

## CONCEPTUAL APPROACHES CONCERNING WINE TOURISM

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### *Abstract*

*The topic of scientific interest of the authors is the research of conceptual approaches regarding wine tourism.*

*The purpose of this research is to elucidate the concepts and generalities regarding wine tourism. The concepts of wine tourism have been formed along with its evolution, and the defining aspects have varied according to the professional opinions of tourism specialists. Understanding the concept of wine tourism cannot be separated from the general concepts of tourism, tour, tourist, visitor, traveler, excursionist. At the same time, special attention is paid to revealing the features of wine tourism and its classification according to different aspects. The presented study is based on the official positions of International and National Tourism Organizations, legislative and normative acts, as well as views of foreign and domestic researchers.*

*The present study was carried out based on the following scientific research methods: analysis, synthesis, comparison, grouping, systematization, etc.*

*The authors' conclusions relate to the presentation of their own definitions of the examined concepts, as well as the scientific novelty regarding the elucidation of the features of wine tourism.*

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**Keywords:** *tourism, tour, visitor, tourist, excursionist, wine tourism*

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## 1. Introduction

Wine tourism is a relatively new form of tourism. Its history varies greatly from one region to another. Globally, wine tourism is a profitable industry, although it only appeared a few decades ago, it can be confirmed that it is on the rise. Wine tourism is the link between customers and producers, and this phenomenon satisfies both parties.

Wine tourism in the Republic of Moldova occupies an important segment in the country's tourism. Investments in wineries and the state's initiative to register the Republic of Moldova on the map of European wine tourism have led to the creation of itineraries that allow visiting numerous areas and wineries. The tourist potential of the Republic of Moldova also derives from the agricultural specifics. In recent years, wine tourism in the Republic of Moldova has registered a massive evolution, and the number of foreign tourists has been increasing. This phenomenon was also appreciated internationally and was confirmed by the organization of the third edition of the World Wine Tourism Conference in the Republic of Moldova in 2018.

The wine companies in the Republic of Moldova produce wines of high quality. This fact is confirmed by the awarding of distinguished international prizes to various wine products. Moldovan wine products are in demand on the EU market, which contributes to the sustainable development of both the wine sector and wine tourism. The Republic of Moldova is among the top 10 wine exporting countries in the world, accounting for 7.5 % of the country's total exports [11].

The scientific approach of the present research will include the study of both the concepts of tourism in general and wine tourism in particular.

At the first stage of the research, the authors will examine the official international and national discussions, the approaches presented in scientific debates by different researchers regarding the notions of tourism, tour, inbound and domestic tourism. In the same way, the notions of visitor, tourist, traveler, excursion, explorer, which are very close in terms of content, but still have essential differences, will be investigated.

At this stage of the research, the own definitions of the researched notions will be presented, which in our opinion will express more complex definitions.

At the second stage of the research, the authors will identify the already existing definitions of wine tourism and the authors' own definition of this type of tourism will be presented. At this stage, the notions of wine tourism will be grouped according to two approaches. At the same time, the specific features of wine tourism will be elucidated, the purpose, motivation or purpose of visiting wine businesses, the offer or services regarding tourist products, tourist attractions, etc., in the view of the authors.

## **2. The degree of investigation of the problem at the present time, the purpose of the research**

At the present time, debates regarding different concepts related to the terminology used in tourism are highlighted by the official positions of the governmental international tourism organizations (the World Tourism Organization - hereafter UNWTO) Travel Agencies, the International Tourism Alliance and the International Automobile Federation (FIA), the International Federation of Thermalism and Climatology (FITEC), the International Federation of Tourism Writers and Journalists (FIJET), the International Academy of Tourism (AIT), the World Federation of Chefs and Confectioners, the International Organization of Cable Carriers (OITAF), the International Bureau of Social Tourism (BITS), etc.) and local (the National Agency for Inbound and Internal Tourism of Moldova (ANTRIM), the National Office of Vine and Wine (ONVV), The National Association of Economic Tourism Agents of Moldova (ANAT), the Association of Tourism Development in Moldova (ADTM), the National Association of Rural, Ecological and Cultural Tourism of Moldova (ANTREC Moldova), the Employers' Association of the Tourism Industry of the Republic of Moldova (APIT ), Cheia satului, etc.), international and local legislative and normative acts, extensively studied by various local, Romanian and foreign researchers such as Bacal Petru, Cocoş Iacob [1], Bogan Elena, Simon Tamara [2], Tomescu Veronica [16 ], Miron Viorel, Guţui Viaceslav and others [10], Platon Nicolae [12], Soare I. [13], Brown G., Getz D. [3], Gîrneţ Slavic [5], Hall M., Shaples L. , Cambourne B., Macionis N. [7], Sparks B. A., Roberts L., Deery M., Davies J., Brown L. [15], etc. and the authors of this research.

