624	611	596
Car rental and others	87	97	106	113
TOTAL Tourism Industry	1,161	1,206	1,237	1,218

Source: NBS data and authors' calculations

2.4.2. Jobs in tourism

In a broad sense, the tourism industry in Chisinau generated approximately 16.8 thousand jobs in 2019, of which approximately 3.3 thousand were employed in enterprises with a predominantly touristic profile, and 13.5 thousand - in partially associated activities with tourism.

2) Of the predominantly touristic activities, the most jobs were provided by companies providing accommodation facilities (1,441), while restaurants and bars were responsible for the employment of 8,959 people in partially touristic activities.

3) In the period 2017-2019, in predominantly touristic activities the number of employees increased annually at a rate of 1.7%, while in partially touristic ones the average annual growth was 3.5%.

Table 13. Number of tourism employees in the municipality of Chisinau, people

	2017	2018	2019	2020
Predominantly Tourism	3,183.0	3,367	3,294	2,415
Air passenger transport	730	758	686	575
Accommodation facilities	1,218	1,324	1,441	1,008
Agents and tour operators	1,235	1,285	1,167	832
Partly Tourism	12,597	12,882	13,492	10,223
Land transport	4,065	4,099	4,192	2,935
Restaurants and Bars	8,253	8,414	8,959	7,067
Car rental and others	279	369	341	221
TOTAL Tourism Industry	15,780	16,249	16,786	12,638

Source: NBS data and authors' calculations

COVID-19. FUGURES & IMPACT

In 2020, the first pandemic year, the number of employees decreased by almost 25%, from 16.8 thousand jobs in 2019 to 12.6 thousand in 2020. In 2020 absolutely all sub-sectors were forced to reduce their staff. The biggest job losses were in the following industries:

restaurants & bars (1,892 or 21.1%), ground transportation (1,257 or 30%), accommodation facilities (433 or 30%) and travel & tour operators (335 or 28.7%).

2.4.3. Income from tourism

If partially touristic activities are numerically represented by more enterprises (71.4%) and generate more jobs (80.4%), most of the tourism industry's turnover is concentrated in predominantly touristic activities (64 ,1%). Thus, in 2019 the aggregate sales of the tourism industry reached 10.9 billion lei, with an average annual increase in the 2017-2019 period of 10.8%, with predominantly touristic activities having a hesitant increase of about 5.4% , compared to the partially touristic ones, where the average annual increase was 23%.

Within the predominantly touristic activities, the turnover in 2019 was made up of air passenger transport in a proportion of 62.7%, followed by travel agencies and tour operators (29.8%) and accommodation facility services with only 7 .4%, which once again confirms the weaker development, but also the extended informal segment of these activities. For example, at the level of the EU-28 states, the share of business from accommodation facilities is 38.4% of the turnover of all that is predominantly tourism.

Table 14. Turnover from tourism in the municipality of Chisinau, million lei

Activitatea	2017	2018	2019	2020
Predominantly Tourism	6,328.8	6,910.8	7,026.2	2,156.9
Air passenger transport	3,792.6	4,125.6	4,407.2	1,188.8
Accommodation facilities	383.3	436.9	523.3	214.3
Agents and tour operators	2,152.9	2,348.3	2,095.7	753.8
Partly Tourism	2,597.7	3,137.0	3,927.3	2,299.5
Land transport	632.7	801.9	1,047.8	532.8
Restaurants and Bars	1,908.7	2,197.1	2,788.5	1,696.7
Car rental and others	56.3	138.0	91.0	70.0
TOTAL Tourism Industry	8,926.5	10,047.8	10,953.5	4,456.4

Source: NBS data and authors' calculations

COVID-19. FIGURES & IMPACT

In 2020, the first pandemic year, the turnover of the tourism industry dropped dramatically, more than 2 times: from 10.9 billion lei in 2019 to 4.5 billion. The most affected were mainly tourism activities, with lower sales by 69.3% in 2020. Sectors comprising mainly tourism activities achieved lower turnover figures between 59-73% compared to those in 2019. Partial tourism activities recorded a turnover of 41.4% below those recorded in 2019.

2.5. Accommodation units: Capacities

The large influx of refugees following the armed conflict between Ukraine and Russia has shown that Chisinau is not prepared to cope with the unforeseen need to accommodate a large flow of tourists. For this reason, the promotion of the destination must correspond to the capabilities. It is obvious that the city of Chisinau cannot be developed as a destination for mass tourism. Chisinau must decide which target groups to address and develop diverse accommodation capacities in several regions of the municipality. The area where the new accommodation units are located must have good transport accessibility.

2.5.1. Hotels

The availability of accommodation units is still limited, especially for accommodation facilities in the upper segment - hotels. According to the World Economic Forum index of global competitiveness, in 2019 the Republic of Moldova ranked 103 out of 140 in terms of competitiveness in the field of tourism.

At the beginning of 2022, the municipality of Chisinau offers tourists 121 accommodation units, of which:

- Campsites and other short-term accommodation possibilities – 13;
- Hotels (2*- 5*) – 105;
- Tourist guesthouses – 3;

It should be noted that the supply of these categories of accommodation structures increased marginally in the period 2017-2020, from 51 to 55 hotels, respectively from 3 to 4 apartment-type hotels. Their capacity is around 2050 rooms and 3800 beds. In the 2017-2020 period,

investments in the sector focused more on the modernization of existing infrastructure rather than the expansion and development of new ones.

According to comfort categories, Chisinau is the city that offers 7 of the 8 5-star hotels in the country, while 30 of the 38 4-star hotels are also located in Chisinau (updated March, 2022). Thus, the offer in the upper segment is practically entirely concentrated in the capital.

In Chisinau there are only 3 hotels that are part of international networks: Radisson Blu, Accor and Marriott Courtyard. And in the middle segment, 3-star hotels, Chisinau offers 2/3 of all hotels available in Moldova (18 out of 25). In the suburbs are mentioned: Cricova - two accommodation units: Hotel & Restaurant Giowine 4* and Vila Family (unclassified), in Vatra - 10 holiday cottages for families and an unnamed rest base - for a maximum of 20 families; in Stăuceni - SC "Dromos Tur" SRL, with an accommodation capacity of 10 places at its hotel and "Moonlight Hotel" (unclassified) and a maximum accommodation capacity of 20 places. There are no hotels, villas or holiday homes in Gratiesti. As we go down the lower segments, the accommodation offer and the degree of concentration erodes, with 7 2-star hotels (out of 19 in total existing in Moldova) and two 1-star hotels.

The quality of 2 and 3 star hotels is considered to be low. Most reviews on Trip Advisor talk about outdated accommodations, cleanliness issues, poor service and food.

The crisis associated with the spread of the COVID-19 virus put investment plans in the sector on hold, or the existing infrastructure remained practically unchanged in 2020.

Table 15. The capacity of collective tourist reception structures with accommodation functions, by comfort category, at the end of the years, Chisinau municipality:

	No, of institutions				No, of rooms, beds:				No. of places - bed			
	2020	2019	2018	2017	2020	2019	2018	2017	2020	2019	2018	2017
Hotels and Motels	55	55	53	51	2,046	2,053	2,071	2,000	3,816	3,825	3,864	3,668
Hotels	51	51	48	48	1,971	1,975	1,976	1,937	3,675	3,681	3,683	3,567
5 stars	5	5	6	6	265	265	287	287	442	442	486	482
4 stars	18	18	16	14	726	720	638	603	1,325	1,317	1,153	1,074
3 stars	16	16	17	19	559	559	591	616	1,055	1,059	1,098	1,152

	No, of institutions				No, of rooms, beds:				No. of places - bed			
	2020	2019	2018	2017	2020	2019	2018	2017	2020	2019	2018	2017
2 stars	7	7	6	6	206	217	287	290	382	395	550	565
1 star	2	2	2	3	164	163	159	141	381	378	368	294
Unrated	3	3	1	0	51	51	14	0	90	90	28	0
Apartment-type hotel	4	4	5	3	75	78	95	63	141	144	181	101
4 staes	1	1	2	1	35	35	51	16	70	70	102	32
Unrated	3	3	3	2	40	43	44	47	71	74	79	69

Source:NBS data

2.5.2. Motels and hostels

According to statistical data, at the end of 2020 there was no motel in Chisinau, instead tourists who came in larger groups, without too many demands, were offered 3 student dormitories for visitors, with a stock of 170 rooms and 545 places - bed.

Table 16. Existing capacity of motels and hostels for visitors, the situation at the end of the years, Chisinau municipality

	No, of institutions				No, of rooms, beds:				No. of places - bed			
	2020	2019	2018	2017	2020	2019	2018	2017	2020	2019	2018	2017
Motels	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
3 stars	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unrated	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hostels for visitors	3	3	3	3	170	170	170	170	545	545	545	545
Unrated	3	3	3	3	170	170	170	170	545	545	545	545
2 stars	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Source:NBS data

In January 2022 in Chisinau there are 4 hostels with a total capacity of 16 rooms and approx. 76 accommodation places (beds).

2.5.3. Tourist and agro-tourism pensions

As in 2019, at the end of 2020, there were 11 tourist guesthouses in the municipality of Chisinau, which offered tourists 205 rooms and 421 beds. Compared to 2017, the number of 4- and 3-star tourist guesthouses has decreased by one unit each, and the current offer is only 3 units per each comfort category. Since 2017, the offer of rooms and beds in the case of 4-star tourist guesthouses has decreased by about 16%, being 109 rooms, and in the case of 3-star ones by about 28% (20 rooms at the end of 2020). Currently, they could accommodate 227 tourists, respectively only 40. In the case of 2-star guesthouses, even if their number remained unchanged (2), their capacity increased a little more than twice, from 15 to 33 rooms and from 30 to 64 beds. In 2020, the first agro-tourism guesthouse in the municipality of Chisinau (in the Vadul lui Vodă recreation area) was also approved, with 3 stars, which comes with an offer of 10 rooms and 20 beds.

Table 17. The existing capacity of tourist and agro-tourism guesthouses, the situation at the end of the years, Chisinau municipality

	No, of institutions				No, of rooms, beds:				No. of places - bed			
	2020	2019	2018	2017	2020	2019	2018	2017	2020	2019	2018	2017
Tourist and agro-tourism pensions	12	11	13	12	215	205	217	206	441	421	445	418
Tourist pensions	11	11	13	12	205	205	217	206	421	421	445	418
4 stars	3	3	3	4	109	109	109	131	227	227	227	269
3 stars	3	3	4	4	20	20	28	28	40	40	56	55
2 stars	2	2	3	2	33	33	37	15	64	64	72	30
1 star	1	1	1	1	11	11	11	11	22	22	22	22
Unrated	2	2	2	1	32	32	32	21	68	68	68	42
Agro-tourism pensions	1	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	20	0	0	0
3 stars	1	0	0	0	10	0	0	0	20	0	0	0
2 stars	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

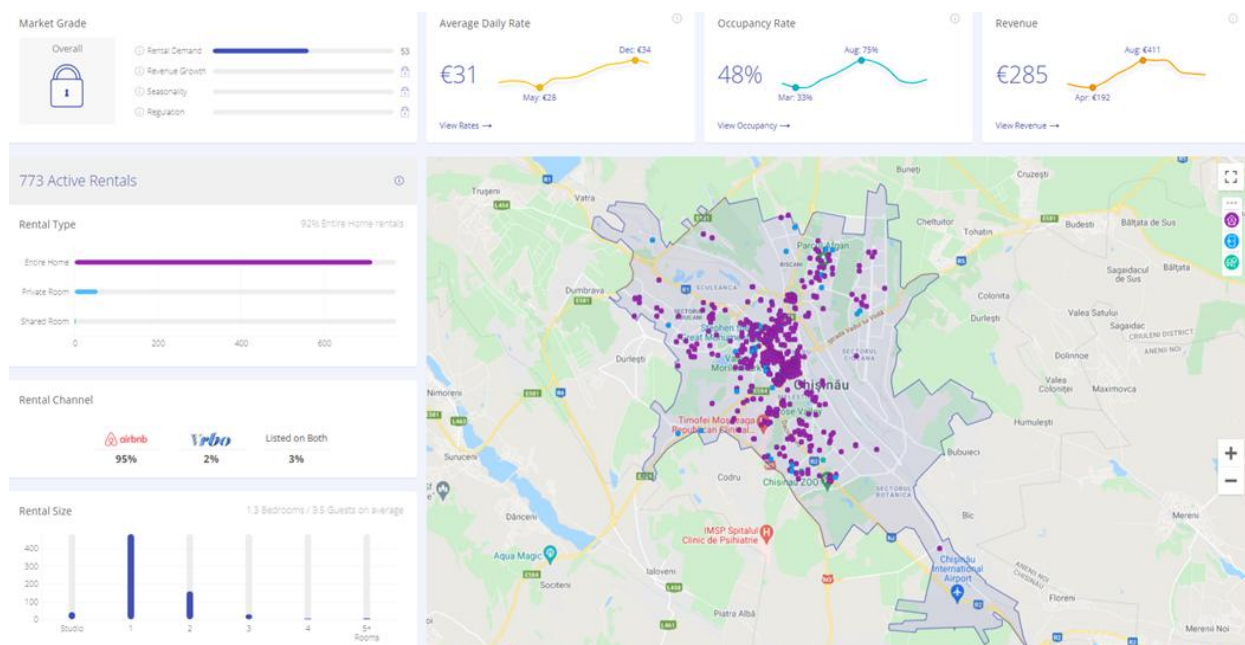
Source: NBS data

2.5.4. Apartaments

According to the AIRDNA source, in February 2022, within the limits of the available data, there are 717 apartments and houses for rent in Chisinau. Their capacity is around 2050 rooms and 3800 beds. The performance indicators of these players in the hospitality market (E.g. occupancy rate, average sales rate, revenues) are not recorded in the official state statistics and denote unfair competition.

Figure 1. Map representation of active properties, offered for rent on AirBnB, in Chisinau:

Source: AIRDNA, <https://www.airdna.co/>



The average daily rate of units placed on platforms like AirBnB is EUR 30 and an occupancy rate of 47% is recorded, an important fact if it is analyzed in comparison to the hotel occupancy rate, which is clearly lower.

Compared to hotels, people who practice the provision of services through AirBnB do not pay a series of taxes and fees, which conventional accommodation units pay. At the same time, at the

moment, these apartments and houses do not have the obligation to comply with various consumer health and safety protection rules, nor the classification rules.

