

Management of Tourist Sports Activities in the Republic of Moldova**Onoi MIHAIL**

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Abstract

The Republic of Moldova maintains its traditions regarding the management of sports tourism activities, the primary role in this regard being assumed by the Sports Tourism Federation and the Sports Orientation Federation. Thus, every year the two federations have a competition plan that is approved by the Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova. It involves the participation of athletes in national and international competitions in various sports tourism events, as well as a series of sports tourism events that take place in the Republic of Moldova. The Sports Tourism Federation of the Republic of Moldova ensures the management of sports tourism activities for events such as hiking, mountain, nautical and cycle tourism, and the Sports Orienteering Federation's sports orientation activities. All this is organised taking into account a regulation which is applied within sports tourism activities. The objectives of the study are represented by the analysis of the management of the activity of the professional federations that organize sports tourism activities by identifying the number of sports tourism activities, their locations and their selection criteria, in this sense the analysis of the specialized literature, the statistical-mathematical method were used, observations being made on the two structures that ensure the management of sports tourism activities at the national level. Moreover, the management of the federations that organise sports tourism activities in the Republic of Moldova they focused on their popularisation and the organisation of sports events that attract athletes both from the country and from abroad.

Keywords: tourism activities, tourism, management, sports activities.

Introduction

Tourism as an object of management reflects the complexity of tourist services, a characteristic aspect also for sports tourism activities (Chechelashvili Maia, Malania Elisabed, 2024, p.2). Outdoor sports tourism activities offer tourism an emerging trend to meet the growing demand of postmodern society for active recreation, leisure and sports (Francisco Molina Navarro, Manuel Rivera Mateos, María Genoveva Millán Vázquez de la Torre, Jesús Peña-Vinces, 2020, p. 3). Sport tourism activities in the Republic of Moldova from year to year are more and more practiced by people of different age groups, who thanks to professional federations and specialized tourist clubs, which prepare and organize these

events with an emphasis on diversification, innovation and technologies, become attractions for athletes and lovers of these sports not only from the Republic of Moldova, but also from abroad. The promotion of tourism offers, including sports tourism, to foreign tourists is done through an agenda that is updated annually and includes several groups of events, including sports events (Salagub, Aliona, 2022, p.127). The management of sports tourism activities is currently dictated by the trends that seek to increase tourism and sports for social, economic and environmental purposes. Moreover, the management of sports tourism activities is based on two basic actors: the active organisers of the sports tourism activities and the tourist participants who are often well physically prepared and emphasise the sports part of the activities in combination with visiting the destinations where the sports event takes place (Banhidi Miklos, Moghimehfar Farhad. 2024, p.8). In this context, sports tourism in general and tourist activities in particular have a sustainable character, having positive effects on the destinations where they are carried out (Derman, Engin, 2019, p. 259). The mentioned ones make the studies in the field of study continue, and our study aims to complete this field with the specifics of the Republic of Moldova.

The purpose of the research consists of the analysis of the management activity of the sport tourism activities in the Republic of Moldova organised by the relevant federations.

Research objectives:

1. Theoretical aspects regarding the management of sports tourism activities.
2. Analysis of the activity of sports tourism activities managed by the relevant federations from the Republic of Moldova in the last five years.
3. Identifying the management aspects of sports tourism activities organised in the Republic of Moldova.

Research methods. To carry out the research, research methods necessary to solve the proposed goal and achieve the established objectives were used, such as: analysis of specialised scientific-methodical literature, observation method, comparative method, and statistical-mathematical analysis.

Results and Discussion

The management of sports tourism activities in the Republic of Moldova is provided by non-commercial organisations (profile federations) that are created once some sports clubs and associations unite to develop a sports branch in order to meet the needs of society. In this sense, on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, a primary role is played by the Sports Tourism Federation, which focuses on sports events such as: walking tourism, mountain tourism, nautical tourism and bicycle tourism, which ensures the multilateral development of those who practice them both as a sports event, but also as a leisure tourist activity. In recent years, the Sports Tourism Federation of the Republic of Moldova has been the one to organise, coordinate and lead sports tourism at the national level, and in this sense, it has a competitive calendar, which is different depending on certain objective and subjective factors Figure 1.