Until now, the notions of tourism, recreation, travel, tour, tourist, visitor, excursionist, types of tourism, wine tourism have been widely discussed. At the same time, we mention that the analysis of the research carried out so far allows us to find that the studies related to the conceptual approaches regarding wine tourism are not carried out thoroughly.

The authors of the current research examine the notions identified regarding tourism in general and wine tourism in particular, in order to present some own notions related to the previously presented definitions.

The problem identified in the research process concerns the establishment of concepts applied in tourism and specifying the appropriate terms for wine tourism research.

The purpose of this research is to identify the main approaches related to wine tourism, such as: the definition of wine tourism and its classification, the features of wine tourism, the purpose of the wine tourism branch, the services offered by wine tourism.

### **3. Applied methods and materials**

The present study was carried out based on the following scientific research methods: analysis, synthesis, comparison, grouping, systematization, etc.

With the help of the analysis method, the investigation of the definitions addressed by the official positions of the tourism organizations, the legislative and normative acts in force, as well as the debates of different authors who researched the presented field was carried out.

The synthesis method, based on the transition from the particular to the general, from the simple to the compound, in order to reach the generalization, was applied in order to present some of the authors' own definitions regarding tourism.

The comparison method allowed us to examine two or more definitions related to the examined terms in order to establish the similarities and differences between them.

The grouping method allowed us to classify the notions of wine tourism into two large groups of approaches:

- based on the product and purpose of the tourist offer;
- based on the role of wine tourism in promoting the tourist attractions of the Republic of Moldova.

The systematization method was applied in order to arrange according to a certain system the researches already carried out and to present the own results of the research in question.

## **4. Results obtained and discussions**

### **4.1. Conceptual approaches regarding tourism**

The tourism branch, in fact like any activity, has its origin. According to some sources, the notion of "tour" appeared around the 1700s and has its origin in England, being used to denote the action of traveling in Europe. This English term was first used to denote the young British aristocrats who were preparing for political and diplomatic careers. In order to complete their education and culture, they toured the countries of Europe for three years. The first travel

guide *Le Grand Tour* (1778), author Thomas Nugent, also appeared for them. The word "tour" in the sense of travel, walk or circuit, also appeared early in the French language, being later taken over and spread all over the world [5, p. 4].

The encyclopedia Wikipedia reveals that the researcher Theobald (1994) suggested that etymologically, the word "tour" derives from the Latin language (pouring) and from the Greek language (tornos), with the meaning of circle - movement around a central point or a axis. Taken into English the word "tour" took on the meaning of the action of moving in a circle. The word "tour" represents a round trip and the suffix "ism" is defined as "an action or process." Therefore, we conclude that tourism is actually a travel activity, and the one who undertakes such a trip is called a tourist [17].

The explanatory dictionary Dex-online [18] defines tourism as follows:

- all the relationships and phenomena that result from the movement and stay of people outside their place of residence (such as spending a vacation or rest leave, participating in various events, etc.);
- activity of a recreational or sporting nature, consisting of traveling some distances on foot or with different means of transport, to visit picturesque regions, towns, cultural, economic, historical objectives, etc.;
- service provider activity that deals with the organization and conduct of leisure and recreation trips or for other purposes.

According to the author Bran F., tourism represents "the art of traveling for pleasure". The same author believes that tourism is "the leisure activity that consists of traveling or living far from the place of residence, for fun, rest, enriching the experience and culture due to the knowledge of new human aspects and unknown landscapes" [17].

Considered a phenomenon of modern times, the definition of tourism has been manifested since the year 1600. In 1883, in Switzerland, a first official document refers to hotel activity, and in 1896, E. Guyer Fleuler, in the study "Contributions to a tourism statistic", defines tourism as "a phenomenon of modern times, based on the growing need to restore health and change the environment, to cultivate the feeling of receptivity to the beauty of nature, a result of the development of trade, industry and the improvement of means of transport" [1, p. 7].

In the work of the Belgian scholar Ed. Picard, "Industry of the traveler", tourism is defined as "the ensemble of organisms and their functions viewed from the point of view of the one who travels, of the traveler himself, but also of those who profit from the expenses made by him" [1, p. 7].

According to Marc, tourism represents the exchange of an economic value (money) against cultural, aesthetic and recreational values [1, p. 7]. In 1940, the Swiss professor W. Hunziker developed a definition of tourism, accepted worldwide: "Tourism is the set of relationships and phenomena resulting from the travel and stay of people outside their home, as long as the stay and travel are not motivated by a permanent establishment and some gainful activity" [1, p. 7].

An interesting approach can be found in A. Toffler", who established that "tourism is the link between the most diverse civilizations and economies and between cultures around the globe, it is the way through which humanity can change and develop, through which cultural

identities can be shared, economic barriers and prejudices of any kind suppressed, is a "real therapy" [5, p. 4].

In 1981, the International Scientific Association of Tourism Experts defined tourism as private activities voluntarily selected and carried out outside the area of residence [17].