2.6. Accommodation units: Application

2.6.1. Accommodation, Overnights, Source Markets (Countries of Origin)

The tourist reception structures in the municipality of Chisinau hosted 253.3 thousand people in 2019, of which 62% were non-residents, and 38% were residents of the Republic of Moldova.

In the period 2014-2019, the average annual growth rate of the number of foreign tourists staying in tourist reception structures was 12.9%, compared to only 0.5%, that of residents.

The top 20 market sources held a share of around 54%. Traditionally, Romania, Ukraine and Russia are the main sources of foreign tourists, with a cumulative share of around 30%.

The most dynamic markets in the period 2014-2019, those with at least 1000 visitors staying in 2019, were China (with an average annual growth of 42.4%), Armenia (+54.6%), Poland (24%), Israel (+23.7%) and Canada (+21.3%).

The number of overnight stays by foreign tourists was 337.4 thousand nights in 2019, 84% above the figure of 2014, or an average annual increase of 13% in the period 2014-2019. In the case of residents, the average annual increase was a tiny one, of only 0.1%.

Of the top 20 countries, sources of tourists, the longest stays were experienced by foreign tourists from Turkey (5.92 nights), followed by those from Bulgaria and Belarus (with 2.25 nights each) and Poland (2.20).

The detailed statistics regarding the number of tourists staying and their overnight stays in the collective tourist reception structures with accommodation functions in the municipality of Chisinau in the years 2014-2020, by country of origin, is presented in Annex 4.

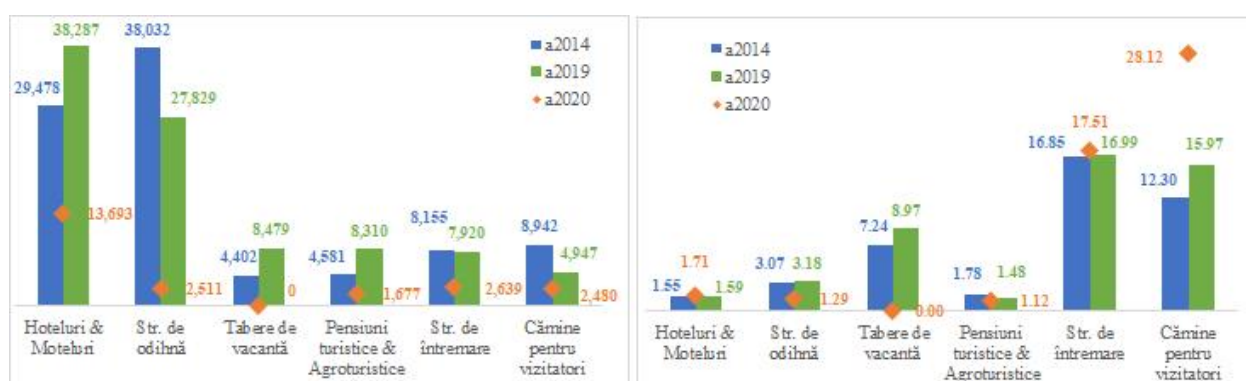
2.6.2. Domestic tourism

In the period 2014-2019, the number of Moldovan citizens staying in accommodation facilities had an uneven evolution, with a maximum recorded in 2018 (105.6 thousand people) and a minimum in 2016 (91.9 thousand people). If in 2014 the co-ratio between residents/non-residents was 52/48%, then in the following years this balance tilted in favor of non-residents, with a ratio of 38/62% in 2019.

By types of accommodation structures, in 2019 most residents were accommodated in hotels and motels - 38.3 thousand people, followed by rest structures - 27.8 thousand. Tourist and agro-tourism guesthouses, holiday camps and accommodation structures follow at a significant distance, all with a number of visitors hovering around the figure of 8 thousand. The last 2 categories are supported by the social policies of the state.

Figure 2. The number of local tourists staying and their average length of stay in collective tourist reception structures with accommodation functions in the municipality of Chisinau in 2014-2020

a) Number of tourists staying by types of accommodation structures b) Average length of stay, nights



Source: NBS data

The average length of stay of residents in hotels and motels gradually decreased from 1.77 nights in 2015 to 1.59 nights in 2019. B&Bs and agritourisms with 1.48 nights are most commonly perceived as weekend stays, while, naturally, holiday camps with 8.97 nights, visitor hostels with 15.97 and structures of accommodation (sanatoria) with 17.51 nights stand out with the longest average length of stay.

The Covid-19 pandemic and the imposed restrictions have severely affected domestic tourism. The number of local tourists decreased by 76.0% in 2020, and the number of overnight stays by 68.0% compared to 2019.

During the pandemic, there is a slight increase in the length of stay in hostels and motels, as well as accommodation structures. The restrictions imposed and the forced postponement of visits made them stay a little longer in these structures, with the emergence of the possibility to travel. The detailed statistics regarding the number of local tourists (residents) staying and their overnight stays in the collective tourist reception structures with accommodation functions in the municipality of Chisinau in the years 2014-2020, by comfort category, is presented in Annex 2.

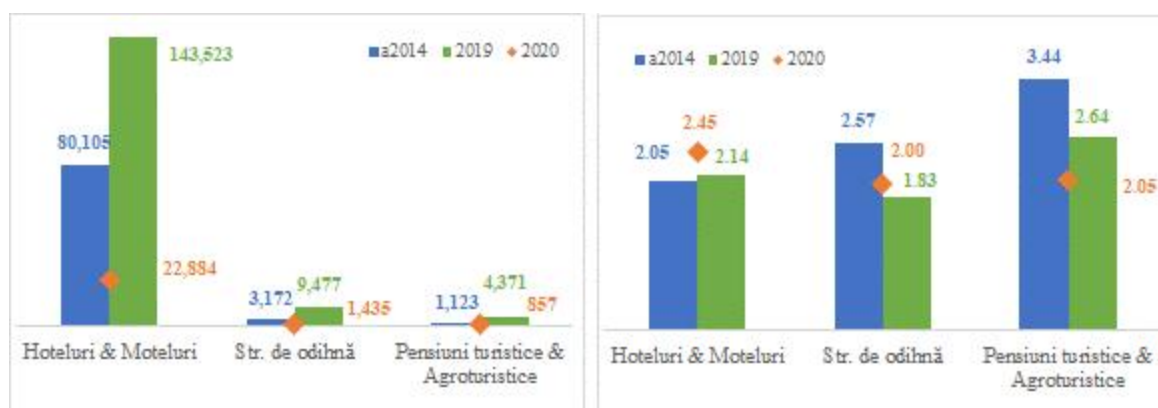
2.6.3. Inbound tourism. Non-residents

In the period 2014-2019, the number of foreign tourists staying in structures in the municipality of Chisinau grew rapidly, with an average annual rate of 12.9%. Thus, their number was 157.5 thousand people in 2019. The vast majority stayed in hotels and motels (143.5 thousand tourists or 87.8% of the total), far behind rest structures (with 9.5 thousand tourists) and tourist and agro-tourism guesthouses (4.4 thousand tourists).

The average length of stay was 2.45 nights in hotels and motels, 2.64 nights in the case of tourist and agro-tourism guesthouses and 1.83 nights for rest structures.

Figure 3. The number of foreign tourists (non-residents) accommodated and their average length of stay in collective tourist reception structures with accommodation functions in the municipality of Chisinau in the years 2014-2020.

a) Number of tourists staying by types of accommodation structures b) Average length of stay, nights



Source: NBS data

The Covid-19 pandemic and the imposed restrictions have further affected inbound tourism. The number of foreign tourists decreased by 84.0% in 2020, and the number of overnight stays by 82.0% compared to 2019.

As in the case of local tourists, during the pandemic there is a slight increase in the length of stay in hotels and motels and rest structures. The few tourists who visited our country in 2020 chose to extend their stay a little.

The detailed statistics regarding the number of foreign tourists (non-residents) staying and their overnight stays in the collective tourist reception structures with accommodation functions in the municipality of Chisinau in the years 2014-2020, by comfort category, is presented in Annex 3.

2.6.4. Indices of net use of tourist reception structures

The 2017-2019 period reflects an improvement in the use of tourist reception structures with an accommodation function intended especially for foreign tourists – hotels and motels and tourist and agro-tourism guesthouses.

The pandemic crisis hit the industry hard, with extremely low official accommodation occupancy rates, 7.4% - in the case of hotels/motels and 4.4% - in the case of tourist/agritourism guesthouses. Their occupancy rate is largely erroneous due to the non-declaration of real figures by the owners, with the aim of tax evasion.

Table 18. Indices of net use of collective tourist reception structures with accommodation functions in the municipality of Chisinau, %:

Indicators	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total	28.9	29.9	30.7	32.4	32.5	30.8	12.5
Hotels and motels	24.1	24.7	22.0	27.0	27.2	27.0	7.4
Tourist and agro-tourism pensions	11.2	11.0	17.4	17.4	15.9	16.8	4.4
Hostels for visitors	50.6	57.1	57.2	59.2	60.7	50.8	62.2
Recovery structures	74.9	79.1	71.3	71.7	67.4	71.6	32.1
Leisure structures	25.7	27.2	23.3	20.3	19.1	19.0	2.6
Children's camps	49.2	19.5	67.5	55.6	59.5	50.5	-

Source: NBS data

2.7. Priority directions of tourism in the municipality

The main purpose of visiting Chisinau by tourists from different countries is rest – this purpose is pursued by up to 3/4 of the entire tourist flow; about 20% of tourists come to Chisinau for business tourism, less than 5% - for medical treatment.

2.7.1. *Light adventure tourism*

Adventure tourism is gaining momentum worldwide and in Europe. Every year, Europeans take 100 million adventure trips to another country. They contribute heavily to the local economies they visit: 2/3 of all their travel spending is at the destination. Tourists are looking for unique experiences and their demands, regarding health, as well as facilitating the digitization of the vacation planning process are changing the market, giving us many opportunities. Plus, with the pandemic, many travelers are looking to outdoor activities as an opportunity to be active and avoid the crowds.

Chisinau's strong point is its proximity to the Dniester River, where boat or kayak tours can be organized. To develop this direction, important investments are needed in the infrastructure of the Vadul lui Vodă leisure area.

Chisinau can also offer a unique experience by equipping and preparing the Chisinau Underground Mine for light adventure services (kayaking, hiking, quest, etc.). This fact implies investments in ensuring the safety and security of tourists.

Another opportunity is the Cable Car from Nicolae Costin St. to Calea Ieșilor St., for which a feasibility study has already been developed for its reconstruction and the development of the adjacent space.

Also, Chisinau can benefit from the creation of hiking and cycling tourist routes, but these directions involve considerable investments in the city's infrastructure. Tourists interested in light adventure are also interested in cultural and culinary experiences, so there is an opportunity to highlight this combination and the diversity of experiences possible in Chisinau (for example, kayaking in Mina during the day and visiting the opera/ballet - at night).

2.7.2. Medical tourism

Currently, medical tourism in Chisinau is not a popular tourist destination, but the demand is increasing every year. The main reason for the growing popularity of medical tourism is the low cost of services. In particular, the spa area of the municipality is present in the Vadul lui Vodă region. At the moment, this sector requires both significant investment in equipment and facilities, as well as costs related to promotion and image.

At the same time, there are currently 11 hotels in the city that offer spa and wellness services. External demand in this segment is more limited due to the existence of high competition, but also low competitiveness – neighboring countries have a much better developed offer in terms of price and resources.

The municipality does not have unique natural resources that could highlight this direction in the health tourism market. A priority direction, however, is emerging in dental tourism. Currently, a large number of tourists choose dental services from the Republic of Moldova, considering quality and price. The possibility of online scheduling of medical services, the possibility of consulting the online price list are important factors in choosing Moldovan dental services. It also takes into account the proximity of clinics to accommodation services and tourist attractions, the possibility of combining several services/activities (spa, procedures, other medical services). Highly qualified medical personnel ensure a high percentage of demand, promotion being provided mainly by customers satisfied with the quality of services.

The development of a package of governmental and municipal support measures for the field is a means that must be used. Minimal support could be provided by developing a health/dental tourism website that would include reviews/testimonials and help travelers book services online.

2.7.3. Business tourism and M.I.C.E

Chisinau can provide spaces for holding conferences and various business events: the Palace of the Republic can host events for approximately 1700 people (together with the hall); The "Moldexpo" exhibition space can host events for about 1000 people. Following a mapping study of tourist services in the municipality, ANTRIM was able to ascertain a capacity of approximately 7000 places available for holding events, conferences and other business meetings.

This capacity is provided by hotels, museums and exhibition spaces and hubs such as Tekwill, Artcor or IHub and includes all price categories.

Artcor is the first creative hub in Moldova that offers coworking spaces, conference rooms with up to 100 seats, multimedia rooms, offices and a space for workshops. The courtyard is an active urban area accessible to all visitors that can also be used as an event space for a larger number of people.

Tekwill is a coworking space, educational center and event venue in Chisinau, which can host from a small meeting to an event of 400 people. IHub, in turn, also offers coworking spaces and events, distinguishing itself through green spaces for work. Digital Park is the first IT park in Moldova and a cultural center with an auditorium with a capacity of 500 people.

Another strong point of Chisinau for business tourism is the fast speed of mobile and internet connection. This privilege is not fully promoted by tourism service providers. Many tourism companies do not fully utilize online and mobile applications in marketing and sales. The lack of travel company web pages with travel offers was mentioned by respondents leaving the country in the 2018 survey. Digitization of travel services, online booking and "seamless" travel have become more important during the pandemic, and this trend is expected to continue long after the pandemic ends. This means that tourism businesses without a digital and online presence are at a disadvantage.

At the same time, MICE service providers are not flexible enough in negotiating the offer and prices with potential beneficiaries. Annually, ANTRIM in partnership with the Ministry of Culture, the Investment Agency and the National Vine and Wine Office elaborates the Cultural-Tourist Events Agenda which is published and promoted internationally, ensuring the accessibility of information about events, tourist attractions, etc. in the online environment - an opportunity to attract events dedicated to business in the country .

The implementation of the Chisinau Investment Forum planned for October this year. will contribute to the development of MICE tourism and presents itself as one of the most important events of its kind for the promotion of Chisinau as a place for investment, but also for business tourism.