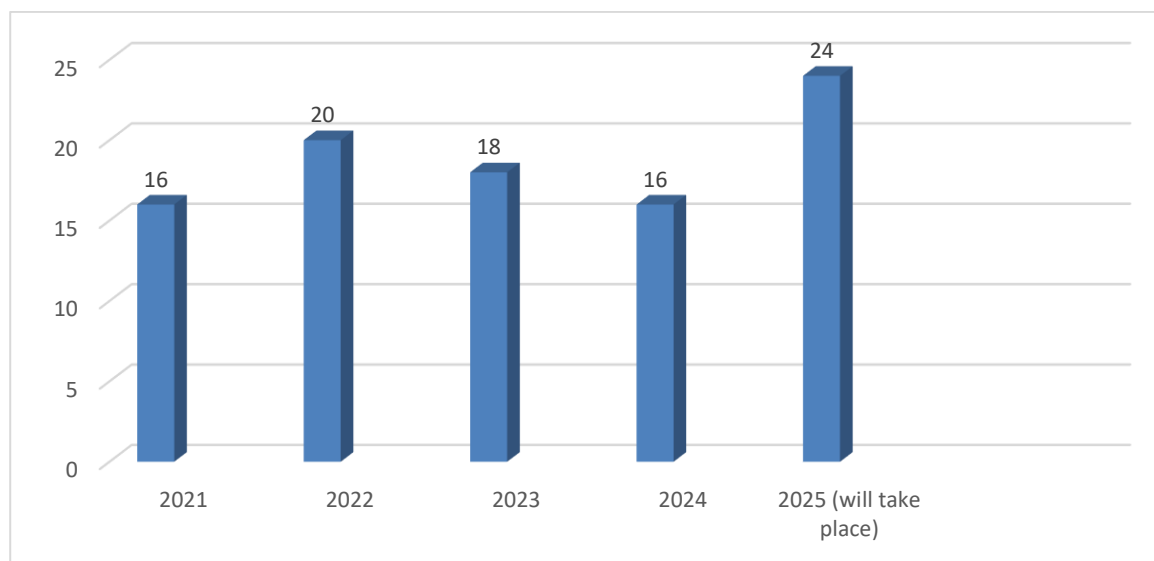


Fig. 1. The number of sports tourism activities organized, coordinated/to be organized and coordinated by the Sports Tourism Federation of the Republic of Moldova

From figure 1, it can be seen that the sports tourism activities managed by the sports tourism federation in the last five years 2021-2024 is 70 sports tourism activities carried out at various sports events, and in 2025 it is expected that another 24 sports tourism activities will be led by specialists in the field of sports tourism, namely in sports tourism, climbing, cycling, mountain tourism, cycling, water tourism Figure 2.

