

BUCHAREST AS A CITY BRAND: HOW TO ATTRACT RUSSIAN TOURISTS

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Abstract:

The aim of this paper is to investigate the attractiveness of Bucharest and its perception by Russian tourists as well as to examine the strengths and weaknesses of the city and define the idea for positioning statement for this place. Bucharest has a deep history and cultural heritage that are highly appreciated by tourists seeking cultural tourism. Moreover, Bucharest had the nickname of "Little Paris" which implied the beauty of the city. Our study focuses mainly on the target audience of Russian people who appreciate cultural heritage. According to the Russian Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat), the number of Russians who visited Romania as tourists increased by 73% in the first quarter of 2015 (<http://russtd.com/destinations/eastern-europe-loses-almost-half-russian-tourists-year>). This increase is a positive sign as it means that Romania and Bucharest are becoming more and more attractive for Russian tourists. Tourists can bring many benefits to the place, both economic and social. In turn, new places with heritage can enrich tourists with new knowledge and broaden their erudition. The study allows us to understand the perception of Bucharest by Russian tourists and single out the key elements of the city of Bucharest. The key elements of the city of Bucharest are rooted in cultural heritage and authenticity, including different styles of architecture, Orthodox churches, classical and folk music, outstanding musicians and food. Bucharest might thus be offered the positioning as a mysterious authentic city revealing the coexistence of different times. To some extent this paper contributes to the understanding of the image of Bucharest in Russian tourists' eyes, their associations and fears. It gives some insights into factors that make Russians choose touristic destinations. In addition, some ideas for the city positioning, logos and slogans can derive from this paper. The study can be useful for touristic agencies or for the Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism which deal with the touristic flow and country image.

Keywords: city brand, values, multi-sensory experience, cultural heritage.

Introduction

Cities resemble personalities and can be described with human characteristics. New York is contemporary, wealthy and individualistic; Paris is aristocratic,

fashionable and chic; Berlin is versatile, dynamic and artistic. People can have very strong emotional connections with cities that earn a special place in their minds and lives. Cities have to deal with a variety of target audiences,

including tourists. Tourists can bring many benefits to the place, both economic and social. The business starts boosting, new working places open up. Moreover, tourism is very good for the international reputation of the place. If tourists actively visit the city, it means that the place has something special to offer to them.

City brands have similarities with “classical” brands of goods and services. Usually a brand is defined as a set of associations, a name with the power to influence the market (Kapferer, 2012). The same can be said about places. The city brand is the sum of all perceptions and associations nurtured by people, with respect to the city (Ispas A., Boboc D.-G., Marica A.-G., Năstăsoiu G.-B., Vijoli C.-V., 2015). Places can cause strong specific associations. For example, Italy is about sweet life (“Dolce Vita”), France is about charm and luxury, Germany – order (“Ordnung”) (Ochkovskaya, Gerasimenko, Rybalko, 2014). Usually each place is characterised by a combination of unique attraction factors making it different from the competing ones (Rainisto S., 2004). According to Dinnie, if destinations want to flourish, they must deliver distinctive, compelling, memorable and rewarding experiences to their target consumers (Dinnie, 2008).

Working on this research, we studied papers devoted to positioning Romania and the Romanian cities (e.g. Sibiu) as tourism destinations. Dumitrescu L., Cetina I., Pentescu A. analyzed Romania’s image using mainly the online travel guides (2014). According to their research, Romania is characterized as rather positive and can attract a special group of tourists “who travelled to many countries, being open-minded towards other destinations and who are looking for

memorable travel experiences...” (Dumitrescu L., Cetina I., Pentescu A., 2014, p. 62).

In our research we concentrated on Bucharest and the perception of the city by Russian tourists. The study of the Russians’ perception of the city of Bucharest has not been carried out so far.

The paper is structured in the following way. First, we briefly summarized the relevant literature about city brands and some successful examples. Second, we presented our research about the sensory realization of the city of Bucharest. Then we conducted an online survey of the perception of the city by Russian people. Finally, we provided the research limitations and gave some recommendations on how to increase the awareness of Bucharest among Russian tourists.