In parallel with the points of view described, the opinion was formed according to which the term "travel" could not replace the term "tourism", or the term "traveler" for the term "tourist". "Travel" is a much broader notion, which can also be understood as emigration, movement from one place to another, which have nothing in common with tourist motivations. In other words, travel has a broader meaning, including travel for any reason. Travelers will therefore be not only tourists, but also nomads, soldiers, emigrants, refugees, etc.

However, we can mention the fact that lately, also in English-speaking countries, the terms "tourism" and "tourist" have been used to a greater extent in the terminology of the field for some time. For example, the British Travel Association is now called the British Tourism Association, or, since 1970, the Canadian Travel Industry Association has become the Canadian Tourism Association, and since 1978 it has been called the Tourism Industry Association of Canada. These name changes of the profile coordinating institutions do not mean giving up the terms "travelers" or "travel", they are only considered less precise.

The lack of a conceptual standardization maintains the presence of some incongruities in the interpretation and quantification of the specific processes of the tourist market from one continent to another. Thus, in North America the term "tourism" is not only frequently substituted for the term "travel", but also often substituted for the term "recreation". Thus we identify that what in Europe is classified as tourism, in North America appears with the description of "outdoor recreation", outside the home (dwelling), or simply "recreation". This explanation is presented in the official report of the Canadian government, in which the words tourism and outdoor recreation are synonymous. For some authors these terms are even interchangeable. Therefore, travel, recreation outside the home in various ways are forms of recreation.

In the view of some researchers in the field, the terms tourism and recreation have some differences, which will be highlighted through the following reasons:

- 1) Tourism is associated not only with free time (rest), but also with work-related travel (business, meetings, etc.). But recreation is only during free time. Indeed, business, the educational process, the practice of hobbies in free time, pilgrimages, visiting the doctor, spa treatment, visiting friends or relatives and other trips for personal purposes belong to the class of tourism, but they can hardly be associated with recreation.
- 2) Tourism, as opposed to recreation, involves traveling (traveling) a shorter or longer distance from home and spending the night away from home. At the same time, we note that not all forms of recreation outside the home also involve a trip from home, although they can take place in natural or suburban areas. Participants can be day-trippers or hikers. In other words, tourism is associated with overnight accommodation somewhere other than home. And the recreation takes place in one's own home or that of friends without changing residence.

- 3) Tourism is a clear commercial activity, a field of the economy. Recreation has, of course, commercial aspects, but insignificant ones.
- 4) Recreation, compared to tourism, is directed towards activities that involve special occupations (arts, hobbies, sports, practicing some vocations during free hours, etc.).

At the same time, the aforementioned researchers note that there are also common characteristics between tourism and recreation. Thus, recreation can be achieved through tourism, and tourism, in most of its forms, means recreation [20].

The National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova establishes that tourism includes the activities carried out by people during their travels and stays outside their usual environment (usual residence), for a consecutive period not exceeding one year, for leisure purposes, for business, visiting friends and relatives, medical treatment, religion, pilgrimage [4].

In the opinion of the World Tourism Organization (abbreviation in Romanian UNWTO, and in English UNWTO), tourist activity is a form of cultural-educational and recreational manifestations of modern society. Thus, the tourist phenomenon involves the movement of people (visitors) from their place of residence to tourist attractions, places of rest and leisure, located outside their place of residence for a certain period (from 24 hours to 6 months or 1 year, depending by the provisions of the legislation in this regard). The movement of people can be for rest and leisure, therapeutic, cognitive, cultural, commercial or for various purposes. So, tourism is a complex phenomenon that includes several elements, such as: tourist resources, space, free time, way of life, accommodation infrastructure, etc.

Although the duration of the tourist stay is at least "24 hours" according to the OMT, in this research we will omit this detail when formulating the notion of tourism.

The research carried out allowed us to formulate the following definition of tourism: tourism is a form of recreation for the tourist with the purpose of spending free time according to his preferences in order to satisfy the personal needs of knowledge and exploration of a geographical space and which at the same time represents a branch of the economy regarding the provision of guiding services, accommodation, transportation, food, etc.

At the same time, the research in question allows us to mention that the authors used the term tourism also in the case of trips made by visitors

In parallel with the definition of tourism, there are discussions about the definition of the tourist, the excursionist, the visitor, the traveler, the explorer.

The terms "traveller", "explorer" and "tourist" are considered to be three closely related terms. In the past, the "traveller" was an adventurer, an individual who visited other peoples, other fairs in order to acquire knowledge about their culture, their social and material situation. He planned and arranged his journey independently and generally without being supported in any particular way by anyone else. The journeys proved to be long, arduous and risky.