The establishment of a MICE Convention Office according to international good practices with the participation of MICE component service providers and the development of an action plan to

promote the MICE offer and develop MICE products, including marketing, communication, trainings, investment attraction, etc., remains to be a must for the city. Also, the development of a MICE portfolio, with the inclusion of available reception capacities, service providers, presented at national and international investment forums. The Convention Bureau would be a professional management body that promotes Chisinau as a MICE destination and would enhance the ability of its members to create attractive packages for their target markets. Also, the Office will be tasked with projecting a brand of Moldova and Chisinau and promoting contributing to increasing international awareness of the benefits of organizing authentic events in Chisinau.

The development of the business tourism market will depend on the growth rate of the economy, but it will not stimulate this growth (that is, it will not be a point of growth, but an element of the service infrastructure). The development of this segment will require greater integration of Chisinau in interregional processes and a higher level of hotel and transport infrastructure development.

2.7.4. Work tourism (workation)

Chisinau can be included in the list of top destinations for "digital nomads". Globally, the rise of a large and new group of people who travel and work remotely is one of the prevailing narratives about a reshaped world of work post-Covid-19. Fast internet speed, low living costs (219th place out of 240 for low price apartments for rent, in Europe), availability of coworking spaces (Artcor, Tekwill, IHub, Digital Park, etc.), low transport prices (on the spot 2 in Europe after the low cost of public transport) and the proximity of all tourist attractions of national and international importance can make Chisinau a perfect destination for digital nomads.

For this target group, a different type of marketing and targeting is needed to attract them, possibly working with existing digital nomad communities for promotion or competitions. There should be coordination from the national government as to whether there will be special visas for digital nomads or whether they would fall under tourist visas.

The latest Skift Megatrend 2022 report reveals that due to the flexibility offered by many jobs, the travel trend called "workation" has taken shape, which is a trip undertaken by people who want to work while traveling and who have more freedom to work outside the office than before

the pandemic. Moldova ranks 494th according to the Index of living expenses plus rent. Compared to other cities in Europe or the world, living expenses in Moldova are much lower, and this is the first factor that attracts digital nomads.

2.7.5. Food tourism and wine (oenological) tourism

In recent years, wine tourism has been mentioned frequently both in the business world and among people looking for weekend or vacation destinations. The desire to get to know wine and the universe around it also pushed the wineries in the Republic of Moldova to promote themselves as best as possible in order to offer a pleasant experience to the tourist. The wineries have a huge potential, thanks to the quality of the drinks and the cultural heritage of centuries.

The tendency of the modern tourist is to get out of static urban spaces and find authenticity, nature and the original. Visiting wineries or wineries, participating in the winemaking process, and then tasting the wines, is an activity that involves the five senses, and the context suits the desire to experiment and discover things of value, which are not intended for consumption superficial. Wine tourism, also known as oenotourism, proposes visiting some wine properties and restoring the cultural link between the tourist, in the given case - consumer, and the final product itself. Contact takes place through direct mediation with grapes and wine, which can also take place during gastro and oeno festivals - local or national.

In recent years, wine tourism has registered a spectacular evolution in the Republic of Moldova, in general, and the municipality of Chisinau - in particular. Within the radius of the municipality are several wineries and cellars - for example ATU Winery (which promotes itself as the first urban winery in Chisinau), as well as the famous "underground wine towns" - Cricova and Mileştii Mici - both included in the Guinness Book of World Records for different records. At the same time, new wine bars are opened in Chisinau every year - at the moment there are around 20 wine bars and wine bars in the city, which periodically organize local, mixed wine and gastronomic events (the format "History with cheese", "Concert in jeans", "An evening with oysters and wine", "Wine and cheese" etc.).

Chisinau is a city with enormous oeno and gastronomic potential, which has something to offer any sophisticated tourist - both those looking for history and local culture, and those who prefer to enjoy wine and traditional Moldovan dishes. Festivals with various themes are organized here

every year, such as "Mai Dulce", "Summerfest", "Ia Mania" and "National Wine Day". The latter - the National Wine Day, was established by the decision of the Parliament on December 26, 1990 and is celebrated annually since 2002 on the first Saturday and Sunday of October. The "DeVin & DeGust" festival appears in its 10th edition on May 29, 2022 and is organized annually by the National Vine and Wine Office. But none of these festivals are found in the Word Festival Association, although it wouldn't take much effort to register our events (local, national or international) (<https://festival-association.eu/>)

Local events also take place periodically or sporadically in the suburbs of Chisinau:

- in Cricova - the festival "White Chrysanthemum", "Mărțișor", the Easter project "Christ is risen!", the spartachiada "Sănătate", City Day, as well as thematic exhibitions: "Cricova of yesterday - Cricova of today", "Carpets and wine - the roots of the nation", Exhibition of national towels, permanent exhibitions of old icons.
- in Vatra - the City Temple, celebrated on October 14;
- in Stăuceni - the local temple, Children's Day, Autumn Fest Stăuceni, the Christmas Fair and the Inauguration of the Christmas Tree;
- in Grătiesti - the Village Temple is celebrated annually. Moldovan cuisine is a real mix of dishes, which perfectly complements wine tourism. The city of Chisinau offers the tourist more than 20 places with traditional Moldovan specifics and more than 20 places with traditional specifics of other nationalities in the republic - Jewish, Ukrainian, Gagauz, Albanian, Greek, Bulgarian, Georgian, etc. The famous Moldavian desserts - "Baba neagră", "Baba albă", "Cușma lui Guguță" may in the future become the main objective for the development of national or international gastronomic festivals, produced within the municipality and which would additionally promote the city of Chisinau. In the suburbs of the city, there are several establishments that can receive guests: in Stăuceni - cafe (up to 100 people), local buffet (50 people), local restaurant (100 people); Vatra - the "La Bădiș" restaurant (80 people), Cricova - two halls for festivities (up to 100 people), Grătiesti - the "Armonie" restaurant (a small hall - for 30 people and a large hall - with a capacity of 100 seats).

2.7.6. Religious tourism or pilgrimage

Religious tourism (spiritual tourism, sacred tourism or faith tourism), is a type of tourism with two main subtypes: pilgrimage, meaning traveling for religious or spiritual purposes, and/or viewing religious monuments and artifacts - a branch of sightseeing.

Religion has a special role in the Republic of Moldova. According to the 2014 census data, of the total number of the population who openly declared their religious affiliation, 96.8% are Orthodox Christians. In Chisinau we find several religious denominations: Orthodox Christians, Old Rite believers ("Lipoveni"), Catholics, Muslims, Jews, etc. It is also important that in Chisinau there are 24 edifices of worship of national importance, and one of them - the Nativity Cathedral Ensemble, has become the unconditional symbol of the city, the image of which is found everywhere, where Chisinau is spoken or written. The oldest edifice in the city, which has been preserved at the moment, is the Church of the Covering of the Mother of God (popularly called "Măzărache"), originally a Moldovan Orthodox church, and which has belonged to the Old Russian Rite Christian community since the mid-50s of the 20th century. In the center of Chisinau is also the "Saint Great Martyr Teodor Tiron" Monastery, colloquially known as Ciuflea Monastery. Although the number of churches in Chisinau is impressive (total over 50 objects of worship in the city (Orthodox, Catholic, Armenian-Apostolic, Protestant, Jewish, plus 18 churches and 2 Orthodox monasteries (in Durlăști and Condrița, in the suburbs of Chisinau)), religious tourism is primarily developed only at the level of the local population, who practice visits during major religious holidays, and are rarely visited by foreigners, who see them only as historically curious sights. Taking into account the opportunity to promote this type of tourism as well, recently several religious routes have been developed, or with a well-marked religious emphasis, but which require more insistent promotion. Some of them unite several places of worship of different denominations on the same route, such as: the Armenian Route, the Greek Footprint in Chisinau, Bulgarian Road, Chisinau Synagogue (Jewish Histories), Protestants or Catholics, etc.

2.8. Urban image and tourist brand

Urban identity is a junction of three dimensions - semantic, social and material, influenced by time and space. The concept of the city must answer three primary questions Who are we? Where do we come from? Where are we going?

Forming a city identity is necessary to stand out and effectively compete with other cities. The foundation of the identity is the perception of the locals, but also of the travelers about the city. This image includes a multitude of elements: the mythology and history of the city, the tourism brand, the vibe of the place, communication and many other aspects.

The endless discussions about the origin of Chisinau constitute an important shortcoming of the urban identity. Of the versions that exist (Chisinau - place of spring/grave/fair/pocket/bour, etc.), the most common is the interpretation of the origin of Chisinau from the "new town", but the others are often evoked as well. Consolidating a single version is paramount to the image of the city. This fact will be done through a consent between all the institutions, historians and locals to stick to a particular variant. This will also contribute to the specificity and authenticity of the city, the development of local folklore, and last but not least the affiliation of the locals to the city - creating the perception of belonging to the community and the city.

The urban image is to be consolidated through monuments, urban histories, tourist guides, etc. Chisinau must adopt an image that would be easy to visualize. An example of this is the city of Braşov, upon hearing which the image of Bran Castle immediately appears in the traveler's mind, although the castle was never the residence of Vlad Țepeş, nicknamed Dracula. Also, the visual identity is very important for the consistent and coherent promotion of the tourist destination.

Currently, Chisinau does not have a city brandbook, which would include a visual identity and a tourism brand, and would allow its presence on social networks, press, tourist offers, events, conferences, international tourism exhibitions, etc. At the same time, the tourism brand should also reflect the city's strategic positioning as a tourist destination – what makes it stand out from other cities? What makes it different from the rest of Moldova? The tourism branding process should incorporate and reflect the strategy, key values, attractions/products, experiences, vibe and perception of the place.

Another chapter that is missing in Chisinau is the tourist vibe - the tourist atmosphere. Behind the word vibe are the feelings, the environment, the general atmosphere, that is, the general

perception of the city by a tourist. The components of this vibe are: the audio-visual (visual identity, associated songs), unique events, characteristic architecture, monuments in a particular style, the arrangement of streets and public spaces and parks and many others.

The touristic vibe of Chisinau can involve the creative industries, local artists and artisans, museums, galleries and concert institutions, but also the most crowded areas of the city, for example the Central Square. Such zones can be created in several sectors of the city - pedestrian streets, parks, recreational areas, encouraging entrepreneurs to locate their businesses in the field of tourism and the organization of outdoor events, such as concerts, photo exhibitions, installations of art, markets, festivals and other activities that can take place to support the tourism vibe and brand.

In the same vein, the city does not have a Marketing and Communication Strategy. An important part of this process is educating customers/travelers to look at a destination not just as geographic locations, but also through the lens of their own interests, values, travel goals, media/online preferences, and more. This helps ensure that marketing and communications are strategic and focused vs. trying to appeal to everyone, which can waste valuable resources and be ineffective. The communication and marketing strategy needs to be aligned with the branding of the city, the development of tourism products and services, and the national tourism marketing strategy and activities in Moldova.

Digitization in the sec. XXI became not only an alternative but a necessity dictated especially by the pandemic situation of the last 2 years, which limited the possibilities of circulation and communication. Of course, the need for digitization is dictated by the changing needs of humanity but also by global trends in the field of tourism.

The creation of Chisinau's tourist site was an important step in the promotion of the city, supplementing the existing historical and cultural information online and ensuring a comprehensive content. But the work on the site does not stop there. With the creation and approval of the strategic vision, the visual identity of the city and the tourism brand, the website needs to be updated. This site must include not only information for reading, but be an interactive platform that promotes authentic experiences and perform logistics functions.

The site must include:

- A cultural agenda of Chisinau;
- Information on public transport (routes, timetable);
- Information regarding the security and safety of Chisinau (in the face of the pandemic and regional military conflicts); - Recommendations and unique experiences that can be tested in the municipality.
- A modern system of navigation and informational support (links to the QR codes on the monuments in the municipality, audio guides, self-guided routes, etc.)

Likewise, in the direction of innovation and digitization, the creative industries need to be involved. The year 2021 has been declared the International Year of the Creative Economy for Sustainable Development by the United Nations General Assembly. Chisinau has enormous potential in the creative industry, but it is necessary to ensure the parallel development of the city with it. One of the tasks that could be achieved by involving the creative industries is the creation of a mobile application that would integrate self-guided routes in the municipality and a program of free excursions, with an emphasis on culture, history, nature or light adventure.