Literature review

City brand and its identity

Every city has a connection with its country. Living in Russia, we can characterize this country as versatile and traditional. Moscow, being a capital, imbibes its versatility and traditions. Dumitrescu L. and his colleagues describe points-of-difference for Romania such as authenticity and traditions (Dumitrescu L., Cetina I., Pentescu A., 2014, p.63). These descriptions of Romania are incorporated in the city of Bucharest as well.

Capitals represent the countries’ heritage and the whole nations. The identity of the capital is very important to the country’s image (Agata Lisiak, 2009). As noted above, Paris has an identity of a chic and aristocratic city, so France is perceived as an aristocratic country as well.

The city identity is based on specific city characteristics, values and benefits. Sometimes it is not easy to formulate one clear identity, specifically, for the capitals which are usually versatile. The identity of Bucharest is multifaceted as it reflects the shades of different times: ancient, soviet and contemporary eras.

Cities can cause associations in tourists' minds by appealing to their senses. A multi-sensory brand experience, including sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch, generates certain beliefs, feelings, thoughts and opinions to create a brand image in the consumer's mind (Hulten B., 2011). The cities also provide a sensory

experience, which is important to tourists' impressions as well as to the locals.

Sight experience in case of cities concerns with visual objects such as buildings, monuments, nature, pieces of art and installations. Unique architecture, both old and contemporary, can differentiate the city. In Huainan in China the unusual Piano and Violin shaped building was erected in 2007 (figure 1). This building with its unique shape has become very popular for tourists and local citizens. The locals named this architectural object "the most romantic building in China" ("Unusual places", <http://unusualplaces.org/piano-house>).



Figure 1. The Piano and Violin shaped building

Source: <http://fine-archi.blogspot.ru>

Visual identity of the city also includes logos which should be easily memorized and reflect the values of the

city. The practice of having several informal logos exists in some cities. For example, Moscow has many unofficial

logos. Designers create logos for Moscow and display them online for discussion. Picture № 8 is the official emblem of the city presenting St.

George Killing a Dragon. Yet, this emblem is not easily reproduced (figure 2).



Figure 2. Different logos of the city of Moscow

Source: Logos are taken from open sources

Reflecting the idea and values of the city, Moscow red logos express the idea of Red Square, the main landmark of the city. Furthermore, in the old Russian language the adjective «red»

(красный) had a meaning of «beautiful».

The other example, a logo of Copenhagen, reflects its openness for people and its “green” values (figure 3).



Figure 3. Logo of the city of Copenhagen

Hearing is about the language, songs, music, poetry, city and street names and the specific memorized “noise” related to the city. Internationally famous songs have power to make the places famed even without visiting them (e.g., “It’s a long way to Tipperary”, “A Paris” by Yves Montand, “New York, New York” by Frank Sinatra, “Berlin” by Klaus Hoffmann, etc.). Although in most

cases classical music and poetry reflect the culture of the whole country, these verbal ingredients are associated with the capital as well. In addition, a slogan, mirroring the concept of the city, constitutes the verbal identity as well.

The combination of a logo and a slogan for Seoul reflects the positive and friendly atmosphere of this multicultural city (figure 4).



Figure 4. A logo and a slogan for the city of Seoul

Some cities are associated with a special smell which remains embedded in people’s memory. There is linden blossom in Berlin at the street Unter den Linden. The French city of Cannes blossoms with perfume. The Italian cities smell of coffee specifically in the morning. Not all aromas, however, promote positive emotions. The gas and piggery smell can have a negative effect on impressions of a city.

When people touch the objects which are peculiar for the place, they can feel something special, e.g., sense of belonging to its history or culture. Touching the remnants of the Berlin Wall, Russian varnished souvenir matryoshkas, Dutch wooden clogs, etc., ensures special tactile experiences and impressions.

The more senses are involved in exploring the city, the more strongly the

impressions and associations can contribute to the city identity.

Cities with a positive image and identity are able to better meet the demands of their different stakeholders such as residents, tourists, investors (Herstein R., 2014). Many experts in city development consider that the key audience for city branding is local residents. If the local residents are satisfied with their living standards and atmosphere in the city, the other audiences such as tourists and investors will be delighted as well. Moreover, locals should be involved in the process of city branding, even though the brand is intended for tourists. It can be of interest for those who are responsible for city branding to take a closer look at Buenos Aires experience. In 2006 the Department of Tourism Promotion and Development

organized a short film competition of alternative views of Buenos Aires to help imagine the new city's tourist brand. The idea was to find fresh views of the city not typically included in the conventional tourism promotion (Dinardi C., 2015). Being involved, locals feel their belonging to the city brand which does not seem alien to them.