The "explorer", however, goes on a journey, based on an action financed by governments or commercial companies (for example, the expeditions between the years 1420-1620 - the period of the great geographical discoveries), being well supplied materially, accompanied by other people and having the aim of to collect precious metals or stones, spices or to explore

new fairs and eventually colonize them. These voyages brought new wealth, products, and opportunities to their people and nations, as well as a long-term historical and political effect on the world.

The word "tourist" is of relatively recent origin. Once, even the invader was considered a tourist, hoping to leave one day. This term appeared in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. The English, Germans and others, touring the continent, came to be known as "tourists".

For the first time the term tourist was used in 1800 by Samuel Pegge, in his work entitled "Anecdote of the English Language", in a very interesting wording: "A traveler is now - a - days called Tour-ist", ie: a traveler today is called a tourist. In France, the first to use the word tourist was Stendhal in "Memoirs of a Tourist" from 1838. And yet, despite the fact that the term "tourist" - belongs to the linguistic circuit for almost two centuries, there was still no distinct, unanimously accepted definition [20].

In 1937, on the recommendation of the Committee of Expert Statisticians of the League of the United Nations, the definition was accepted according to which the foreign tourist can be "a person who travels for a period of at least 24 hours, in another country, different from the one in which his habitual residence is located". According to this definition, tourists can be considered those who travel for pleasure (for leisure or for other health reasons, etc.), to participate in conferences, seminars (administrative, diplomatic, religious, sports), those who make business trips or who participate in cruises, even if the duration of the stay is less than 24 hours (these highlighting a separate group).

This definition has also been accepted since 1950 by the International Union of Official Organizations of Tourism (UIOOT – in 1975 when it transformed into the World Tourism Organization, the most important world non-governmental tourism organization with consultative status to the UN), which included students and pupils temporarily living abroad in the category of tourists.

For the domestic tourist, the UIOOT adopted the following definition: "any person who visits a place, other than where he has his domicile or habitual residence, within his country of residence for any reason other than that of exercising a remunerated activity and performing here a stay of at least one night (or 24 hours), can be considered as a national tourist".

Some analysts recommend replacing the term "tourist" with other terms closer to the true meaning of the reality in question, namely "traveler", "visitor" or "guest".

In 1963, the World Tourism Organization defined the term visitor in a general sense as: "any person who moves to a country other than that in which he has his habitual residence, for any purpose other than to exercise a remunerated activity in another given country". The definition of visitor is explained by two terms: tourists and hikers.

Tourists are visitors who have a stay of at least 24 hours or at least one night in the country of visit, whose reasons for traveling can be: rest, pleasure, entertainment, recreation, health, studies, religion, business, family, etc. , and excursionists are temporary visitors, whose stay is less than 24 hours in the country of visit (including cruises).

From the definitions presented at the OMT level, we notice that the emphasis in the definition of the tourist is placed on the domestic and international tourist.

In dex-online [18]:

- visitor is a person who visits a locality, a museum, an exhibition, etc.
- the tourist is the person who travels for pleasure or for the performance of professional tasks
- the hiker is the person who takes a trip, and the trip is a walk or trip made, usually in a group, on foot or with a means of transport, for instructive-educational, recreational, sports or entertainment purposes, etc.

The National Bureau of Statistics of the Republic of Moldova adopted the UNWTO vision regarding the definition of tourists and hikers. Thus, tourists are natural persons who travel to any place, other than their place of residence, for a duration of at least 24 hours and for a purpose other than carrying out a remunerated activity in the visited place, and excursionists are persons who do not spend the at least one night in a collective or private tourist structure [4].

The lack of generally accepted definitions of the terms "tourism" and "tourist" is a continuing source of frustration for tourism planners and analysts.

In our view, tourists are people who move from their place of residence to spend their free time in order to visit picturesque places and attractive leisure spaces, to have recreation and to acquire new experiences.

It is more difficult to collect information on the activities of hikers, especially since they are often not organized by a tour company. Namely, for this reason, the statistical data somehow gives us information only about tourists, although it is not excluded that sometimes hikers are also included in their composition.

It should be mentioned that although in Moldova we have wineries, which also offer accommodation, as a rule visiting the wineries is organized through excursions. At the same time, in our opinion, wine tourism can be characterized by the fact that, for the most part, the visit to the wineries is organized with the return on the same day later to the place of accommodation, both for foreign and domestic tourists.

Therefore, it is welcome to mention that the authors' research on wine tourism will use the well-known terms both globally and nationally of tourism and tourists, even in the situation where the duration regarding the tourist activity carried out by at least 24 hours and the travel from the place of residence that the accommodation entails is completely missing.

#### **4.2. Conceptual approaches regarding wine tourism**

The field of increased interest of the research in question refers to the identification of the main concepts related to wine tourism. It should be noted that the definition of wine tourism has been analyzed and formulated in national and international legislative and normative acts, dictionaries, as well as in the works of various researchers. From the very beginning it is welcome to reveal the fact that wine tourism is explained with different terms in the researched bibliographic sources. Thus, this type of tourism can be called: wine-growing, wine-growing, eno, oeno, wine-growing, wine-growing, uval, wines.