III. Strategic directions and sustainable development policies

3.1. Identification of target objectives (SWOT ANALYSIS)

In order to structure a Tourism Development Strategy for the municipality of Chisinau and following the discussions in the focus groups organized by fields, the SWOT Analysis was carried out, the results being the following:

3.1.1 Activity in the field of tourism/HORECA

Strengthes	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The geographical location of Chisinau allows to attract tourists from Europe and other regions. - Attractive destination unaffected by mass tourism. - Proximity to top tourist destinations in the country (max. 50-60 km). - The presence of the Chisinau International Airport and the trolleybus that connects it with the city. - Direct air connections with many important regional and European markets; - Tourism is a new priority of the Chisinau administration - Very good internet and mobile connection speed. - Cheap public transport. - The presence of a large human capital in the capital. - The existence of a taxi service that allows you to call an English-speaking driver. - Experience in organizing various cultural and gastronomic events of regional importance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low utilization of tourist heritage in the city and suburbs. - Small number of 2* and 3* hostels, which would diversify the city's accommodation offer. - Few events aimed at attracting investments in the field and promoting the city. - Lack of functional applications that would allow tracking of public transport. - Lack of information boards at public transport stations in the city that would show the passenger's waiting time. - Lack of entertainment venues that would diversify the night life. - There are few quality accommodations in the Vadul lui Vodă region and other suburbs. - Apartment owners who rent apartments through AirBnB do not pay accommodation fees. - The lack of public transport routes that would run regularly to the Cricova and Mileștii Mici wineries. - There is no place/pavilion where tourists

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The activity of the Tourist Information Center and various associations in the field. - Interest in the tourism sector (National Program in Tourism, National Strategy Moldova 2030). - The presence of the DCFTA free trade agreement signed with the EU - Elaboration and promotion of national routes to capitalize on existing tourist resources through PN "Drumul Vinului". - The existence of a diverse number of international programs and projects that support the development of tourism in the region. - The existence of government programs to support SMEs in the tourism sector; - A wide variety of places to eat (restaurants with local and authentic cuisine and high-quality continental/European cuisines, wineries, pastry shops, etc.); 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> can buy souvenirs or a Sunday market, where you constantly find sellers on the spot (the one on the pedestrian street is not constantly active). - Regulation/traffic rules are necessary for renting e-scooters (accidents, high speed, etc. are common). - The spontaneous development of tourism, without a clear delimitation of local products with an attractive tourist brand. - Lack of designated tourism development zones (ZDT) to stimulate tourism development; - Unfriendly legal framework for small businesses in the field of tourism (see the White Paper); - The low level of sustainability of the development of the tourism industry (WEF 110/140); - The discrepancy in the categories of accommodation structures (insufficiency of 3* hotels, motels, hostels, etc.); - Limited capacity of modern conference or exhibition spaces; - Low attractiveness for international hotel chains famous for franchises in Chisinau; - Weak development of digital services for booking a tour, guide, accommodation, meal in the premises
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	<p>through national platforms;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Municipal revenues from tourism are not reinvested in the tourism industry;
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stimulating entrepreneurs in the field, who demonstrate an ecological impact on the environment. - Motivation for continuous training of staff trained in serving tourists. - Creation of a city brand that would allow its promotion on foreign markets. - Opening of an Information Center for tourists at Chisinau International Airport. - Signing bilateral agreements with other cities in the world, which would also include provisions for tourism promotion. - Promotion of Chisinau through air routes that connect it with other cities (in-flight magazines). - Attracting more low-cost airlines that would operate flights from Chisinau International Airport. - Promotion of business tourism in the city through Chambers of Commerce and business associations. - Promoting Chisinau as a destination that can host MICE events. - Organizing large events in the suburbs to decentralize the flow of tourists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tourism is perceived as an excessively regulated economic sector. - Slow implementation of reforms in tourism. - There is no clear and concrete concept regarding the development of regional tourism. - Political and economic instability. - Maintaining the pandemic situation associated with COVID-19 - The exodus of the labor force and young people abroad. - High level of taxation and bureaucracy - Lack of sufficient information of the population regarding the procedure for setting up a business, acquiring a patent in the tourism sector; - Low degree of specialization of the municipal tourism offer; - Military conflicts in the region. - Slow implementation of reforms in tourism; - Maintaining the classification as an unsafe destination due to the pandemic and current military conflicts;

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment of a Chisinau Destination Management Association with public-private administration. - Encouraging and developing public-private partnerships. - Involvement of creative industries in increasing the attractiveness of the city. - Multiplying air or rail connections with other cities in the region. - The trolleybus that connects the Airport with the city can be used as an information point - toll collectors can be trained, or distribute to guests a leaflet informing about Chisinau and the visit.chisinau page. - Promotion of viewpoints in Chisinau. - Creation of an online application with the schedule / connections of trolleybuses/buses in Chisinau. The possibility of purchasing 1-day subscriptions online. - Integration of existing routes and routes on the visit.chisinau platform, which would inform the tourist about the ways to reach the destination by means of municipal and/or national and/or regional transport. - Creating content on the city website that would argue for the safety of the 	
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<p>destinatio - vaccination rate, quality of life, etc.</p> <p>- Capitalizing on pandemic/post-pandemic trends of tourists wanting less crowded and more remote destinations.</p>	
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3.1.2. Cultural heritage and human potential

Strengthes	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chisinau has a rich and diverse cultural-historical heritage, especially from an ethnic point of view. Different peoples lived/live here: Jews, Armenians, Ukrainians, Russians, etc. - The existence of several thematic tourist routes through Chisinau. - The existence of the tourist trolleybus. - A large number of museums - Each museum offers different activities with the public with free participation (creative workshops, history, culture, etc.). - Prominent personalities born or who worked in Chisinau. - Chisinau – an important university center in the region. - The existence of a diversified offer of theaters and palaces of culture - Experience in organizing various cultural and gastronomic events of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The existence of few art institutions - galleries, exhibition halls, which would attract tourists interested in art. - The lack of general culture of the local tourist (throwing waste in unauthorized spaces, disturbing the public peace, etc.). - Ignorance of the city's history and its culture by the locals. - Concentration of all important touristic objectives in the city center. - Low interest of students to choose specialties in the field of culture and creative industries. - Emigration of the active workforce. - Lack of collaboration between PMC and universities. - In the organizational chart of cultural institutions, there is no funded position that would cover "cultural/museum marketing".

<p>regional importance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Large number of universities offering tourism education programs (over 10). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All billboards in the city are private - it is not possible to promote cultural events through them. - Media houses refuse to promote cultural institutions for free. - Low knowledge of existing tourism products/services among foreigners, but also among locals due to limited promotion and limited digitization of tourism services. - Cultural institutions can only finance posters and invitations, other promotional tools cannot be justified in expenses. - Lack of possibility to purchase museum tickets online. - Lack of communication between cultural institutions and the lack of a common goal / activity strategies. - Ignorance of correct historical information by tour guides, and exposure of erroneous information, just to attract tourists.
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of an agenda of exclusive annual cultural events for the city. Chisinau. - Organizing free pre-arranged tours (time, day) for locals and foreigners. - Realization of information campaigns at 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Insufficient funding of cultural institutions from the state. - Legal obstacles that lead to the fact that the money collected from the sale of tickets/souvenirs is not reinvested in cultural institutions.

<p>local and international level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating a series of residencies for artists within museums, where they could interact and create. - Attracting private partners as co-financiers of certain cultural activities. - Regular meetings between all actors in the field to synchronize their activities and common goals. - Development of cultural journalism. - Creating audio guides in several languages for museums. - Updating the normative framework that would allow the increase of personnel in cultural institutions (guides, marketers, etc.). - Creation of a museum booklet/card - which would allow access to several national museums at a preferential price. - Creation of a museum district following the example of large European cities. - Developing the practice of "student exchange" with other university centers in the world. - Elaboration, approval and implementation of a Municipal Protocol for the protection of historical and cultural heritage in case of exceptional situations (state of emergency, siege, war 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Migration of qualified labor outside the country's borders; - Lack of economic and professional attractiveness for young staff;
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and natural calamities).	
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3.1.3. The situation of the built heritage

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 810 architectural monuments of national / local importance in the city perimeter. - A very rich underground built fund (cellars, bunkers). - Diverse relief and rich natural landscapes in the region of Goian, Condița villages suitable for hiking trails. - The existence of a rich architectural heritage from the century. XIX in the Vadul lui Vodă region. - The possibility of doing internships / training in the field in the country and abroad. - The existence of sufficiently well-managed green spaces with special species of trees and shrubs (Botanical Garden, Dendrological Park, etc.) - Clean streets, parks and monuments (in the central area / city center). - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 80% of the built capital is in a deplorable state. - Small spacing between newly built housing blocks and the lack of green spaces around. - A poorly developed infrastructure for cyclists.. - Bus parking not available in the city (for large groups). - There is no institution to monitor the situation of the architectural heritage - The locals' irresponsible perception of common property and heritage. - Reduced financial resources allocated for the restoration, capitalization of the heritage. - The facades of the monuments covered with advertising - no rules for colors, location, size, etc. - Insufficient human resources in the field. - Lack of legal mechanisms that would oblige the owners of architectural monuments to maintain them.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The green spaces are not sufficiently arranged. - The amusement park for children in Chisinau needs rehabilitation. - The existence of historic architectural monuments in a deplorable state and their non-utilization from the perspective of tourism (Herța House, Zemstvei Museum, Guguța Cafe, etc.); - Underdevelopment of urban infrastructure (lighting fixtures, roads, tourist signs, etc.); - The insufficiency of landscaped green spaces;
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The creation of several self-guided routes, loaded on a common platform, which can be traveled either on foot or by alternative transport. - Improving the infrastructure for cyclists, connecting the green areas of Chisinau. - Equipping the city with both parking lots and self-service repair/intervention and even charging stations for alternative electric transport. - Connecting suburbs that have something to offer tourists, by creating and promoting self-guided routes. - The list of historical monuments in the municipality needs to be revised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Degradation of the natural, cultural and already built heritage. - The perpetuation of the situation regarding the reduced financing of the rehabilitation of the built heritage. - Irreversible degradation of natural, cultural and built heritage and delayed interventions.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of a profile entity that would keep records and monitor the situation of the architectural heritage, e.g. Municipal Heritage Agency. - Attracting investments (European funds, grants) / private partners for capitalizing and protecting heritage. - Illumination of tourist attractions in the municipality and joining the City Network - light. - Placement in the means of transport of the simplified scheme of the route. - Signing collaboration agreements with other more developed cities from the point of view of capitalizing on built heritage. - Creation of a network of information and tourist centers in all sectors of the municipality. 	
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IV. Strategic vision and objectives (2022-2026)

4.1. Strategic vision

The purpose and objectives of the Strategy were developed in accordance with the needs of the representatives of the tourism industry in the municipality and with objectives 8, 9, 11, 13, 17 of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

Our vision: By 2026, Chisinau will be a recognized European tourist destination, competitive and attractive for investments. Tourism is an important direction in the economy of the municipality, which creates jobs and sustainably manages development throughout its territory,

enhances the culture of quality and offers its guests safety, attractions and authentic experiences throughout the year.

The purpose of the strategy - the development of the tourism sector in the city of Chisinau taking into account the competitiveness and sustainability requirements of a specific tourist destination and the promotion of the city of Chisinau as a top tourist destination on the European continent.

The strategic objectives derived from the mission and purpose of this strategy are based on 3 pillars of development:

- The long-term sustainability of interventions and investments, to transform the tourism economy of the city into a tourist attraction, a better place to live and a more profitable potential for businesses in the field.
- Protection and coherent development of the capital of the municipality in terms of nature, ecosystems, demographic and urban development in all areas with potential for tourism development.
- The development of different partnerships, which ensure the consistent achievement of the strategic development vision.

4.2. Strategic objectives

No .	Objectives	Premises, factors
1.	Streamlining the administration of the tourism industry and stimulating partnerships	<p>The tourism industry develops related sectors and can ensure local economic development, increase in revenues to the municipal budget, creation of new jobs</p> <p>Strengthening the effort of municipal subdivisions, APL and other actors in the implementation of a common agenda in tourism</p> <p>The need to increase the number of staff involved in the training and implementation of municipal</p>

		tourism policies.
2.	Consolidation and development of the tourism product of the municipality	<p>Effective use of the municipal tourist heritage</p> <p>International trends related to the diversification of tourist offers in large urban centers</p> <p>Consolidation of forms of tourism that have been implemented in Chisinau for several years and are competitive on regional markets.</p>
3.	Positioning and promoting the destination, with impact that would increase the visibility of the destination in the target markets	<p>Weak external promotion of the Chisinau tourist destination at present</p> <p>Promotion with other big cities in the region of a joint regional tourist offer</p> <p>The existence of European tourism promotion programs and projects.</p>
4.	Creating a favorable investor and business climate to enable sustainable business development, investment and economic growth	<p>Municipal administration open for attracting and making investments in tourism</p> <p>Increasing competition with top tourist destinations in the region</p> <p>The interest of existing entrepreneurs in diversifying businesses to serve tourists.</p>

4.3. Specific objectives and recommended actions of the *Strategy*

To achieve the **General Objective no. 1** the following specific objectives and actions are established:

1.1 Monitoring the development of tourism and strengthening the commitment to the growth of the sector at the municipal level

The strategic positioning of the tourism industry in the general development initiatives in the municipality:

- Increasing the number of staff responsible for the implementation of activities related to the tourism industry within the General Directorate of Economy, Trade and Tourism
- Development and implementation of the inter-functional (inter-departmental) collaboration process within the subdivisions of the local public administration, to ensure that the tourism aspect is considered in all areas of planning and development.
- Formation of a Municipal Advisory Committee/Council for Tourism (CCMT).
- Strengthening the capacities of civil servants in the field of tourism, urban planning, partnerships.

1.2 Stimulating collaborations for the development of the tourism sector in the municipality of Chisinau

Development of a program for the involvement of the parties concerned by the tourism development projects in the municipality:

- Facilitating the participation of UAT level I from the municipality in decisions and initiatives to develop tourism in the region.
- Prioritizing community involvement in tourism development initiatives by implementing a common action plan.
- Implementation of a participatory communication plan that will contribute to the periodic provision of information, including updates and relevant opportunities related to tourism, future events, to interested parties
- Engaging young people in discovering and promoting local tourism resources by integrating

outdoor learning programs into curricula.

- Exploring opportunities for collaboration with tourism stakeholders, from outside the city of Chisinau, in order to create experiences based on tourism themes (for example, nature, arts and culture, history)

To achieve **General Objective no. 2**, the following specific objectives and actions are established:

2.1 Diversifying the tourist offer and creating opportunities for the development of new types of tourism

Consolidation and capitalization of the tourist potential of Chisinau:

- Development of tourist infrastructure in the Vadul lui Vodă recreation area: monitoring water quality and promoting the safety of the destination, encouraging the establishment of new businesses in the field of tourism, construction of attractions intended for light adventure tourism (amusement parks, leisure complexes, etc.)
- Development of the tourist infrastructure in the vicinity of the Church of the Holy Emperors Constantine and Elena
- Infrastructure development in the vicinity of the Foundation Stone of the City of Chisinau (old center)
- Identification and development of free spaces for the organization of cultural-artistic events (festivals, concerts), traditional Moroccan fairs and thematic fairs
- Designing public spaces for entertainment activities: Ghidighici Lake, "Râșcani" Park, the area adjacent to the Lake in the Village Museum, etc.
- Rehabilitation and re-operation of the Cable Car in the Buiucani sector.
- Developing routes and developing the tourist potential of Î.M. "Chisinau Mine" - Request to add a Chisinau-Mileștii Mici passenger transport route to Mileștii Mici Subterranean Galleries (or with other neighboring villages, such as Brăila)
- Setting up a park for the practice of extreme "skate" sports - Placement of information panels

on the streets to reconstruct the history of some streets and tourist attractions

- Creation and arrangement of at least 3 viewpoints connected to tourist routes
- Creation of thematic routes (gastronomy and wine, multi-ethnic and eco (hiking)) that will connect tourist attractions within the municipality
- Promoting the need to establish routes to transport people from popular destinations to less popular ones
- The involvement of creative and cultural industries through the participation of artists, creators and innovators in the restoration and development of public space, with an emphasis on promoting leisure in Chisinau

Promotion of local policies for the creation of tourist development zones on the territory of the municipality of Chisinau:

- Coordination of tourism development activities with zonal urbanism plans (e.g. creation of several pedestrian zones and their interconnection according to the model of E. Doga Street)
- Construction and/or repair of access roads and infrastructure necessary for the tourism industry (parking lots, access points, ramps, etc.),
- Development and registration of regional self-guided tourist routes. - Creation of spaces intended for street art (street pantomime, theater, music, painting) - spaces for the affirmation of artists.