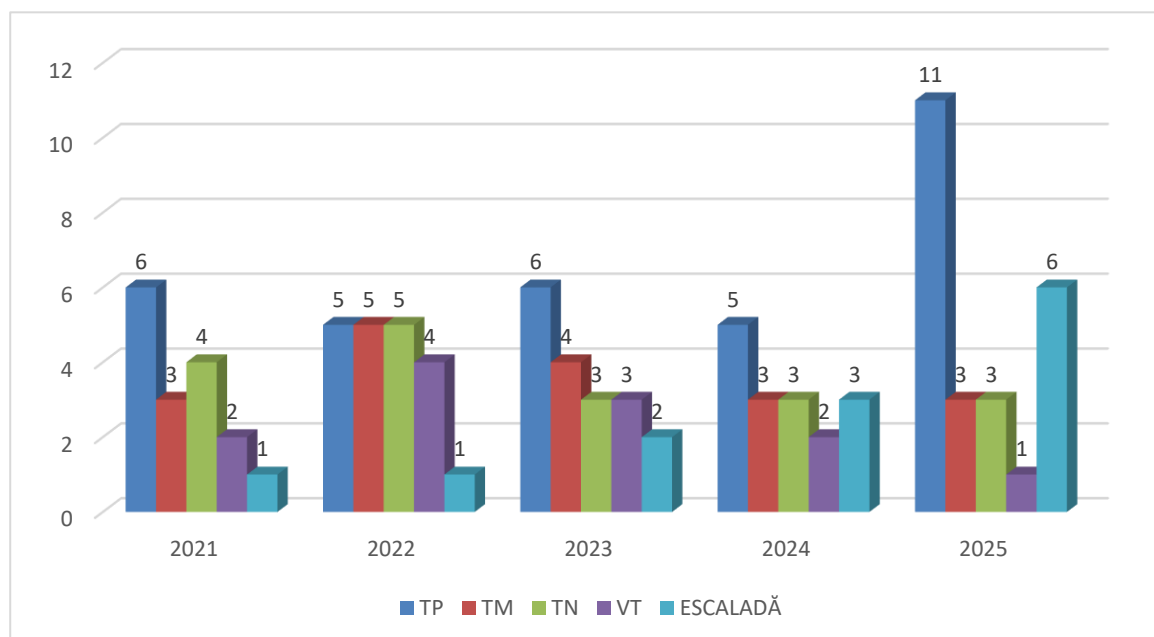


Fig. 2. The number of sports tourism activities managed/to be managed by the Sports Tourism Federation of the Republic of Moldova by forms of tourism (pedestrian (PT), mountain (MT), nautical (NT), bicycle tourism (BT) and climbing)

Figure 2 highlights that the federation ensures the management of the organisation of different sports tourism activities, which essentially require venues for the sports tourism activity, but also authorisation from local institutions. Thus, the most frequent locations where sports tourism activities are organised are in: Chisinau, Orhei, Tighina, Sîngerei, Dubăsari, Balti, Vadu lui Vodă, Glodeni, Ungheni, Ștefan Vodă, etc. Figure 3.

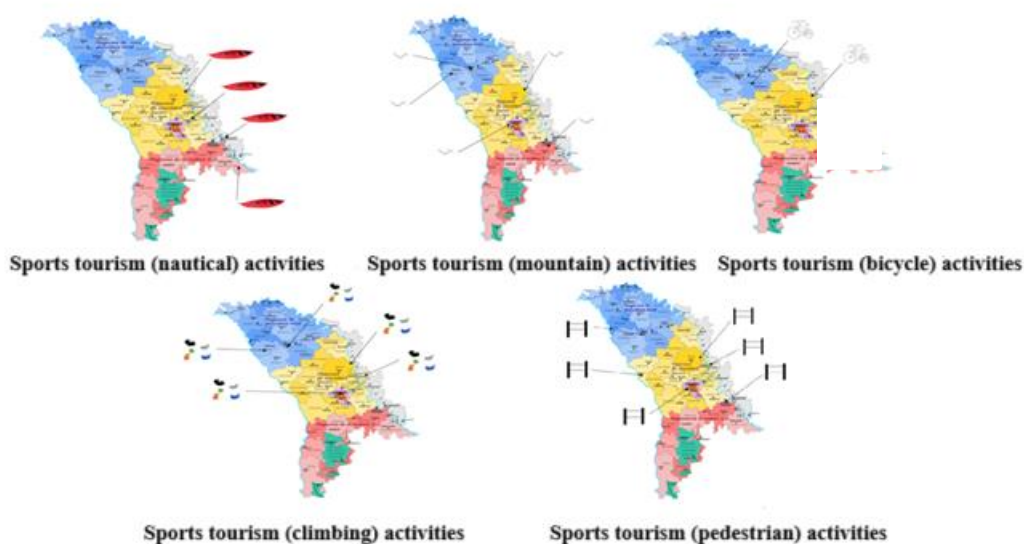


Fig. 3. Locations for various sports tourism activities (pedestrian, mountain, nautical, cycling, climbing) on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, managed by the Sports Tourism Federation

The locations identified by the managers of sports tourism activities as seen in Figure 3 are based on several criteria, among which Figure 4 can be mentioned:

1. The type of sports tourism activity carried out.
2. Specific location for the opening and closing of sports tourism activities.
3. The number of participants in sports tourism activities.
4. The type of equipment required to be used in sports tourism activity.
5. Source of drinking water.
6. Special area for setting up the participants' camp.