Etymologically, the term "viticole" comes from French, and the term "viticolo" comes from Italian and means belonging to viticulture. The term "oeno" comes from the Greek language and translates as - wine, and the science that deals with the study and procedures for creating,



caring for and preserving wine, but also other derivatives made from grapes, is called "oenology"[7].

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Analyzing the definitions regarding the definition of wine tourism, we find that the approaches to its content can be conventionally classified into two large groups of approaches:

- based on the product and purpose of the tourist offer;
- based on the role of wine tourism in promoting the tourist attractions of the Republic of Moldova.

**1.** The first group of approaches, based on the product offered, in our opinion, is the most widespread concept regarding the definition of wine tourism. This vision, in fact, reveals the totality of the goods and services offered within this type of tourism. The approach based on the product offered by the wine enterprises can be found in the Law on the organization and development of the tourist activity in the Republic of Moldova [9], the encyclopedia Wikicro, on the promotion page of the "Wine of Moldova" brand and in the specialist literature of researchers: Hall C., Sharples L., Cambourne B., and Macionis N. [7], Miron Viorel, Guțui Veaceslav and others [10], Bogan Elena, Simon Tamara [2], Platon Nicolae [12] etc.

Next we will reveal these approaches. Thus, in accordance with art. 3 of the Law on the organization and development of tourist activity in the Republic of Moldova "wine tourism is a form of tourism practiced by tourists to visit wine regions, wine farms and wine businesses in order to combine the taste of tasting wine products with knowledge of the local lifestyle, the environment rural and cultural activities" [9].

We find the same definition on p. 3 of the National Program in the field of tourism "Wine Road in Moldova" [8]. This concludes that wine shops, exhibition centers, tasting rooms with exceptional architecture, cities and underground caverns, the diversity of production, specialized stores - represent a special potential for promoting wine tourism in Moldova, present motivations capable of placing the wine tourism product of republic in the international tourist circuit [8].

Wikicro encyclopedia states that "wine tourism, oenotourism, wine tourism, or wine tourism refers to tourism whose purpose is or includes the tasting, consumption, or purchase of wine, often at or near the source. Where other types of tourism are often passive in nature, wine tourism can consist of visits to wineries, wine tasting, vineyard walks or even actively participating in the harvest" [6].

The European Vintur Program establishes that "wine tourism is a form of homologation tourism based on the discovery of wine regions and their products, it is a form of rural tourism and agritourism, and the wine tourism product consists in the integration under a single thematic concept of resources and services tourism of interest, existing or potential, in a wine-growing area".

The National Office of Vine and Wine (hereafter ONVV) on the promotion page of the "Vinul Moldovei" or "Wine of Moldova" brand noted that "vine tourism, wine tourism, also known as wine tourism, proposes visiting some wine domains and restoring the cultural link between the consumer and the final product, through contact with grapes, wine and the spaces where they are produced. At the same time, this type of tourism allows the purchase of wine products" [21].

The Winemakers' Association of Australia defines wine tourism as "visits to wineries and wine regions to experience the unique qualities of the lifestyle associated with the enjoyment of wine and cultural activities, gastronomy and scenery". It is this definition and approach that gave rise to a series of studies of products and destinations [14, p. 48].

Moldovan researchers Miron Viorel, Guțui Veaceslav, and others defined "wine tourism as tourism, which constantly captures the interest of visitors to different agricultural areas of the world, which produce wines, have the necessary facilities for practicing wine and grape tasting or for treatments" [10, p. 34].

Romanian researchers Bogan Elena, Simon Tamara conclude that "oenological/wine-growing tourism relies on the presence of viticultural products, associated with wine production and storage units, such as wineries. They offer tasting spaces and in some cases even accommodation, which are created in special spaces, such as old and renovated manor houses" [2, p. 25].

The Romanian researcher Soare I. states that "wine tourism or uval tourism appeared on the foundation of the link between the culture of wine, vines and man, with long-standing traditions, it has continuously given generations the pleasure of observing and remarking its significance" [13, p. 52].

Wine tourism is defined by Dutch researchers Michael Hall and Niki Macionis as "visits to vineyards, wineries, wine festivals and wine shows for wine tasting and exploitation of the attributes of a wine-producing region, these being the main motivating factors for visitors". This definition is based on the study of information obtained from tourists and visitors to wine festivals [7, p. 3].

The Australian Center for Sustainable Tourism Research supports the idea that "wine tourism is about tasting the wine and experiencing the destination. At the same time, it is mentioned that tourists are motivated to visit these businesses to explore the surroundings of the destination, to interact socially with the local environment and for personal development" [15]. Personal development assumes that tourists during the visits get to know the information provided by the guides about the wine culture and the place where the vines are planted. Personal development is part of the tourist's internal motivations, while wine tasting and destination experience remain attraction factors.