In our paper we concentrated on tourists, specifically Russian tourists.

Study methodology approach

In order to explore perceptions of Bucharest and its potential to become an international city brand, this research was developed in two parts: an analytical inquiry and a descriptive exploration. First, we analysed the sensory realization of Bucharest. Second, we investigated the perception of Bucharest by Russian people.

The investigation of perception of Bucharest consisted of two stages: in-depth interviews and an online survey. The in-depth interviews were conducted among 20 respondents, leisure travellers to European countries. All the respondents have higher education degrees, appreciate cultural tourism and travel with a touristic purpose to European cities outside the borders of Russia at least once per 24 months. The in-depth interviews allowed us to formulate the following research questions:

RQ1: Do Russians travel to Bucharest and to other big cities in Eastern Europe?

RQ2: What really matters for Russian tourists keen on travelling to Europe while choosing their destination?

RQ3: What associations and fears about Bucharest do Russian tourists have?

RQ4: Does the communism heritage attract Russian tourists?

RQ5: What are the strengths and weaknesses of the city of Bucharest?

RQ6: What cultural objects in Bucharest are the most attractive to Russians?

RQ7: What knowledge of Bucharest do people have (famous people, works of art)?

RQ8: Does belonging to an Orthodox church make Romania more attractive to the Russian?

RQ9: Does the statement "Bucharest is a little Paris" make it more alluring?

RQ10: What sources of information do Russians use when choosing a trip?

Then, we conducted an online survey which helped us find answers to these questions. The questionnaire was designed to elicit Russians' perceptions of Bucharest and to investigate potential ideas for positioning of the city.

We placed the questionnaire on survio.com. A lot of pictures of Bucharest were included in the questionnaire to make the impression of Bucharest for those who have not been there yet. After that, the link was posted on Facebook. The first question was a filter and asked whether the respondents have travelled to Eastern Europe (outside their own country). 416 respondents took part in the survey. 17 of these respondents travel only round Russia. So we had to exclude them from the sample. 399 respondents visited at least one city in Eastern Europe. According to the United Nations Eastern Europe consists of the following 10 countries: Belarus, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia and Ukraine. The names of the big cities were given as potential

answers. Besides, there was a chance to add cities which were visited but not listed as possible answers. We decided to make the process of the survey analysis easier and found one more respondent who has an experience of travelling to Eastern Europe. Thus, we got the round figure and finally the sample consisted of 400 people. All respondents currently live in Moscow and have higher education degrees or/and scientific degrees (59 respondents). The respondents were aged from 24 to 61. The gender

structure was as follows: 281 females and 119 males. They all have travelled abroad in the last 24 months. The survey was carried out and analyzed in November 2015.

Findings

Sensory realization of Bucharest Using open online resources and our own touristic experience, we analyzed the multi-sensory experience concerning Bucharest. Visually the sensory realization of Bucharest is presented in figure 5.



Figure 5. Multisensory analyses for Bucharest

Source: Pictures are taken from open sources

Sight perception of Bucharest can be represented by buildings of different architectural styles, pieces of arts and everything specific to the city which can be seen. In our opinion the contemporary philosophical symbol of Bucharest is represented by the building of the Union of Romanian

Architects. It is an unusual architectural design which constitutes the combination of the new and the old (figure 6). Furthermore, the citizens (e.g., what they look like, whether they smile or not) are relevant to the visual perception of the city as well.



Figure 6. Contemporary philosophical symbol of Bucharest

Source: <http://www.bucharestapartment.net/>

The hearing perception of Bucharest is carried out mainly through music. Although internationally famous contemporary musicians Andrei Ionita (a cellist) and Angela Gheorghiu (an opera singer) live outside Romania's borders, they are strongly associated with their country of origin and its capital. The Romanian composer George Enescu is associated not only with Bucharest, but with the whole country. Every year the George Enescu International Festival is held in Bucharest. It is important to quote that "98% of the participants of the Enescu Festival 2015 state that the Festival contributes to the improvement of Romania's image in the world, adding that the event is important for the entire cultural community in the country" (<http://festivalenescu.ro/en>).