Diversification of the offer through new tourist products in the municipality of Chisinau:

- Elaboration of annual studies regarding the identification of local and international consumer preferences regarding the types of activities and preferred tourist locations, the needs evoked.
- Consolidation of the infrastructure intended for organized tourism (arrangement of parking lots for long-type tourist coaches (minimum 12 m), minimum 10 coaches) and light adventure (creating tracks for cyclists), which would ensure the security and safety of travelers
- Development of a MICE portfolio, including the available services of conference/seminar room providers, team building organizers, event organizers, which will be accessible in several languages of international circulation;

2.2 Promotion of the cultural and historical heritage in the municipality as a component of the tourist product

Preservation, restoration and valorization of heritage objects in the municipality:

- Request to review the Register of Monuments of Local Importance in the municipality
- Development of the feasibility study regarding the capitalization of historical buildings for tourist purposes
- Rehabilitation of 3 historical buildings for tourist purposes (Moara Roșie, B.P. Hașdeu Municipal Library, residence of the municipality's City Hall)
- Strict establishment and preservation of protection zones for heritage objects
- The development and implementation of the accountability mechanism for the owners of the buildings included in the Register of national and local category monuments in order to renovate and maintain the buildings in question
- Creation of a profile entity that will keep records and monitor the situation of the municipal architectural heritage.
- Illumination of architectural monuments of national and/or local importance

To achieve the **General Objective no. 3** the following specific objectives and actions are established:

3.1. Creation of the visual identity of the city, for promotion in the target markets

Creating and strengthening the visual identity and tourism brand of the capital

- Creating and strengthening the visual identity and tourism brand of the capital
- Developing the Marketing and Communication Strategy - promoting strategic types of tourism
- Creation and distribution of the promotion spot for Chisinau as a tourist destination
- Creation and dissemination of an oath (English - Pledge) as a tourism brand awareness tool,

to encourage visitors (international travelers, diaspora) to use social networks as a place to share signing the pledge

3.2 Ensuring the promotion and mediatization activities of Chisinau as a tourist destination

Strengthening the position of the municipality of Chisinau as a tourist destination on the local and international market

- Elaboration of the annual Cultural Agenda of Chisinau and its promotion at the national and international level.
- Encouraging the development of cultural tourism by promoting theater programs, concerts, festivals, contests, etc.
- Presentation of the tourist offer of Chisinau in international exhibitions and conferences
- Promotion of Chisinau as a destination for tourism through local and international media resources, including on-board magazines and specialized ones in the field of tourism
- Creation and implementation of campaigns to promote the municipality of Chisinau as a tourist destination
- Updating of promotional materials placed in the premises of the Chisinau International Airport - Installation of QR-codes in public transport (trolley bus no. 30) that will direct tourists to pages of tourist interest, such as visit.chisinau.md
- Implementation of promotion activities that connect tourist activities with medical services

3.3 Intensification of international cooperation in the field of tourism

Identifying potential partners and establishing sustainable partnerships:

- Establishing a partnership in the field of tourism with the 2 important urban centers in the region (Iași and Odessa) in order to jointly identify and promote some regional tourist packages.
- Collaboration with international, local, regional and national tourism organizations to develop sustainable tourism
- Participation in exhibitions and international fairs, with a capital stand, and related communication activities (B2B and B2C type) - Organization of press and familiarization tours

3.4 Consolidation of innovative services for tourists, digitization and ensuring online and offline accessibility of the municipality's tourist offer

Ensuring the information accessibility of the destination:

- Creation of the Chisinau city card - web-based platform, mobile application and physical cards, which will allow the combination of several attractions and public transport routes
- Development of the information system for public transport means: installation of simplified transport route schemes, and installation of TV screens, tourist signs, which will signal the following stations on the respective route, with translation into an international language.
- Creation of the mobile digital application for audio guides (including previously developed ones) - Development of the mobile application for public transport routes in the languages of international circulation
- Updating and promoting the tourist website visit.chisinau.md.
- Establishment of a subdivision responsible for marketing / an office to exercise the function of urban marketing, which also includes the tourism sector

Pentru realizarea **Obiectivului general nr. 4** sunt stabilite următoarele obiective specifice și acțiuni

4.1 Adjustment of regulations associated with the tourism industry

Revision of the fiscal base related to economic activities in the field of tourism

- Development of proposals to amend the Fiscal Code regarding the introduction of a fixed amount of the local tax for accommodation in the amount of 1 EUR to the city tax and the administration of the respective means collected in the budget for the purpose of tourism development
- Promotion of the policy of reducing the VAT rate for tourist reception services up to 8%
- Promoting the initiation of the process of including hotel apartment rental services in the official economic circuit (Ex: units listed on Airbnb, etc.)

4.2 Promoting private and public strategic investments and attracting external funds

Attracting external private and public investments:

- Development of a market evaluation study to identify the investment potential in the tourism industry, in partnership with other public institutions
- Development of the city's investment tourism portfolio (default for easy adventure)
- The inclusion of tourism investment profiles in the events/forums intended to attract investments - Organization of familiarization tours for potential investors in the municipality of Chisinau
- The creation of a cultural tourism corridor that will contribute to the development of a critical mass of facilities and objects of interest in the field of cultural tourism that will be located in a defined area of the city through collaboration with the cultural-artistic communities and entrepreneurs (Example: sculptors, craftsmen , graffiti artists)
- Developing the capacities of staff responsible for writing projects to attract funds for the tourism industry

4.3 Developing the skills and knowledge of tourism stakeholders to enable business development, consistent promotion, as well as quality service delivery

Encouraging vocational training:

- Creation and implementation of annual continuous improvement programs for entrepreneurs and employees in the field of tourism, including for tour guides and museographers
- Strengthening the capacities of the personnel within the specialized subdivision of APL in the field of tourism through training and exchange of experience
- Creating a plan of expert-moderated workshops to support companies in developing marketing and promotion capacity, resilience and selling tourism products/services
- Encouraging programs aimed at training and developing professional capacities in the field of tourism offered by non-governmental organizations, the tertiary education sector and training providers.

V. Sustainability of Strategy implementation

5.1. The institutional framework

The institutional framework for implementing the Strategy includes several institutions:

- The Mayor - approval of the annual action plan, examination of implementation reports
- Municipal Council - responsible for examining and approving annual implementation reports, approving the budget dedicated to tourism development, approving decisions to participate in various international projects
- General Directorate of Economy - responsible for the development and presentation of annual action plans, annual reports
- Culture Directorate, General Directorate of Education, Youth and Sports, General Directorate of Public Transport and Communication, General Directorate of Architecture, Urbanism and Land Relations, General Housing-Communal Directorate and Planning - carrying out the activities resulting from the respective competences and tasks, which have relevance to culture, history, sport, tourism, urban planning and rehabilitation, architecture and heritage conservation, land use planning, green spaces and recreational areas
- General Directorate of Finance - inclusion of proposals for the financial-fiscal support of the measures proposed by the General Directorate of Finance
- Suburban LPA - development and implementation of annual action plans.

5.2. Implementation and monitoring mechanisms

The successful implementation of the Tourism Strategy requires continuous monitoring and evaluation, with interventions along the way to update the content of some activities or solve some problematic or unforeseen aspects. In this context, it is important that the City Hall of the municipality (through the General Directorate of Economy) and the APL in the suburb can monitor and evaluate the implementation of the activities included in the action plan.

During the implementation period, those responsible for carrying out the action plan will report on the completion of activities, projects and the achievement of specific objectives. The monitoring of projects and actions will be carried out through the established Implementation Indicators. If deviations from the action plan are identified, measures will be initiated to correct or adjust this plan.

Annually, the implementation report will be drawn up and presented, which will be publicly heard in an expanded format: the Chisinau Municipal Council, APL from the suburbs, the tourism business environment, the expert and scientific community in the field.

At the end, an evaluation report will be developed that will represent the summary of the synthesis of the annual reports and the evaluation of the progress of the Strategy implementation, according to the planned indicators and the comparison with the existing situation in 2022.

5.3. Potential sources of funding

The implementation of the Strategy will require financial, labor, material and informational resources. The degree of provision with such resources represents one of the main factors of the success of the implementation of this Strategy. The description of the financing sources presented below is made considering the annual financing programs carried out by different financiers. Funding is granted on the basis of projects submitted by structures and organizations and when the opening of funding programs is announced. For these reasons, the "Possible sources of financing" section of the Action Plan presents the institutions that have financing programs for projects that include such actions. It follows that in case of launching a financing program by a financier, those responsible for the implementation of the actions, will develop projects and forward them for financing to the respective donors. Also, the financing organizations presented below represent the main donors who have been active for a long time in the republic. In this compartment, the financing programs that can appear instantly during the Strategy implementation period were not included:

1. Sources of the municipality's budget for various cultural actions, tourism, infrastructure, environmental protection, urban development, etc. However, the sources of the municipal budget are insufficient to make the necessary investments, therefore the main stake will be related to their diversification.
2. Means of the national public budget. These sources will be obtained for the realization of the planned activities according to the provisions for the development of public infrastructure, public services in various fields, for supporting SMEs, which will be implemented at the municipal level. Annually, in the State Budget Law, the financing of activities supporting various social-economic activities is planned through various state programs and funds.

3. Means of economic agents. The financing of the actions planned in the Strategy from the funds of the economic agents will be realized through: (i) direct investments in the expansion or launch of new businesses; (ii) paying for the services of developing market studies, business plans, identifying and establishing partners; (iii) contracting consulting services from service providers; (iv) payment of payments for participation in exhibitions, fairs, promotion actions or study visits; (v) payment of fees for participation in training programs, etc.

4. Grants, donations, loans of donor organizations active in the Republic of Moldova or to which the Republic of Moldova is eligible: the European Union (through various cross-border or transnational programs and projects), UNDP Moldova, IFAD, GIZ, USAID, ADA, World Bank, EBRD, etc., which offer them on a competitive basis (grants) or on a loan basis and to which various entities and public authorities, economic agents or NGOs are eligible. Also, LPAs in the municipality of Chisinau can request from some donors, the elaboration and implementation of various programs or projects intended strictly for the municipality of Chisinau, as was previously achieved through the UNDP Moldova projects: Charming Moldova (in the field of urban planning) or Development of the municipality of Chisinau (in the field of institutional development of APL from the municipality of Chisinau).

5.4. Potential risks

Table 21. Risks concerning Strategy implementation

Field	Description
Management of Strategy Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conflicts of interest regarding the implementation of the Strategy ● Limited financial resources ● Lack of capacities to attract investments

Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of cooperation of local public authorities with the business sector and the community ● Indifference and non-involvement of the population in supporting the activities ● Lack of experience of civil society structures and their non-involvement ● Non-involvement of international partners
Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of interest from the business community in developing the local economic base
Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Limited resources for providing social assistance ● The continuous impoverishment of the population ● Labor emigration
The political-legal framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Instability of political situation ● Contradiction and instability of current legislation
External partner relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lack of cooperation with district and central public authorities ● Non-involvement of international partners
The state of the economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reduced investment potential ● Underdeveloped business infrastructure ● Country risk

VI. The Strategy implementation activity plan (2022-2026)

Actions	Sub-actions	Deadlines	Implementation-related costs	Source of funding	Responsible for implementation	Partners	Monitoring indicators	Risks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
General objective no. 1 Streamlining the administration of the tourism industry and stimulating partnerships								
<i>Specific objective 1.1. Overseeing the development of tourism and strengthening the commitment to the growth of the sector at the municipal level</i>								
1.1.1. The strategic positioning of the tourism industry in the general development initiatives in	1.1.1.1. Increasing the number of personnel responsible for the implementation of activities related to the tourism industry within the General Directorate of Economy, Trade	2022-2023	Within the limits of the approved budgets	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	DMF, DGF	The disposition of the mayor; Number of new employees;	Lack of interest on the part of specialists in conducting the competition for the corresponding positions;

the municipality	and Tourism							Lack of finances for the training of specialists in the field;
	1.1.1.2. Development and implementation of the inter-functional collaboration process within the subdivisions of the local public administration	2023	Within the limits of the approved budgets	The budget of Chisinau municipality	PG	Branch deputy mayors	Internal order issued specifying the collaboration process; The number of informative sessions conducted by DMRU; Involvement of DGECT in projects/initiatives in tangential fields of tourism;	Lack of interest on the part of specialists from different directions in carrying out the collaboration process within the APL subdivisions; Lack of finances for the training of specialists in the fields;