Steven Van Ausdler found that "wine tourism is a tourism product suitable for the rural area". Wine production can help rural regions restructure their economies by creating jobs for both wine production and hospitality associated with traditional meals. The availability of wine trails plays a central role in attracting visitors to rural areas in many underdeveloped regions [22, p. 10-14].

The Moldavian scholar Platon Nicolae [12, p. 194] in a research on rural tourism identified several visions regarding the essence of wine tourism. We can attribute the first vision to the first approach to the notion of wine tourism and this opinion implies:

- 1) a motivational form of tourism practiced by tourists to visit wineries and wine regions, in order to combine the pleasure of tasting wine products with the opportunity to get to know the country, the lifestyle of the natives, the culinary and gastronomic traditions".
- 2) the possibility for tourists to get to know the entire technological process of wine preparation, and in the villages where the winemaking tradition is preserved, tourists can get involved in the wine production process.

**2.** The second approach to the definition of wine tourism emphasizes its role in promoting the tourist attractions of the Republic of Moldova. This approach assumes that visiting a wine tourism object can be combined with various interesting activities and exploring the surroundings.

In our view, the tourist demand, in the last period, requires an offer as varied as possible of tourist objects visited in a single tour. Combining the visit of wine enterprises with the inclusion of various cultural-artistic objects in the tourist route conditions an even greater attraction for tourists.

The National Program in the field of tourism "Wine Road in Moldova" establishes that the viticulture branch and the tourism industry contribute to attracting the largest number of consumers of viticulture tourism production, additionally promoting all existing tourist facilities in Moldova [8].

In the framework of the research carried out by the Moldovan scholar Platon Nicolae on rural tourism, he was able to find that wine tourism, in addition to offering the offered product, also has an important role in promoting the tourist heritage of the Republic of Moldova. Thus, he concludes that "wine tourism is the calling card of the Republic of Moldova, because the tourist packages proposed for sale to foreign tourists necessarily include an objective or a wine cellar" [12, p. 194]. In our opinion, the scholar Platon Nicolae succeeded in the presented definitions to include both approaches regarding the concept of wine tourism.

Foreign scholars Brown G., Getz D. find that "wine tourism can be included in niche tourism based on the desire to visit wine-producing regions or where tourists are determined to visit wine-producing regions, especially wineries and wineries, while traveling for other reasons" [3, p. 146-158].

Niche tourism refers to destinations, which come to satisfy varied needs of the tourist [20].

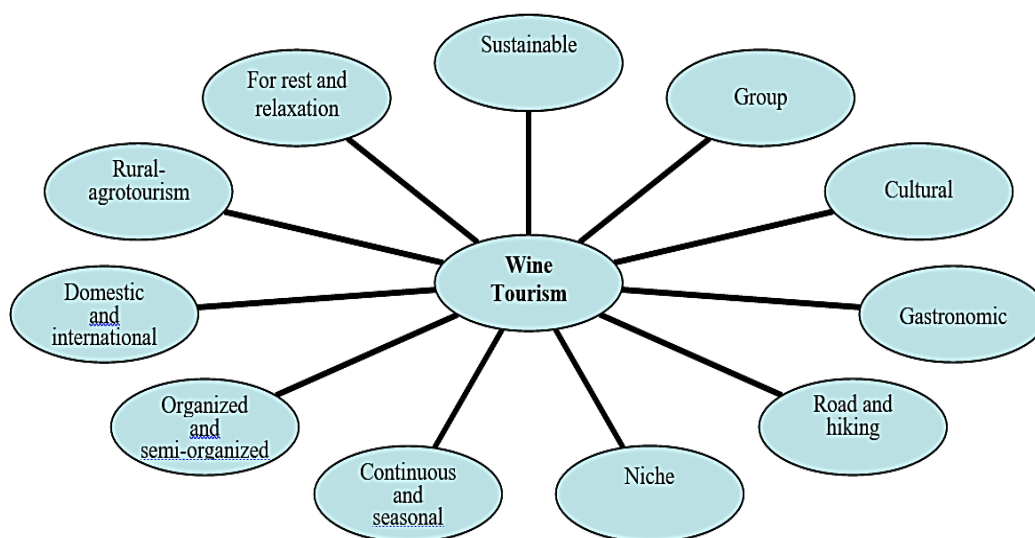
An important disclosure of the content of wine tourism is presented by the researcher Veronica Tomescu, who mentions that "wine tourism is found in agrotourism and gastronomic tourism, and can also be included in the category of eco and sustainable tourism"[16].

The approaches mentioned regarding the definition of wine tourism and its role in the Republic of Moldova allowed us to formulate the following definition: "wine tourism represents rural and sustainable economic activities, with a view to the possibility of studying the exceptional architecture of wine cellars and beautifully decorated rooms, wineries, underground cities, cellars and cultural events related to the promotion of wine products

(festivals, national wine days, etc.), which involve tasting wine products and traditional gastronomic dishes, personal development regarding the culture of wine production and tasting, purchase of wine products, visiting tourist attractions in the locality, participation in walks and hikes in the area, etc.