The smell of the city Bucharest is expressed in a mix of blossoms. In autumn the smell of baked eggplants can be experienced. In the springtime the trees and roses fill the air with perfumes.

Touch experience might concern the area of the Old Town that is paved with bricks. When people walk there, they can feel these bricks.

Taste is expressed in a variety of different authentic dishes, for example, "Mămăligă" (corn meal with salty cheese and sour cream), "Cârnați afumați" (smoked sausages), "Porumb copt" (boiled corn on the cob). This type of sensory experience is revealed in a national drink *tuica*, *chees* and some Romanian brands as *Poiana*. The national food and brands contribute to the image of the whole country as well

as to its cities' image where this food can be found.

Bucharest offers a variety of unique sensory experience to both locals and tourists.

The Russians' perception of Bucharest

The final part of our research included an online survey with Russian respondents (n=400).

Trying to find out whether the respondents travel to Bucharest and to

the other big cities in Eastern Europe, we managed to determine the cities that are in high demand among these tourists.

The survey demonstrated that the most popular capital in Eastern Europe for the Russians is Prague, then Kiev, Budapest and Minsk (figure 7). In this question the time when the city was visited was not particularly defined. We aimed to find out to which Eastern European places the respondents have travelled.

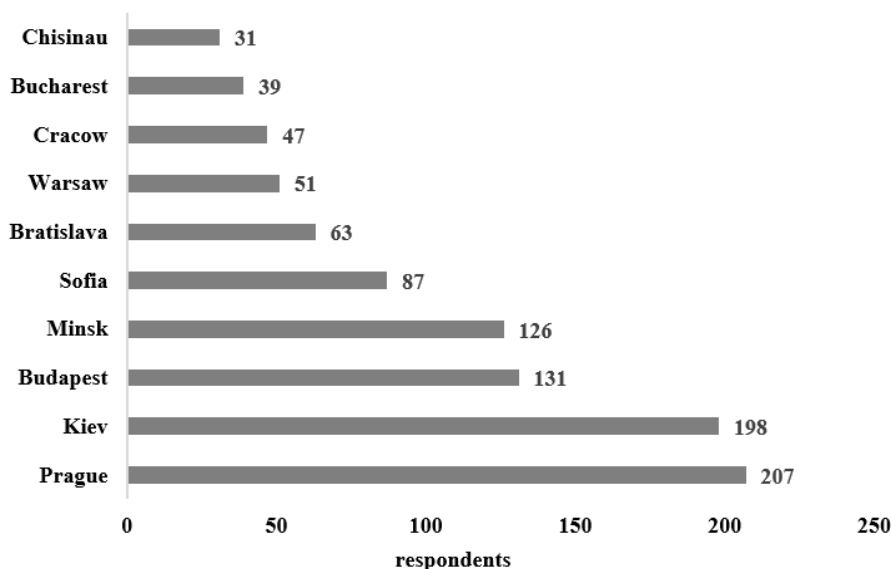


Figure 7. The number of respondents who visited the Eastern European capitals

Source: Prepared by the author

39 respondents (9,8 %) have travelled to Bucharest. It means that not many Russians from this sample have been to Bucharest. Having said that, a lot of them would like to go to Bucharest and explore the city. 319 respondents who have never been to Bucharest before would like to visit the city in the future. It is important to notice that according to the Russian Federal State Statistics Service, "the number of Russians who visited Romania as

tourists increased by 73% in the first quarter of 2015 while the tourist flows to the Czech Republic and Poland dropped by 45 and 33%, respectively. Slovakia also saw a 70% decrease in the number of Russian tourists while Slovenia lost more than half of the Russian tourist flow. Hungary has been least affected by the falling tourist demand and dropped by 8%" (<http://russtd.com/destinations/eastern-europe-loses-almost-half-russian->

[tourists-year](#)). This increase is a positive sign for Bucharest in respect of attracting Russian tourists.

Trying to find out which factors are important for choosing touristic destinations, we asked the respondents to gauge every ingredient, where 5 is the maximum, 1 - minimum. We provided such factors as cultural heritage, shopping, food, opportunity to

speak foreign languages, meeting new people, sport and academic events, opportunities to maintain and improve health, a combination of the cultural tourism and the closeness to beach resorts. Then in order to determine which elements have priority, the weighted averages for each factor have been calculated (figure 8).