								Unapproved project;
	1.1.1.3. Formation of a Municipal Advisory Committee/Council for Tourism (CCMT)	2023	Within the limits of the approved budgets	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Deputy mayor, DGECT	The structural subdivisions of PMC/CMC	The mayor's provision regarding the creation of the council; The number of representatives from the fields - sport, art, culture, creative industry, IT industry and communications; Involved economic agents, communities, professional associations; Number of meetings	Irrelevant or insufficiently argued proposals from the organization of the council; Lack of support for the formation of the advisory council by the Mayor; Reduced skills of the people involved in the process;

							organized; The number of decisions issued;	
<i>Specific objective 1.2. Stimulating collaborations for the development of the tourism sector in the municipality of Chisinau</i>								
1.2.1. Elaboration of a program for the involvement of the parties concerned by the tourism development projects in the municipality	1.2.1.1. Facilitating the participation of UAT level I from the municipality in decisions and initiatives to develop tourism in the region	2023-2025	Within the limits of the approved budgets	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Deputy mayor, DGECT	Structural subdivisions of PMC/CM Profile associations, UAT	Individual meetings held with representatives from town halls in the suburbs of the municipality; The increasing number of projects attracted and implemented;	Reduced skills of the people involved in the process; Lack of interest from level 1 UAT specialists in carrying out the collaboration process;
	1.2.1.2. Prioritizing	2022-2023	Within the limits of	The budget	Branch	Structural	The growing	Lack of

	community involvement in tourism development initiatives by implementing a common action plan		the approved budgets	of Chisinau municipality	deputy mayor, DGECT	subdivisions of PMC/CM Profile associations, UAT	number of communities and organizations involved in tourism initiatives (or with an impact on the development/promotion of tourism potential), on various topics: gastronomy, sport, culture, art, outdoor active experiences, wine experiences, festivals and events, street trade what is	sufficient and truthful information about tourist activities; Information disseminated late; APL's reluctance to participate in organized tourist events;
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							<p>included in the action plan; Internal action plan with the involvement of community groups and organizations that will include activities, financial allocations, commitments from the parties involved, evaluation and performance indicators; Resources (including financial) dedicated to</p>	
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							supporting communities and organizations whose activity has an impact on tourism development;	
	1.2.1.3. Engaging young people in discovering and promoting local tourism resources by integrating outdoor learning programs into the curriculum	2022-2026	Within the limits of the approved budgets	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	DGETS, UAT,, profile associations, Chisinau Municipal Youth Center	The subjects of studies identified for the integration of outdoor learning programs; Decision issued; Home study programs, which allow students to involve their family members in	Lack of support for the draft decision in the CMC meeting; Insufficiency of financial resources; Lack of connection between the City Hall and relevant associations; Low interest

							exploring tourist locations during their free time;	in working together; Irrelevant, uninteresting projects;
	1.2.1.4. Exploring opportunities for collaboration with stakeholders from tourism, outside the municipality of Chisinau, in order to create experiences based on touristic themes (nature, art, culture, history).	2022-2026	Within the limits of the approved budgets	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	Structural subdivisions of PMC/CM, UAT	Established partnerships; Created tourist routes/offers that connect experiences in the municipality of Chisinau with at least 1 area outside the municipality; Increasing number of printed promotional materials;	Failed collaboration ; Lack of common interest; Lack of sufficient financial resources for a fruitful collaboration ; Inadequately organized routes; Insufficient promotion;

General objective no. 2 Consolidation and development of the tourism product of Chisinau;								
<i>Specific objective 2.1 Diversification of the tourist offer and creation of opportunities for the development of new types of tourism</i>								
2.1.1 Consolidation and capitalization of the tourist potential of Chisinau	2.1.1.1. Development of the tourist infrastructure in the Vadul lui Vodă recreation area	2022-2026	Within the limits of the approved budgets	The budget of Chisinau municipality, bugetul APL Vadul lui Vodă	Branch deputy mayor; Primăria Vadul lui Vodă	DGECT, Profile strategic partners, DC, economic agents - owners of tourist objects	No. created objects; No. renovated and modernized objects;	Insufficiency of financial resources; Low interest from potential beneficiaries ; Reluctance of economic agents (refusal to participate in the competition) ; Insufficient promotion of the rest area;

	2.1.1.2. The development of tourist infrastructure in the vicinity of the Church of the Holy Emperors Constantine and Elena	2022-2026	Within the limits of the approved budgets	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGAURF	DGECT, Professional associations, development partners, economic agents	Alley created; Belvedere point created; Foreign investments attracted;	Insufficiency of financial resources; Low interest from potential beneficiaries ; Reluctance of economic agents (refusal to participate in the competition) ; Insufficient promotion of the historic area;
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	2.1.1.3. Infrastructure development in the vicinity of the Foundation Stone of the City of Chisinau (old center)	2023-2026	Within the limits of the approved budgets	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGAURF	DGECT, DC, Professional associations, development partners, economic agents	Renovated tourist attraction, which would replicate the old springs (the original water collection location in the 15th century); The leisure area arranged in the immediate vicinity of the Foundation Stone and the Măzărache Church;	Insuficiența resurselor financiare; Interes scăzut din partea potențialilor beneficiari; Promovarea insuficientă a zonei istorice - Piatra de Temelie a Orașului Chișinău; Proiect de renovare neaprobat de CMC.
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	2.1.1.4 Inclusion of extracurricular artistic education institutions in the circuit of municipal tourist routes	2022-2026	Within the limits of the approved budgets	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGETS	DGECT, DC, Professional associations	The identification and introduction of extracurricular artistic education institutions from the perspective of cultural values, the artistic potential of the municipality of Chisinau, in the national tourist circuits;	Insufficiency of financial resources; The lack of the possibility of introducing extracurricular artistic education institutions into the circuit of municipal tourist routes; Low interest from extracurricular artistic education institutions; Unattractive routes;
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	2.1.1.5 Development of open spaces for the organization of cultural-artistic events (festivals, concerts), traditional Moroccan fairs and thematic fairs	2022-2026	Within the limits of the approved budgets	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DC	DGECT, External donors and private partners	Increasing number of spaces identified; Number of events held; The growing number of interested partners; Effective promotion of accepted spaces for the organization of cultural-artistic events;	Insufficiency of financial resources; Low interest from potential beneficiaries ; Insufficient promotion of cultural-artistic events;
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	2.1.1.6 Renovating buildings suitable for cultural centers and launching the activity of at least 3 cultural centers in the municipality	2023-2026	Within the limits of the approved budgets	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DC	DGAURF, DGECT, External donors and private partners	At least 3 centers with renovated buildings and the launch of the activity of: - The "Eugen Doga" Culture and Art Center, the "Grigore Vieru" Culture and Art Museum Center, the "Ion and Doina Aldea-Teodorovici" Culture and Art Museum Center;	Failed projects; Insufficiency of financial resources; Rejection of projects in the CMC meeting; Difficulty in identifying the necessary buildings that can be renovated; Lack of specialized staff;
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	2.1.1.7 Arrangement of public spaces for entertainment activities: Lake Ghidighici, "Râșcani" Park, the area adjacent to the Lake in the Village Museum	2022 -2025	Within the limits of the approved budgets	The budget of Chisinau municipality, Bugetul , M.E. "Directorate of Parks, Culture and Recreation"	Branch deputy mayor, DGLCA, M.E. „Parks, culture and recreation department ”	External donors and private partners	The number of objects put into operation;	Insufficiency of financial resources; Low interest from potential beneficiaries ; Insufficient promotion of the rest area;
	2.1.1.8 Rehabilitation and re-operation of the Cable Car	2024-2026	Within the limits of the approved budgets	The budget of Chisinau municipality, Financial resources of the private partner (Implementation through PPP)	Branch deputy mayor, DGTPCC, Î.M. RTEC, DGECT, DGAURF, DMF, DAJ	Private partners (selected by competition)	Object put into operation;	Reluctance of economic agents (refusal to participate in the competition) ; Financial insufficiency ; Poor quality installations;

	2.1.1.9 Development of routes and development of the tourist potential of Î.M. "Chisinau Mine"	2022-2025	Within the limits of the approved budgets	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	Economic agents, Profile Associations	Developed tourist routes, tourist infrastructure adapted to the requirements;	Budgetary insufficiency ; Failure to comply with security regulations; Poorly organized route Difficulties in obtaining documentation; Insufficient promotion of tourism potential
	2.1.1.10 The request to complete a route for transporting people to the destination Mileştii Mici Subterranean Galleries (or Brăila	2023-2024		The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGTPCC	Economic agents, professional associations	Existing passenger transport route Chisinau-Mileştii Mici (or with other neighboring	Budgetary insufficiency ; Inadequately organized route;

	village)						villages) modified;	
	2.1.1.11 Setting up a park for practicing extreme skate sports (skateboard park)	2023-2024	Within the limits of the approved budgets	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGETS	M.E. DPCO Economic agents	Location identified for the development of the park; landscaped park;	Lack of territory identification ; Deficiencies in obtaining permissive documentati on; Project rejected by the decision in the CMC; Lack of financial resources;

	2.1.1.12 Creation and arrangement of at least 3 viewpoints connected to tourist routes;	2023-2024	Within the limits of the approved budgets	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGAURF	DGECT, Professional associations	3 equipped viewpoints;	Lack of identification of the territory for the viewpoint; Project rejected by the decision in the CMC; Financial insufficiency ;
	2.1.1.13 Creation of thematic routes (gastronomy and wine, multi-ethnic and eco (hiking), which will connect tourist attractions within the municipality	2022-2026	Within the limits of the approved budgets	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	Professional Associations	At least 5 thematic routes created;	Unattractive routes; Unavailability of guides; Insufficiency of financial resources; Disinterest of the population;

								Poor organization of routes or irrelevant content; Insufficient promotion of routes;
	2.1.1.14 Promoting the need to establish passenger transport routes from popular destinations to less popular ones	2022-2026	Within the limits of the approved budgets	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGTGCC	Economic agents, professional associations	Promoting the need to develop routes with passenger transport to less popular destinations, in order to raise their rating to the level of popular ones;	Insufficiency of financial resources; Failed project; Low interest from potential beneficiaries ;

	2.1.1.15 Involvement of creative and cultural industries through the participation of artists, creators and innovators in the restoration and development of public space, with an emphasis on promoting leisure in Chisinau	2023-2026	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality, Finanțări donatori	Branch deputy mayor, DC	Partenerii de dezvoltare, asociații obștești din industria creativă, ARTCOR, Asociația COR, agenți economici	Rectificarea cadrului normativ pentru susținerea inițiativelor; Număr de parteneriate stabilite; Număr de obiective și facilități create;	Colaborare eșuată; Lipsa de interes comun; Lipsa resurselor financiare suficiente; Lipsa susținerii proiectului;
2.1.2 Promotion of CMC policies, regarding the creation of tourist	2.1.2.1 Coordinating tourism development activities with zonal urban planning by creating several pedestrian areas and	2023-2024	Within the limits of the approved budgets, bugetul DGECT	The budget of Chisinau municipality, resources drawn from external donors	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	DGAURF	The decision of the CMC regarding the approval of tourist areas of the municipality of Chisinau 2	Incomplete data; Erroneous conclusions, non-promotion within the CMC;

development zones on the territory of the municipality of Chisinau	interconnecting them according to the model of E. Doga Street						pedestrian zones created;	
	2.1.2.2 Construction and/or repair of access roads and infrastructure necessary for the tourism industry (parking lots, access points, ramps, etc.)	2023-2025	Within the limits of the approved budget	The budget of Chisinau municipality, resources drawn from external donors	Branch deputy mayor, DGTPCC, DGLCA	DGAURF, DGTPCC, DGLCA	The decision of the CMC regarding the approval of constructions and/or the repair of parking lots, ramps, viewpoints, etc.) Built and repaired parking lots, access points, ramps intended for tourist flow;	Insufficiency of financial resources; Failure to comply with documentation; Lack of support for construction approval by CMC;

	2.1.2.3 Development and registration of regional self-guided tourist routes	2023-2025	Within the limits of the approved budget	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	DGAURF, Development partners, public associations from the creative industry, ARTCOR, COR Association, economic agents	Tourist routes elaborated and uploaded on the official website of the municipality; Developed tourism promotion materials;	Insufficiency of financial resources; Occurrence of technical faults; Non-compliance with the terms of realization; Non-observance of the audio guides with the duration of the route;
	2.1.2.4 Creating spaces for street art (theatre, street pantomime, music, painting)	2023-2025	Within the limits of the approved budget	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	DC, DGAURF, Development partners, public associations from the creative industry, ARTCOR, COR	The project regarding the creation of spaces dedicated to street art, developed and put into	Insufficiency of financial resources; Vandalism; Inappropriate choice of seats; Image risks;

						Association, economic agents	operation; Spaces for functional street art;	
2.1.3 Diversification of the offer through new tourist products in the municipality of Chisinau	2.1.3.1 Consolidation of the infrastructure intended for organized tourism (arrangement of parking lots for long-type tourist coaches (minimum 12 m), minimum 10 coaches) and light adventure (creation of safe tracks for cyclists)	2023-2025	Within the limits of the approved budget	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	AI, professional associations, development partners, public associations from the creative industry, economic agents	Parking arranged for long-type tourist coaches (minimum 12 m), with a capacity of at least 10 coaches - at least 1 parking in the city center; Tracks for cyclists created - minimum 10 tracks;	Insufficiency of financial resources; Lack of support for construction approval by CMC;

	2.1.3.3 Development of annual studies on the identification of local and international consumer preferences regarding the types of activities and preferred tourist locations, the needs evoked	2023-2026	Within the allocated budget	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	Chisinau Statistics Bureau, professional associations	Elaborated questionnaire - data collected and interpreted in the annual study;	Insufficiency of financial resources; Questionnaire content unconvincing; The tourist's disinterest; Questionnaire incomplete;
	2.1.3.4 Development of a MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions) portfolio, including the available services of conference/seminar	2023-2024	Within the limits of the approved budget	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	AI, professional associations	Developed MICE portfolio;	Insufficiency of financial resources; Unconvincing portfolio content; Insufficient promotion;

	room providers, team building organizers, event organizers, which will be accessible in several languages of international circulation (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions)							
<i>Specific objective 2.2 Promotion of the cultural and historical heritage of the municipality as a component of the tourism product</i>								

2.2.1 Preservation, restoration and valorization of heritage objects in the municipality	2.2.1.1 Request to review the Register of Monuments of Local Importance in the municipality	2023-2024	În limita alocărilor bugetare	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGAURF	DGAURF, A.O. Urbanism Center, AO Save Chisinau, AO UrbanLab Chisinau, Agency for Inspection and Restoration of Monuments	Revised and updated register;	The difficulty of identifying the monuments; Lack of necessary documents; Lack of specialists who could work in the team; Insufficiency of financial resources;
	2.2.1.2 Rehabilitation of 3 historical buildings for tourist purposes, as a result of the feasibility study	2023-2026	Within the budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGAURF	DGECT, Monument Inspection and Restoration Agency, GCPC AO Save Chisinau, AO UrbanLab	Elaborated project, regarding the possibilities of the rational capitalization of historical buildings; At	Insufficiency of financial resources; Failed project; Lack of support for the approval of

						Chisinau Urban Planning Center, Professional Associations	least 3 historic buildings utilized for tourist purposes;	the project by the CMC; Non-compliance with the project development terms;
	2.2.1.3 Strict establishment and preservation of protection zones for heritage objects	2023-2026	Within the allocated budget	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGAURF	DGECT, A.O. Urbanism Center, AO Save Chisinau, AO UrbanLab Chisinau Agency for Inspection and Restoration of Monuments, Professional Associations	Elaboration of a; Regulation on the establishment of borders and conservation of protection zones;	Insufficiency of financial resources; Regulation not approved; Lack of necessary documents; Non-compliance with the project development terms;

General objective no. 3 Positioning and promoting the destination, with impact that would increase the visibility of the destination in the target markets