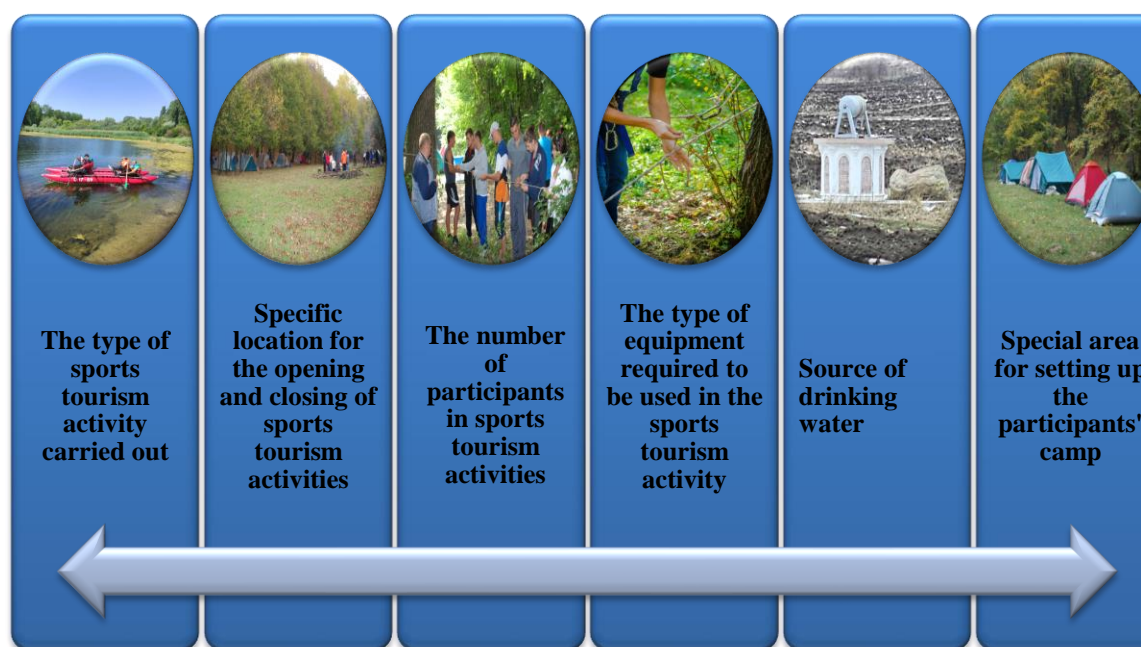


Fig. 4. Necessary criteria for organising and conducting sports tourism activities

In the context of what was presented, the managers of the sports institutions in the locations where the sports tourism activities take place, try to use different forms of promotion of the destinations, thus creating the premise of areas where various sports tourism activities can be practiced, such as: pedestrian, nautical, mountain or cycle tourism, a fact that leads to the attraction of tourists willing to practice sports and have a beautiful experience outdoors (Peric, Marko, 2015, p.86).

The analysis of sports tourism activities highlights that people are looking for such activities, which combine movement with socialization, getting to know new areas in the national geographic space, but also the experience of being in a competition with people whose goal is to strengthen the state of health. In this sense, another entity that ensures the management of sports tourism activities is the Sports Orienteering Federation of the Republic of Moldova, which organizes various sports tourism activities with an emphasis on the sports orientation test in which "forest" sports lovers participate, both from the country and abroad. According to (Peric, Marko, 2015, p.197) tourists through sports tourism activities want to broaden their horizons or feel enriched by learning about something new or by engaging in sports tourism activities. Active or passive participation in sports tourism activities, in combination with unique sports resources, primarily places and facilities, can offer tourists special experiences, only if an institution that can do this through human resources ensures their management. In this sense, the Sports Orienteering Federation has a competitive calendar that focuses on orienteering sports tourism activities that attract different categories of people (Figure 5).