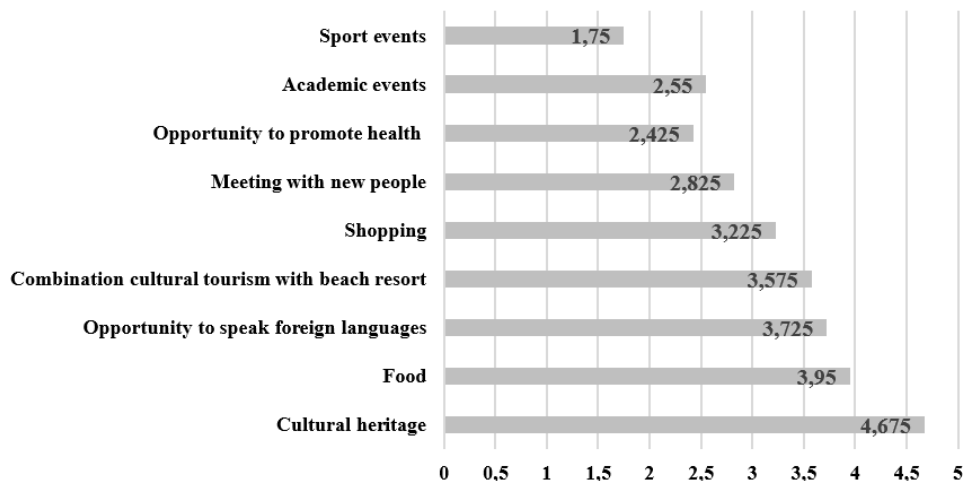


Figure 8. Factors having influence on choosing destinations by Russian tourists

Source: Prepared by the author

The research findings allowed us to single out the key elements of the place, which matter for Russian tourists. The cultural heritage is crucial for the respondents and comes first in this scale. Then, the second place belongs to food. An opportunity to practice a foreign language and the access to the sea come third and fourth correspondingly. Shopping is on the fifth place. Probably these results could find an explanation in the academic and business background of our intellectual respondents who strongly appreciate the cultural heritage

of the place they are visiting and have knowledge of a foreign language (mainly English).

Taking into account the above mentioned results, the key elements of the city brand of Bucharest could be rooted in **cultural heritage and authentic gastronomy**.

Furthermore, the respondents were asked to give examples of their associations with Bucharest.

The associations of those who visited Bucharest were different from those who have not been to the city (figure 9). The most frequently

mentioned associations with Bucharest are the following: “the Old city”, “Mămăligă & Țuică”, “the Palace of the Parliament”, “Ceașescu”, “the City of different architecture styles”, “Enescu and Athenaeum”, “A bit of Soviet”, “Orthodox churches”. As for the respondents who have not yet visited Bucharest, their associations were: “Communism & Ceașescu”, “the City

of vampires and gypsies”, “Poor and shabby city with the legacy of communism”, “Dracula”. Although people who have explored Bucharest provided more culturally based associations, the controversial personality of Ceausescu appears in both variants. A few respondents (3) remembered the funny slogan: “Have a rest in Bucharest”.