Specific objective 3.1 Creating the visual identity of the city, for promotion in the target markets

3.1.1. Creating and strengthenin g the visual identity and tourism brand of the capital	3.1.1.1. Creating and strengthening the visual identity and tourism brand of the capital	2022	Within budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	Professional Associations	Developed visual identity; Logo created; Brandbook created; Brandbook and logo approved by CMC;	Insufficient budget; Purchase failed; Unattractive and unoriginal Logo and Brandbook;
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	3.1.1.2 Development of the Marketing and Communication Strategy	2022-2023	Within the allocated budget	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	Professional associations, experts in the field	The Marketing and Communication Strategy developed and approved by the CMC;	Insufficiency of financing resources; Inefficient Marketing and Communication Strategy; Deficiencies in establishing the strategic promotion program;
	3.1.1.3 Creation and distribution of the promotion spot for Chisinau as a tourist destination	2022	Within the allocated budget	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	Professional associations, experts in the field	Elaborate spot; Spot approved by CMC;	Insufficiency of financing resources; Lack of originality; Unattractive and unconvincing presentation

								of the promotional message;
	3.1.1.4 Creating a tourism brand awareness pledge to encourage visitors to use social media as a place to share signing the pledge	2023	Within the allocated budget	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	Professional associations	Oath developed with the support of the creative community; Installation of digital locations for visitors to sign the commitment, at points of tourist interest (museums,	Unattractive presentation of the oath as a brand awareness tool; Brand rejection; Insufficient financial resources; Failed tourist passport;

							hotels, wineries, etc.); Development of the tourist passport of Chisinau;	
<i>Specific objective 3.2 Ensuring the promotion and mediatization activities of Chisinau as a tourist destination</i>								

3.2.1 Strengthening the position of the municipality of Chisinau as a tourist destination on the local and international market	3.2.1.1. Elaboration of the annual Cultural Agenda of Chisinau and its promotion at the national and international level.	2022-2026	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DC	AI, DGECT, DGF, professional associations	Established annual calendar of events;	Insufficiency of financial resources; Disinterest from the public;
	3.2.1.2. Encouraging the development of cultural tourism by promoting theater programs, concerts, festivals, contests, etc.	2022-2023	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DC	DGECT, DGF, AI, professional associations	Pre-established and confirmed annual calendar of events prior to the events;	Insufficiency of financial resources; Disinterest from the public;

	3.2.1.3 Presentation of the tourist offer of Chisinau in international exhibitions and conferences	2023-2026	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	Professional associations, development partners	Number of online or offline participations in specialized exhibitions and international conferences;	Insufficiency of financing resources; Non-quality promotional products; Unconvincing presentation content; Cancellation of exhibitions;
	3.2.1.4 Promotion of Chisinau as a tourism destination through local and international media resources, including on-board magazines and specialized tourism magazines	2023-2026	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	Professional associations, strategic development partners in the field of tourism	Number of items growing;	Insufficiency of financing resources; Non-quality promotional products; Unconvincing presentation content; Insufficient

								promotion;
	3.2.1.5 Creation and implementation of campaigns to promote the municipality of Chisinau as a tourist destination	2022-2026	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	PMC, Professional associations	Campaigns developed and carried out;	Insufficiency of financing resources; Unattractive promotion of campaigns; Promotional campaign with disinterest from the public;

	3.2.1.6 Updating of promotional materials placed in the premises of Chisinau International Airport	2022-2026	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	PMC, Professional associations	Number of promotional materials placed;	Insufficiency of financing resources; Non-quality promotional products; Unconvincing content of promotional materials
	3.2.1.7 Installation of QR-codes in public transport (trolley bus no. 30) that will direct tourists to pages of tourist interest, such as visit.chisinau.md	2022-2023	Within budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	AI, RTEC, DGTPCC , Î.M. PUA, Professional associations	Information system implemented; CMC Decision or PG Provision; Number of tourist boards and signs;	Insufficiency of financial resources; Lack of support for construction approval by CMC; Vandalism; Purchase failed;

	3.2.1.8 Implementation of promotional activities that connect tourist activities with medical services	2022-2026	Within budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	Professional associations	The brochure and/or the city guide developed for placement in the premises of medical service providers; Number of proposed investment projects that will connect the tourist area with medical service providers; Brochures uploaded on the visit.chisinau.md platform;	The insufficiency of the financial resources necessary for the development of city guides and brochures; Failed project; The unattractive presentation of the content of the brochures and the city guide; Low quality of brochures and city
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								guide content
<i>Specific objective 3.3 Intensification of international cooperation in the field of tourism</i>								
3.3.1 Identifying potential partners and establishing sustainable	3.3.1.1 Establishing a partnership in the field of tourism with the 2 twinned urban centers in the region - Iasi (Romania) and Odessa (Ukraine)	2023-2026	Within the approved budget	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DRE, DGECT	Professional associations	Multiannual collaboration project with the two twinned urban centers;	Insufficiency of financing resources; Failure to establish collaboration ; Failed project;

partnerships	3.3.1.2 Collaboration with international, local, regional and national tourism organizations to develop sustainable tourism	2023-2025	Within the limits of public and private budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, ANTRIM	Professional associations, NGOs with a tourism profile, international organizations	Collaboration project;	Insufficiency of financing resources; Failure to establish collaboration ; Collaborative project failed;
	3.3.1.3 Participation in exhibitions and international fairs, with a capital stand, and related communication activities (B2B and B2C type)	2023-2026	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	Professional associations, NGOs with a tourism profile	Online or offline participation in specialized exhibitions; Number of partnerships established;	Insufficiency of financing resources; Non-quality promotional products; Unconvincing presentation content; Cancellation of exhibitions;

	3.3.1.4 Organization of informative tours for mass media;	2023-2026	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor	Professional associations	Number of press and familiarization tours organized; Increasing number of journalists and reporters attracted to Chisinau; Increasing number of tour operators and tourism agencies attracted to the municipality;	Unattractive routes; Unavailability of professional associations; Insufficiency of financial resources; Mass media disinterest; Poor organization of routes or irrelevant content;
<p><i>Specific objective 3.4 Consolidation of innovative services in tourism, digitization and ensuring online and offline accessibility of the municipality's tourist offer</i></p>								

3.4.1 Ensuring the information accessibility of the destination	3.4.1.1 Creation of Chisinau city card - web-based platform, mobile application and physical cards, which will allow combining many attractions and public transport routes	2023-2026	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	Professional associations	Number of card options (attraction ticket combinations + guided tour + transport ticket, museum ticket + gallery ticket + restaurant combinations, etc.,) in online and offline format, easy to use with fixed prices; Integrated web platform; Possibility of uploading promotional materials; Developed	Failed project; Insufficiency of financial resources; Technical deficiencies and errors of the web platform; A platform too complicated to navigate;
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							application	
	<p>3.4.1.2</p> <p>Development of the information system for public transport: installation of simplified transport route schemes, and installation of TV screens, tourist signs, which will signal the following stations on the respective route, with translation into an international language.</p>	2023-2026	Within budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality, bugetul DGTPCC, bugetul RTEC	Branch deputy mayor, DGTPCC, RTEC	DGECT	Developed information system;	Failed project; Lack of support for construction approval by CMC; Financial insufficiency ;

	3.4.1.3 Development of mobile digital application for audio guides (including previously developed)	2022-2023	Within the limits of public and private budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	Professional associations, private partners	Digital mobile application development;	Insufficiency of financing resources; Awkward app to use; Technical incompatibility when installing them (depending on the smartphone model;
	3.4.1.4 Development of mobile application for public transport routes in international traffic languages	2023-2025	Within the limits of public and private budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, RTEC, PUA	ANTRIM, Private partners	Updating a previously developed mobile application;	Insufficiency of financing resources; Technical deficiencies and program errors; Failed collaboration

								; Incorrect information about routes;
	3.4.1.5 Updating and promoting the tourist website visit.chisinau.md.	2022-2026	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	DRPBC	Continuously updated content;	Failure to update information on time; The risk of providing erroneous information;
	3.4.1.6 Establishment of a subdivision responsible for marketing / an office to exercise the function of urban marketing, which also includes the tourism sector	2023	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor	DGECT, PMC	Subdivision / office created;	Failed project; Lack of support for construction approval by CMC; Financial insufficiency ;

General objective 4. Creating a favorable environment for investors and the business environment in the field of tourism

Specific objective 4.1 Adjusting the regulations associated with the tourism industry

4.1.1 Revision of the fiscal base related to economic activities in the field of tourism	4.1.1.1 Development of proposals to amend the Fiscal Code regarding the introduction of a local tax amount for accommodation in a fixed amount of 1 EUR to the city tax and the administration of the respective means collected in the budget for the purpose of tourism development	2023	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGF	DGECT	Draft decision elaborated;	Insufficiency of financial resources; Lack of support for the draft decision in the meeting of the CMC; Deficiencies in obtaining permissive documentation;
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	4.1.1.2 Promotion of the policy of reducing the VAT rate for tourist reception services up to 8%	2023	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor	DGF	Amended VAT charge;	Lack of support from CMC;
	4.1.1.3 Promoting the initiation of the process of including hotel apartment rental services in the official economic circuit (Ex: units listed on Airbnb, etc.)	2023	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor	DGAURF, DGECT	Lobbying activities; Number of letters, meetings regarding this subject;	Insufficiency of financial resources; Lack of support for the draft decision in the meeting of the CMC; Deficiencies in obtaining permissive documentation;
<i>Specific objective 4.2 Promotion of private and public strategic investments and attracting external funds</i>								

4.2.1 Attracting foreign private and public investments	4.2.1.1 Developing a market assessment study to identify the investment potential in the tourism industry, in partnership with other public institutions	2023-2026	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGF	DGECT, Professional associations	Developed study;	Study failed; Financial insufficiency ; Erroneous data;
	4.2.1.2 Development of the city's investment tourism portfolio (default for easy adventure)	2022-2026	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	AI, DGF, Professional associations	Portfolio created; Number of investment profiles developed for various branches of tourism;	Insufficiency of financial resources; Calendar with disinterest from the public;

	4.2.1.3 Inclusion of tourism investment profiles in events/forums aimed at attracting investments	2022-2026	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	AI, DGF, Professional associations	Activities developed and implemented;	Lack of support from CMC; Insufficiency of financial resources;
	4.2.1.4 Organization of familiarization tours for potential investors in the municipality of Chisinau	2024	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	AI, DGF, Professional associations	Number of familiarization tours organized for potential investors;	Incomplete information about starting businesses; Low interest from potential investors; Insufficiency of financial resources;

	4.2.1.5 The creation of a cultural-tourist corridor that will contribute to the development of a critical mass of facilities and objects of interest in the cultural-tourist field that will be located in a defined area of the city through collaboration with cultural-artistic communities and entrepreneurs (Example: sculptors, craftsmen, graffiti artists)	2022-2026	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DC	AI, DGECT, DGAURF, Professional associations	Mechanism created; Number of partners attracted; Number of implemented activities;	Financial insufficiency ; Mechanism failed; Lack of interest from partners;
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	4.2.1.6 Developing the capacities of staff responsible for writing projects to attract funds for the tourism industry	2022-2026	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor	AI, DGECT, DGETS, Professional associations	Increasing number of trained employees;	Financial insufficiency ; Mechanism failed; Lack of interest from partners; Emigration of qualified personnel from the country;
Specific objective 4.3 Develop the skills and knowledge of tourism stakeholders to enable business development, consistent promotion, as well as quality service delivery								

4.3.1 Encouraging continuing professional training	4.3.1.1 Creation and implementation of annual continuous improvement programs for tourism entrepreneurs and employees, including tour guides and museographers	2023	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	DC, DGETS, higher education institutions, Professional associations	Number of training programs launched;	Insufficiency of financial resources; Training program failed; Unavailability of professional trainers; Defective or irrelevant program organization;
	4.3.1.2 Strengthening the capacities of the personnel within the specialized subdivision of APL in the field of tourism through training and exchange of	2023-2026	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	ANTRIM, DC, DGETS, higher education institutions, Professional associations	Number of trainings in tourism management, attended by staff from the specialized subdivision of APL in the field of	Insufficiency of financial resources; Inappropriate choice of internships; Lack of staff interest;

	experience						tourism;	
	4.3.1.3 Creating a plan of expert-moderated workshops to support companies in developing marketing and promotion capacity, resilience and selling tourism products/services	2022-2026	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor, DGECT	DC, DGETS, higher education institutions, Professional associations	Expert moderated workshop plan elaborated; Number of information sessions; Number of persons trained;	Insufficiency of financial resources; Lack of experts; Program with disinterest from guides and museographers;
	4.3.1.4 Encourage training and capacity building	2022-2026	Within the limits of public budget allocations	The budget of Chisinau municipality	Branch deputy mayor	DGETS, DC, DGECT, higher education	A number of designed programs;	Financial insufficiency ; Mechanism

	programs in the field of tourism offered by NGOs, the tertiary education sector and training providers.					institutions, Professional associations;		failed; Lack of interest from strategic partners;
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VII. Annexes

Annex 1. Delimitation of activities that refer predominantly and partially to the tourism industry

Given that the tourism sector is at the intersection of most economic activities, its definition can have various more or less complex approaches. Analyzing several models for quantifying the tourism sector, it was finally decided to adopt the Eurostat methodology used at the level of the European Union. On the one hand, the activities are comprehensively structured, and on the other hand, there is a reference level, to which we can relate.

Thus, Eurostat divides the tourism industry into 2 large categories: Predominant Tourism (Mostly Tourism) and Partial Tourism (Partially Tourism), with several economic activities assigned to each category according to the Economic Activities Classifier Rev2. Given that a similar classification system compatible with the EU has been used in the Republic of Moldova for several years, it was possible to delimit the given activities also from the Economic Activities Classifier of Moldova, these being presented in the table below as follows.