As a result of the investigations carried out and the analysis of the concepts of wine tourism, the author delineated the following features of this tourism: sustainable, group, cultural, gastronomic, road and hiking, niche, continuous and seasonal, organized and semi-organized, domestic and international, rural- agritourism, rest and relaxation.

Let's follow in figure 1 the features of wine tourism.



**Figure 1. The Features of Wine Tourism**

Source: developed by the author

Let's examine the features of wine tourism:

- sustainable – ensures sustainable, long-term economic development, respectful of both environmental and socio-cultural resources, but also respectful of people (visitors, employees of the wine tourism sector, populations in tourist reception areas). The concept of sustainable tourism seeks to reconcile the economic objectives of tourism development with the maintenance of the resource base essential for its existence. Wine tourism is a heterogeneous activity, which contributes to the development of the country's economy and includes in its activity services such as: catering, transport, production and marketing of goods, souvenirs, cultural and leisure activities, etc.;
- group – trips are organized for a group of people, minimum 2 people;
- cultural – the tours are accompanied by a guide on the culture of serving and making wine products. Cultural tourism is based on visiting museums and places of archaeological, historical and religious interest, as well as on learning about local art and folklore: music, dance, folk crafts, folk theatre, national costumes, which are of cognitive and cultural interest. Cultural tourism can also be attributed to various national and international festivals, including Wine Day, which is held annually and gathers visitors from different countries.
- gastronomic – there is a certain compatibility and combination of certain types of wine with certain dishes, and this type of tourism involves travelling to enjoy traditional

prepared food and drink, constituting a unique and memorable gastronomic experience;

- road and hiking – wine tourism involves visiting vineyards, wine cellars and other wine rooms, which are located in different localities and, as a rule, travel to the respective points is carried out by car, while visits to vineyards, wineries and other local attractions may include hiking;
- niche – trips for other reasons than visiting the wine enterprise, but which complement the tourist programme;
- continuous and seasonal – the wineries receive visitors all year round, but visiting the master class on the grape processing can only be seen during the harvest period, i.e. autumn, therefore seasonal;
- organized and semi-organized – the visit to the vineyards can be fully organized by a tour company or the visit can be carried out with your own transport by booking the excursion online or via telephone;
- domestic and international – winery visitors can be both residents and non-residents of a country;
- rural-agrotourism – tourist activities carried out in rural areas, including visits to vineyards and wine-growing estates with the aim of enhancing the natural and human potential of villages. Rural tourism targets tourists who benefit from the following services: accommodation in agro-tourist guesthouses, food with pure ecological products grown and prepared in the area, leisure. A good number of the wineries have accommodation spaces and restaurants where entertainment activities are organized.
- rest and relaxation – tourist activity, which is accompanied by a state of rest and relaxation as a result of tasting traditional Moldovan dishes and tasting selected wines.

In the process of researching approaches to wine tourism, we established the following goals related to the activity of wine tourism:

- visiting the production and storage areas of wine products (wine rooms, cellars, underground cities, etc.);
- consumption of wine products as a treatment;
- interaction with the local lifestyle of the rural environment;
- participation in cultural events: festivals, national wine day;
- purchasing quality products for an attractive price;
- walks in the vineyard, and sometimes even participation in the harvest;
- personal development in terms of knowledge of the entire technological process of wine-making.

Wine tourism includes the following services:

- catering;
- transport;
- production and marketing of goods;
- sale of souvenirs;
- guided tours regarding the culture of serving and manufacturing wine products in wine rooms (cellars, galleries, halls, cellars, underground cities, etc.);
- tastings;
- cultural and entertainment activities;
- accommodation;
- services regarding visiting nearby tourist attractions.

The attraction factors in wine tourism tours are:

- visit some special rooms with special architecture;
- the relaxing atmosphere created by the winemakers;
- personal development;
- shops with wine products at attractive prices;
- level of service;
- tasting of wine products and gastronomic delights;
- local lifestyle;
- attractions in the area.

Wine tourism is considered an essential tool for increasing employment and prosperity of the regional rural economy.

## 5. Conclusions

National and international approaches to wine tourism are more or less complex. In the last two decades, a certain progress has been registered in the direction of terminological standardization regarding tourism [20]. At the same time, there are discussions among researchers regarding the terms used in tourism. Although, the WTO has clearly defined the definition of tourism and the international and domestic tourist, at the same time there are still countries that have not accepted the generally accepted terminology regarding the terms in tourism.

As for wine tourism, it is less researched, being a relatively new form of tourism. It could be said that wine tourism has its specific peculiarities. At the same time, we believe that in the research presented by the authors it was possible to analyze the identified definitions of tourism, tourist and wine tourism and to present their own definitions.