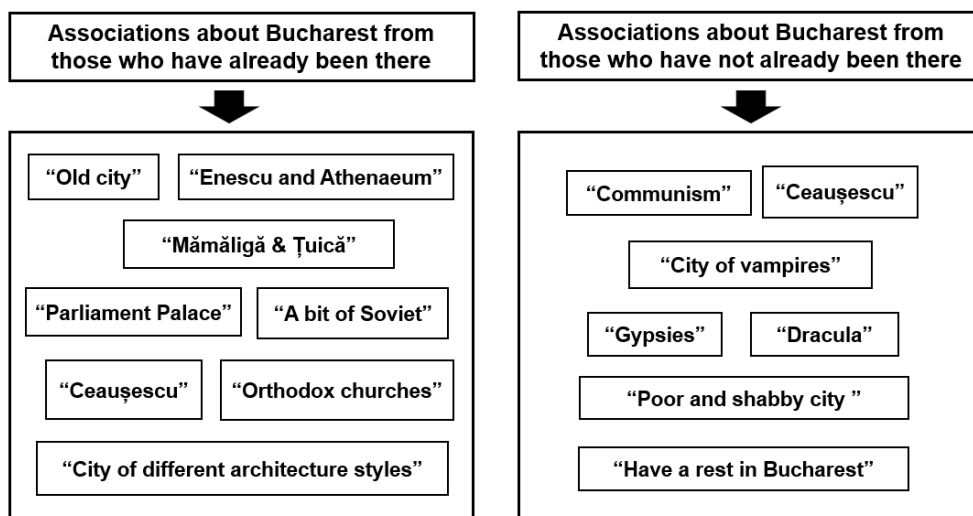


Figure 9. The associations about the city of Bucharest

Moreover, some people have fears regarding gypsies (31 respondents) and the very cruel overthrow of the communist regime when Ceaușescu and his spouse were executed (9 respondents). Anyway, these associations should be taken into account for the city's positioning. The out-of-date stereotypes which are negative for the city's image can be changed when people visit the city.

We asked the respondents about their interest in the communism heritage, which was peculiar to Romania as well as to Russia and the other countries of the Soviet bloc. The communism heritage does not seem to

be very attractive for the Russian tourists. People whose families were negatively affected by the communist regime prefer not to deal with this legacy. Those who were lucky and did not experience its negative side do not see any special attraction in this communism heritage as well. Nevertheless, the Palace of the Parliament, a symbol of the communist past, being of poor aesthetics and artistic quality, is of interest to tourists who are keen on this part of history and specifically search for the signs of the communist past. In Warsaw the Palace of Culture and Science is increasingly popular, especially among foreign

tourists and has become an internationally known symbol of the city (Agata Lisiak, 2009).

Based on the answers of the respondents and the online touristic

sources such as <http://www.tourism-bucharest.com>, we examined the strengths and the weaknesses of the city of Bucharest (applied to Russian tourists) (table 1).

Table 1

Strengths and weaknesses of the city of Bucharest

Strengths	Weaknesses
Bucharest is situated not far from Moscow (2 hours 25 minutes flight)	The stereotypes about the city connected with gypsies and poverty
Price level in Bucharest and Romania is lower in comparison to the Western European countries	The absence of the key idea for the city of Bucharest and as a result the lack of strong positioning
Bucharest has strong versatile cultural heritage	Romanian language does not represent the Slavonic group of languages to which Russian belongs
Bucharest has an "official" reputation of a safe city	The lack of the slogan and the logo reflecting the idea of the city
There is authentic food in Bucharest and Romania	There is no internationally recognized movie with the city of Bucharest integrated into the plot

Although Bucharest is seen to have more strengths than weaknesses, the biggest shortcomings of the city are the old stereotypes and the absence of the positioning. The idea underlying the positioning statement can distinguish the city and attract tourists. For instance, Milan is about fashion; Paris brings the idea of the city which is full of romance; Verona is connected with Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliette. Having heard about these destinations' images, tourists go there with certain dreams and expectations.

Assuming Russians appreciate the cultural heritage of Bucharest, we chose several cultural objects of the city, to estimate which of them arouse interest. We listed the following objects:

1) the Palace of the Parliament (People's House),

2) the Romanian Athenaeum,
3) the National Museum of Art of Romania,
4) Bucharest's Old Town,
5) Orthodox Romanian churches,
6) Considering the interest in the Dracula's personality, we included the Bran Castle (known as Dracula's Castle), which is situated not far from Bucharest.

Taking into account the fact that the majority of the respondents have not visited Bucharest yet, we posted a video and images of the chosen cultural objects and added brief information to introduce them to the survey participants. The information was taken from open sources.

The scores ranged from 1 (the lowest grade) to 5 (the highest grade meaning the highest interest). To

identify the most attractive objects, the weighted averages have been calculated (figure 10).