Predominant Turism		Partial Turism	
CAEM	Activity	CAEM	Activity
H51.10	Air passenger transport	H49.10	Intercity passenger transport by rail
I55.10	Hotels and other similar accommodation facilities	H49.32	Transportation by taxi
I55.20	Accommodation facilities for holidays and short periods	H49.39	Other land transport of passengers n.e.c.
I55.30	Caravan parks, campsites and camps	H50.10	Maritime and coastal passenger transport

N79.11	Activities of tourist agencies	H50.30	Transport of passengers on inland waterways
N79.12	Activities of tour operators	I56.10	Restaurants
		I56.30	Bars and other activities serving drinks
		N77.10	Car rental and leasing activities
		N77.21	Rental and leasing activities of recreational goods and sports equipment
		N79.90	Other reservation services and tourist assistance

Annex 2. *Number of local tourists (residents) staying and their overnight stays in collective tourist reception structures with accommodation functions in the municipality of Chisinau in 2014-2020, by comfort category*

	Number of tourists accommodated							Number of overnight stays						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Hotels & Motels	29,478	27,050	31,097	33,129	39,804	38,287	13,693	45,614	47,804	53,886	54,719	62,937	60,949	23,463
Hotels	28,068	25,653	29,569	31,681	38,011	36,408	12,613	43,462	45,063	50,974	51,392	59,246	57,318	20,324
1 star	332	4,880	4,771	5,971	5,974	5,731	2,123	693	7,512	6,814	11,556	12,694	10,984	4,267
2 stars	7,237	7,494	8,153	8,422	9,660	8,980	3,210	15,105	15,773	16,854	14,220	13,509	14,048	5,360
3 stars	9,561	7,090	7,389	7,564	7,668	10,581	3,428	14,110	11,980	13,215	11,303	10,628	14,673	4,404
4 stars	6,354	4,494	8,465	5,385	5,779	6,233	1,711	8,177	7,242	12,822	8,957	10,277	10,926	3,098
5 stars	513	466	730	4,339	8,930	4,633	2,087	748	783	1,174	5,356	12,138	6,384	3,114
Unrated	4,071	1,229	61	0	0	250	54	4,629	1,773	95	0	0	303	81
Apartment type hotels	1,410	1,397	1,528	1,448	1,793	1,879	1,080	2,152	2,741	2,912	3,327	3,691	3,631	3,139
4 stars	0	13	56	37	96	166	199	0	31	96	63	163	305	396

	Number of tourists accommodated							Number of overnight stays						
Unrated	1,410	1,384	1,472	1,411	1,697	1,713	881	0	2,710	2,816	3,264	3,528	3,326	2,743
Recreational structures	38,032	32,940	24,200	24,371	31,565	27,829	2,511	116,738	56,064	91,430	85,130	93,669	88,508	3,248
Bungalows	76	0	28	148	174	165	106	76	0	66	224	246	266	174
Campsites	1,302	2,299	9,724	8,959	11,015	8,139	0	2,748	3,335	49,929	49,677	53,808	47,846	0
Holiday villages & other structures	35,419	28,312	11,506	11,451	17,148	15,388	1,400	112,041	49,605	37,238	30,442	35,253	34,884	1,740
1 star	8,892	0	0	0	0	0	0	51,206	0	0	0	0	0	0
2 stars	5,591	3,898	4,319	3,306	3,151	2,757	448	24,142	17,163	18,705	17,411	15,550	15,557	788
3 stars	1,598	1,165	976	1,530	1,653	1,326	1	4,415	3,091	2,670	3,530	3,941	2,787	1
Unrated	19,338	23,249	6,211	6,615	12,344	11,305	951	32,278	29,351	15,863	9,501	15,762	16,540	951
Touristic villas	1,235	2,329	2,942	3,813	3,228	4,137	1,005	1,873	3,124	4,197	4,787	4,362	5,512	1,334
2 stars	0	42	17	8	68	339	126	0	47	29	12	125	529	175
3 stars	681	1,866	1,792	2,164	2,690	2,982	618	1,093	2,424	2,371	2,613	3,383	3,732	760
4 stars	513	393	1,110	1,592	437	745	221	724	602	1,708	2,083	775	1,108	319
5 stars	41	28	23	49	33	71	40	56	51	89	79	79	143	80
Holiday camps	4,402	13,172	6,390	10,964	11,163	8,479	0	31,856	91,178	52,266	62,743	99,654	76,074	0
Tourist and agro-tourism pensions	4,581	4,934	15,705	14,486	8,313	8,310	1,677	8,152	9,041	17,742	19,059	12,329	12,266	1,875
Agro-tourism pensions	158	248	25	0	0	0	38	217	275	28	0	0	0	38

	Number of tourists accommodated							Number of overnight stays						
2 stars	0	0	25	0	0	0	38	0	0	28	0	0	0	38
3 stars	158	248	0	0	0	0	0	217	275	0	0	0	0	0
Tourist pensions	4,423	4,686	15,680	14,486	8,313	8,310	1,639	7,935	8,766	17,714	19,059	12,329	12,266	1,837
1 star	535	553	306	402	311	517	0	854	756	392	644	522	559	0
2 stars	52	1,366	1,733	2,700	2,862	3,783	743	62	1,465	1,904	2,995	3,141	4,239	854
3 stars	7	20	260	441	524	415	114	12	32	323	521	716	593	161
4 stars	3,829	2,747	2,821	3,210	4,000	2,642	684	7,007	6,513	4,535	5,366	7,334	5,676	684
Unrated	0	0	10,560	7,733	616	953	98	0	0	10,560	9,533	616	1,199	138
Recovery structures	8,155	8,315	8,895	8,911	8,724	7,920	2,639	137,407	145,637	142,640	141,518	137,656	134,531	46,211
Other recovery structures	0	0	504	405	378	230	0	0	0	2,790	4,050	2,880	2,480	0
Treatment pensions	4,550	4,339	4,743	5,430	4,813	3,957	1,498	82,681	80,922	83,974	89,317	81,790	75,603	29,338
Sanatoriums	3,605	3,976	3,648	3,076	3,533	3,733	1,141	54,726	64,715	55,876	48,151	52,986	56,448	16,873
Guest houses	8,942	6,695	5,589	7,041	5,983	4,947	2,480	109,965	104,116	102,698	106,728	106,492	78,995	69,734
TOTAL	93,590	93,106	91,876	98,902	105,552	95,772	23,000	449,732	453,840	460,662	469,897	512,737	451,323	144,531

Source: National Bureau of Statistics data and authors' calculations

***Annex 3.** Number of foreign tourists (non-residents) accommodated and their overnight stays in collective tourist reception structures with accommodation functions in the municipality of Chisinau in 2014-2020, by comfort category.*

	Number of tourists accommodated	Number of overnight stays
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	Number of tourists accommodated							Number of overnight stays						
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Hotels & Motels	80,105	80,405	105,045	124,906	133,436	143,523	22,884	164,463	193,322	198,676	236,074	265,805	306,624	56,113
Hotels	78,304	78,560	103,093	122,053	129,676	138,276	22,039	159,123	186,560	193,273	229,009	256,601	294,761	53,611
1 star	0	1,436	2,425	5,755	6,148	5,923	840	0	3,475	5,756	11,456	22,349	42,303	5,193
2 stars	5,357	6,081	10,346	9,880	8,591	8,319	951	15,020	26,722	23,431	19,966	16,794	16,615	2,393
3 stars	17,874	21,616	21,960	26,368	27,819	31,264	3,574	45,941	48,727	43,399	52,479	55,965	64,585	7,841
4 stars	47,403	39,269	60,684	36,625	41,575	43,568	8,312	80,820	84,886	106,184	90,754	100,074	106,307	23,360
5 stars	5,973	6,313	7,576	43,425	45,543	47,075	7,929	14,233	15,455	14,296	54,354	61,419	60,870	13,758
Unrated	1,697	3,845	102	0	0	2,127	433	3,109	7,295	207	0	0	4,081	1,066
Apartment type hotels	1,801	1,845	1,952	2,853	3,760	5,247	845	5,340	6,762	5,403	7,065	9,204	11,863	2,502
4 stars		166	609	1,089	1,246	3,197	459		264	1,696	2,566	3,277	6,204	915
Unrated	1,801	1,679	1,343	1,764	2,514	2,050	386	5,340	6,498	3,707	4,499	5,927	5,659	1,587
Recreational structures	3,172	4,071	4,851	5,657	8,247	9,477	1,435	8,143	8,851	11,642	14,771	18,266	17,314	2,873
Holiday villages & other structures	69	92	117	204	135	378	0	734	837	740	1,233	1,033	718	0
2 stars	69	92	105	138	127	59	0	734	837	714	1,167	1,025	331	0
3 stars	0	0	0	66	0	47	0	0	0	0	66	0	47	0
Unrated	0	0	12	0	8	272	0	0	0	26	0	8	340	0

	Number of tourists accommodated							Number of overnight stays						
Touristic villas	3,103	3,979	4,734	5,453	8,112	9,099	1,435	7,409	8,014	10,902	13,538	17,233	16,596	2,873
2 stars		13	42	57	133	124	0		18	320	258	226	207	0
3 stars	882	815	1,054	919	2,498	4,558	774	2,595	1,799	2,309	1,655	5,047	7,976	1,566
4 stars	1,907	2,765	3,452	4,174	5,320	4,256	633	4,152	5,169	7,812	10,822	11,606	7,960	1,244
5 stars	314	386	186	303	161	161	28	662	1,028	461	803	354	453	63
Tourist and agro-tourism pensions	1,123	1,108	1,738	2,294	3,991	4,371	857	3,865	4,066	4,923	6,965	9,606	11,536	1,761
Agro-tourism pensions	313	207	26	0	0	0	0	794	364	75	0	0	0	0
2 stars			26	0	0	0	0			75	0	0	0	0
3 stars	313	207						794	364					
Tourist pensions	810	901	1,712	2,294	3,991	4,371	857	3,071	3,702	4,848	6,965	9,606	11,536	1,761
1 star	0	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	0	0	0	0	
2 stars	92	23	10	46	864	3,133	784	288	69	46	52	1,757	6,607	1,629
3 stars	124	226	870	795	806	597	48	442	820	2,013	1,803	1,734	1,412	85
4 stars	594	652	832	1,450	2,321	401	0	2,341	2,813	2,789	5,107	6,115	3,029	0
Unrated			0	3	0	240	25			0	3	0	488	47
Recovery structures	216	225	182	228	203	155	5	3,282	3,519	2,485	3,035	2,730	1,962	41
Treatment pensions	4	7	3	2	2	0	0	55	94	29	16	20	0	0
Sanatoriums	212	218	179	226	201	155	5	3,227	3,425	2,456	3,019	2,710	1,962	41

	Number of tourists accommodated							Number of overnight stays						
Guest houses	1,130	307	490	37	0	0	0	3,618	642	712	74	0	0	0
TOTAL	85,746	86,116	112,306	133,122	145,877	157,526	25,181	183,371	210,400	218,438	260,919	296,407	337,436	0,788

Source: National Bureau of Statistics data and authors' calculations

Annex 4. Number of tourists staying and their overnight stays in collective tourist reception structures with accommodation functions in the municipality of Chisinau in the years 2014-2020, by country of origin

		Number of tourists accommodated							Number of overnight stays						
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
A.	Non-residents	85,746	86,116	112,306	133,122	145,877	157,526	25,181	183,371	210,400	218,438	260,919	296,407	337,436	60,788
1	Romania	19,823	21,438	27,638	32,835	40,374	42,064	7,576	38,478	40,428	49,509	59,664	74,931	81,091	16,992
2	Ukraine	9,834	12,239	15,017	16,075	16,670	19,371	3,340	20,115	23,593	25,541	29,365	30,284	32,434	6,838
3	Russian Federation	7,614	8,064	8,840	11,856	11,908	13,301	2,565	17,556	19,569	17,877	23,028	24,206	26,798	5,273
4	United States of America	5,785	3,516	7,626	9,747	9,135	9,188	1,014	11,019	11,161	12,877	16,349	15,393	17,320	2,649
5	Germany	4,165	3,495	5,028	5,923	6,033	6,783	1,028	9,508	8,943	10,437	12,212	13,149	13,864	2,596
6	Italy	4,862	4,362	4,700	5,435	5,822	6,572	1,079	11,468	10,898	10,206	11,689	12,140	13,661	2,484
7	Turkey	3,333	3,886	4,215	5,455	5,088	6,302	1,336	7,061	20,540	8,403	9,815	14,914	37,277	5,588
8	Poland	1,919	1,915	3,079	3,416	4,608	5,625	349	3,974	4,048	6,004	7,120	9,276	12,403	1,101
9	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	2,711	2,179	3,737	4,412	4,020	4,619	681	5,907	6,525	7,510	8,412	8,217	8,795	1,709
10	Israel	1,351	1,328	2,316	2,646	3,568	3,907	316	4,321	4,606	6,071	6,328	8,649	8,416	700
11	Franca	1,999	1,745	2,343	2,748	2,840	3,689	583	3,824	4,118	4,862	5,453	5,887	6,733	1,265
12	China	384	327	597	1,168	1,481	2,247	86	1,034	1,058	1,349	2,714	3,335	4,347	249

13	Austria	1,285	930	1,589	1,635	1,906	1,805	163	3,507	3,113	3,029	3,063	3,970	3,461	441
14	Bulgaria	1,613	1,442	1,610	1,968	1,829	1,722	312	2,775	2,738	5,207	5,589	5,161	3,871	655
15	Belarus	926	951	1,003	1,230	1,927	1,711	288	2,367	2,839	2,727	3,181	4,594	3,826	637
16	Sweden	1,073	1,287	1,160	1,224	1,248	1,666	127	2,574	4,117	2,970	2,961	2,796	3,286	370
17	Netherlands	1,215	1,272	1,519	1,348	1,645	1,557	284	2,755	3,137	3,135	2,931	3,075	2,755	612
18	Spain	900	815	1,015	1,408	1,339	1,370	260	1,629	2,185	2,338	2,703	2,610	2,878	740
19	Belgium	549	528	875	834	1,074	1,201	208	1,034	1,207	1,684	1,595	2,085	1,985	528
20	Canada	438	386	488	621	648	1,148	294	995	1,149	997	1,262	1,249	1,928	435
	Other countries	13,967	14,011	17,911	21,138	22,714	21,678	3,292	31,470	34,428	35,705	45,485	50,486	50,307	8,926
B.	Residents of the Republic of Moldova	93,590	93,106	91,876	98,902	105,552	95,772	23,000	449,732	453,840	460,662	469,897	512,737	451,323	144,531
	TOTAL	179,336	179,222	204,182	232,024	251,429	253,298	48,181	633,103	664,240	679,100	730,816	809,144	788,759	205,319

Source: National Bureau of Statistics data and authors' calculations

INTERIM SECRETARY OF THE COUNCIL

Adrian TALMACI