The presented research allows us to conclude:

- 1) Tourism represents a form of recreation for the tourist with the purpose of spending free time according to his preferences in order to satisfy the personal needs of knowledge and exploration of a geographical space and which at the same time represents a branch of the economy regarding the provision of guiding services, accommodation, transportation, food, etc.
- 2) Tourists are people who move from their place of residence to spend their free time in order to visit picturesque places and attractive leisure spaces, to have recreation and to acquire new experiences.
- 3) Wine tourism represents rural and sustainable economic activities, with a view to the possibility of studying the exceptional architecture of wine cellars and beautifully designed rooms, wineries, underground cities, cellars and cultural events related to the promotion of wine products (festivals, national wine days, etc.), which involve tasting wine products and traditional gastronomic dishes, personal development regarding the culture of wine making and tasting, purchasing wine products, visiting local tourist attractions, participating in walks and hikes in the area, etc.
- 4) The characteristic features of wine tourism are: sustainable, group, cultural, gastronomic, road and hiking, niche, continuous and seasonal, organized and semi-organized, domestic and international, rural-agritourism, rest and relaxation.

- 5) Purpose related to the activity of wine tourism: visiting production and storage areas of wine products (cellars, cellars, underground cities, etc.), consumption of wine products as a treatment, interaction with the local lifestyle of the rural environment, participation in events cultural: festivals, national wine day, procurement of quality products at an attractive price, visits to the vineyard, and sometimes participation in the harvest, personal development regarding the knowledge of the entire technological process of wine preparation.
- 6) Wine tourism includes the following services: catering, transport, production and sale of goods, sale of souvenirs, guided tours regarding the culture of serving and manufacturing wine products in wine rooms (cellars, galleries, halls, cellars, underground cities, etc.), tastings, cultural and entertainment activities, accommodation, services regarding visiting nearby tourist attractions.
- 7) The attraction factors in wine tourism tours are: the visit of special rooms with a special architecture, the relaxing atmosphere created by the winemakers, personal development, shops with wine products at attractive prices, the level of service, the tasting of wine products and gastronomic delights, the style of local life, attractions in the area.

Wine tourism is becoming more and more popular every year. This activity is practiced by both the foreign and local population. We believe that the discussions and views of the authors addressed in this article will be a theoretical support for the field of professional training in the field of tourism.

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### **Rezumat**

*Tema de interes științific a autorilor este cercetarea abordărilor conceptuale privind turismul vitivinicol.*

*Scopul prezentei cercetări este elucidarea conceptelor și generalităților privind turismul vitivinicol. Conceptele turismului vitivinicol s-au format odată cu evoluția sa, iar aspectele definitorii au variat în funcție de opiniile profesionale ale specialiștilor din turism. Înțelegerea conceptului de turism vitivinicol nu poate fi desprinsă de conceptele generale de turism, tur, turist, vizitator, călător, excursionist. În același timp, o atenție deosebită se acordă dezvăluirii trăsăturilor turismului vitivinicol și a clasificării acestuia în funcție de diferite aspecte. Studiul prezentat este bazat pe pozițiile oficiale ale Organizațiilor Internaționale și Naționale ale Turismului, actele legislative și normative, cât și viziuni ale cercetătorilor străini și autohtoni.*

*Prezentul studiu a fost efectuat în baza următoarelor metode de cercetare științifică: analiza, sinteza, comparația, gruparea, sistematizarea etc.*

*Concluziile autorilor țin de prezentarea definițiilor proprii a conceptelor examinate, precum și noutatea științifică privind elucidarea trăsăturilor turismului vitivinicol.*

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**Cuvinte-cheie:** turism, tur, vizitator, turist, excursionist, turism vitivinicol

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### **Аннотация**

*Предметом научного интереса авторов является исследование концептуальных подходов относительно винного туризма.*

*Целью данного исследования является разъяснение концепций и общих черт, касающихся винного туризма. Понятия винного туризма формировались вместе с его эволюцией, и определяющие аспекты менялись в соответствии с профессиональным мнением специалистов по туризму. Понимание понятия винный туризм нельзя отделять от общих понятий туризм, тур, турист, посетитель, путешественник, экскурсант. При этом особое внимание уделяется выявлению особенностей винного туризма и его классификации по разным аспектам. Представленное исследование основано на официальных позициях международных и национальных туристических организаций, законодательных и нормативных актах, а также мнениях зарубежных и отечественных исследователей.*

*Настоящее исследование выполнено на основе следующих научных методов исследования: анализ, синтез, сравнение, группировка, систематизация и др.*

*Выводы авторов касаются представления собственных определений рассматриваемых понятий, а также научной новизны в выяснении особенностей винного туризма.*

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**Ключевые слова:** туризм, тур, посетитель, турист, экскурсант, винный туризм

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