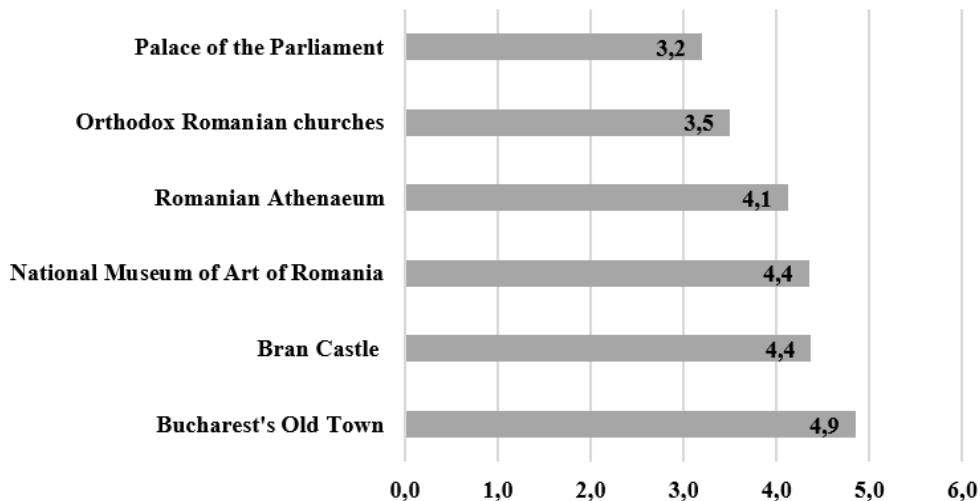


Figure 10. The attractiveness of the cultural objects of Bucharest

Source: Pictures taken from open sources

The results revealed that the most attractive cultural objects for the respondents are the Bucharest's Old Town, the Bran Castle (the respondents are ready to spend 2 hours and 40

minutes to reach this object) and the National Museum of Art of Romania. The grotesque Palace of the Parliament does not seem to be the key point among the touristic attractions for the

Russians. It is on the last position in this list of the cultural objects.

Although the weighted average grade for the attractiveness of Orthodox Church is 3.5 from 5, the belonging to the same church gives a special charm to Romania. It makes the countries closer for the religious people.

The respondents seem to have good knowledge of Bucharest and Romania. They know several personalities in different fields such as music, literature and politics. Besides the General Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party Nicolae Ceaușescu, his wife Elena Ceaușescu and also Dracula, the respondents mentioned the composer George Enescu, the children's literature author Octav Panku-Jasi, the pan flute musician Gheorghe Zamfir, the cellist Andrei Ionuț Ioniță (the winner of 2015 Tchaikovsky Competition Gold Medal), the Europop music group Morandi, the movie director and animator Ion Popescu-Gopo, the Romanian actor Radu Beligan. In addition, the children's movie "Maria, Mirabella" and the drama film "Patul lui Procust" with the Russian actor Oleg Yankovsky were indicated in the answers. These responses prove that cultural heritage unites nations, makes them closer and allows people from two different countries understand each other better.

The statement "Bucharest is a little Paris" got controversial estimation. 201 respondents indicated that this statement strengthens their desire to visit Bucharest because bearing comparison with Paris is a challenge and it means that the city is beautiful and worth seeing. 199 respondents stated that this reference to Paris does not encourage them to travel to Bucharest. It can be explained by the fact that tourists visiting Bucharest would like to experience the distinctive

character of this city, not to see another Paris. In our opinion the statement "Bucharest is a little Paris" is not perfect for the Bucharest positioning as it makes an accent on Paris and dilutes the originality and the authenticity of the city of Bucharest. If people want to experience Paris, they will go to the real Paris. The idea and the values of the city should be unique. In order to become an internationally successful destination, Bucharest has to build a strong authentic image. We could offer Bucharest the positioning **as the mysterious authentic city revealing the coexistence of different eras.**

In the final part of the survey we learnt where Russians obtain information about their touristic destinations and whether artistic movies and classical literature with a city integrated into a plot encourage them to visit this place.

Many writers, artists, film directors being inspired by cities or specific places can devote their works to the destinations or integrate them into a plot. For example, the German author Erich Maria Remarque in his famous "Arch of Triumph" conveyed the atmosphere of Paris. After reading this book, people might desire to go to Paris and experience its atmosphere. Artistic movies transferring the atmosphere of a beautiful city are a very strong tool and a motivator encouraging people to visit the place. For example, the elegant Federico Fellini movies encourage intellectual people to explore Italy. In addition, the connoisseurs of Fellini's style visit his home town Rimini. The old American drama "Waterloo Bridge" still inspires the cultural tourists from different countries visiting London to explore this bridge. The contemporary movies such as "Paris, I love you", "New York, I love you", "Moscow, I love you" demonstrate the versatility of the

big cities. 327 respondents indicated that they are influenced by these artistic works.

The survey showed that the respondents use a variety of different sources to find information about the

city they are intending to visit. The presented rating reflects the popularity of the information sources. The rating starts with the most popular source (table 2).

Table 2

The popularity of the information sources

Internet sites devoted to the cities	№1
Travel blogs	№2
Friends' recommendations	№3
Guide books	№4
Movies and literature with cities integrated into the plot	№5
Travel magazines	№6
Videos on youtube.com	№7
Google panoramas	№8

The combination of these sources should be used for the city promotion. The local citizens can become brand ambassadors to the country and its cities.

In the theoretical part of this paper we mentioned that the city brand usually has an easy, memorable logo and a slogan reflecting the distinctive idea and values of the place. The city of Bucharest still has no logo. We recommend creating not only an official logo, but several informal, memorable logos for Bucharest reflecting the different facets of the city. The slogan as well as logo can be formal and present the idea for positioning (*as the mysterious authentic city revealing the coexistence of different eras*). However, slogans might also be informal and sound poetic, describing one of the facets of the city, like "Have a rest in Bucharest". The city may have a mix of different logos and slogans that express the values of the city. Logos and slogans can be combined. Following the experience of other cities, something like "Hi, Bucharest!" or "Fall in love with Bucharest" should be presented.

Conclusion

This study is the first step to understand the perception and attractiveness of Bucharest for Russian tourists and looking for the unique identity of the city. In our opinion, the image of the mysterious city with cultural and historical heritage should be created. Although our proposal for the Bucharest's positioning as *the mysterious authentic city revealing the coexistence of different eras*, the local government and citizens must understand and come to an agreement how they want their city to be perceived in the outside world. In spite of the fact that countries which experienced communism have preferred to get rid of the signs from that epoch and forget this period, we think that the communist heritage gives a special charm to Bucharest and communist artefacts (e.g. the Palace of the Parliament) attract tourists from those countries which did not experience this regime.

As cultural issues unite nations, the globally-oriented movie "Bucharest, I love you", telling the world about this place, would contribute to the city's

international awareness. The broadly announced cultural events are recommended. The Romanian Athenaeum has chances to become one of the most famous platforms for classical music performed in Eastern Europe. Romania has talented musicians well-known outside the borders of the country such as the opera singer Angela Gheorghiu and the young cellist Andrei Ionita who was awarded the first prize in Tchaikovsky Competition in 2015. The musicians are famous in Moscow and could become a cultural bridge between these two countries. Moreover, Ionita plays the music of Russian composers. The Soviet composer Shostakovich is claimed to be one of his favourite composers (The interview with Andrey Ionita, <http://tch15.medicini.tv/en/artist/andrei-ionut-ionita>). Enescu's festival attracts intellectual Russian tourists who are connoisseurs of classical music. Visiting this festival may be an opportunity to see the city of Bucharest and experience the authentic Romanian food. Bucharest can offer culture in its diversity.

It is recommended to create a mix of different logos and slogans that express values of the city. Although only a few respondents are familiar with the slogan "Have a rest in Bucharest",

we urge the readers dealing with city branding not to ignore this easy and memorable phrase which can be used in a variety of informal situations and in travel guides.

In a nutshell, Bucharest is perceived by the respondents mainly as an attractive city which they do not mind visiting and experiencing. It is important to strengthen the positive elements of Bucharest's image that are already perceived by actual and potential visitors (e.g. authentic food, old and beautiful buildings, classical music, safety, non-expensiveness etc.). Some of the negative aspects of the Bucharest's personality that are linked to gypsies, shabbiness, cruel communist regime and its overthrow must be dealt with. Some outdated stereotypes, e.g. gypsies or vampires, could be used in a funny way for the informal city communications. The deep cultural heritage, the belonging to the same religion, the gastronomy opportunities, the moderate price level and the closeness to Moscow are very favourable for developing inbound Russian tourism.

Bucharest is a destination chosen by the educated tourists who represented our sample and has a lot of chances to become the city brand at least in the Eastern Europe territory.

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