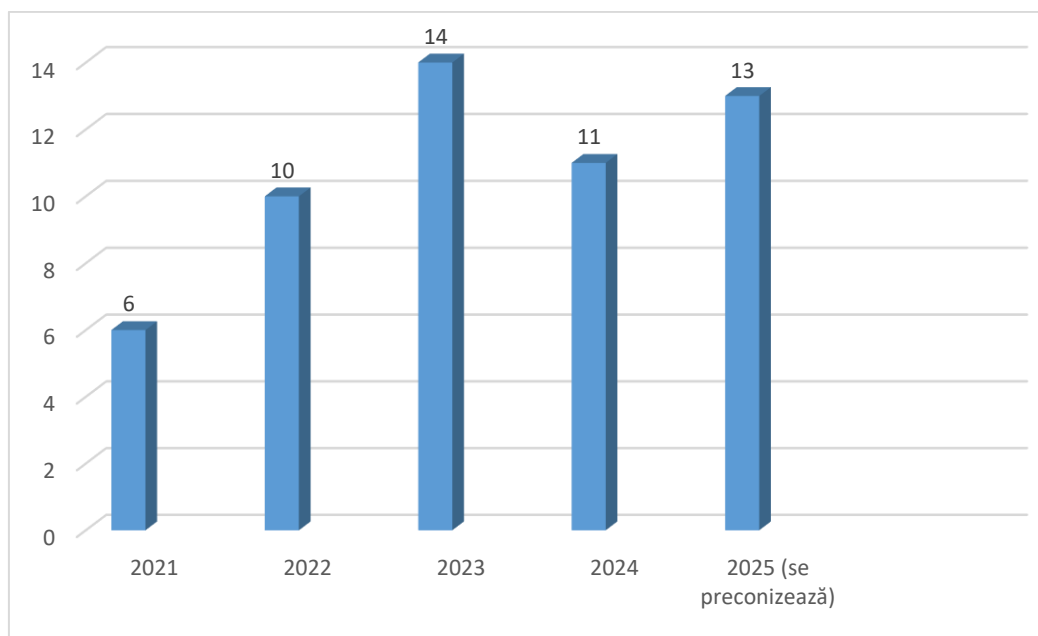


Fig. 5. The number of sports tourism activities organised, coordinated/to be organised and coordinated by the Sports Orientation Federation of the Republic of Moldova

From Figure 5, it can be noted that starting from 2021, the Sports Orientation Federation has an increase in sports tourism activities that is maintained from year to year, a fact visible through the forecasts for 2025, which will be around 13 sports tourism activities. This fact is due to the efficient management of the sports orientation federation, which, in order to attract participants, but also to develop these activities on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, organised and continues to organise annual theoretical-practical information seminars in various areas and regions of the Republic of Moldova. Thus, in recent years, the federation has started to organise sports tourism activities in various regions of the country, such as Chisinau, Sîngerei, Ceadr-Lunga, Ungheni, Floreşti, Călăraşi, Dubăsarii-Vechi, etc. (Figure 6). These locations were identified because, in order to ensure the management of sports tourism activities of this kind, it is necessary to create a sports topographical map, which requires the identification of a specialist and time to create it. In this sense, through an effective strategy and management, the federation organised a seminar with the participation of a specialist in drawing orientation maps, where several people were trained to be able to draw such maps on the territory of the Republic of Moldova. At the same time, the president of the federation, in the seminars organised in various regions of the country, trained different categories of people: physical education teachers, coaches, lovers of sports tourist activities (sports orientation), who currently create maps of the areas where the events take place. Thus, the locations where sports orienteering tourist activities are currently taking place have become diverse, and this fact has created premises for travel to different regions, major interest from the participants and knowledge of the geographical areas of the Republic of Moldova, which have potential in this regard.



Fig. 6. Locations for various sports tourism activities (sports orientation) on the territory of the Republic of Moldova, managed by the Sports Orientation Federation

The summary of locations required for the performance of sport-oriented sports tourism activities indicates that they can be used in the process of organising and conducting sports tourism activities only if they meet the following conditions Figure 7:

1. They have an updated sports map for the last five years.
2. They have diverse terrain that challenges participants.
3. They have a strategic management plan for the development of sports activities in general, but also sports tourism.
4. Promotion of sport and a healthy lifestyle among the local population, etc.

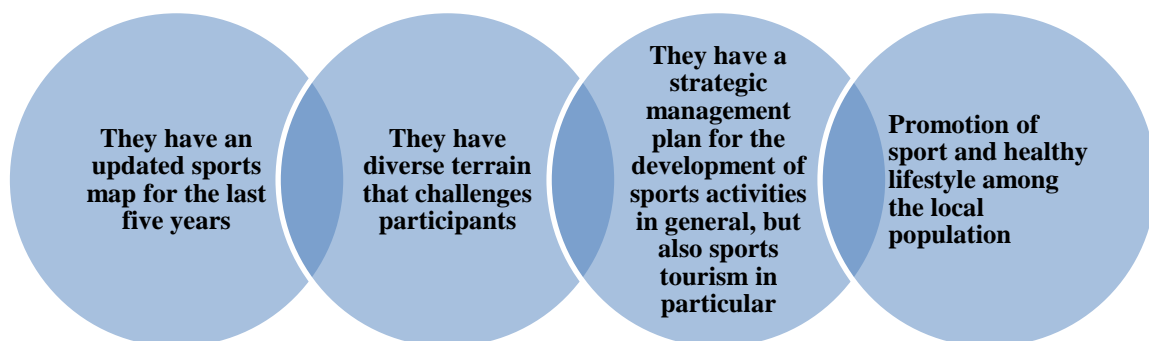


Fig. 7. Criteria that a location must meet in order to organize and carry out sports orienteering tourist activities

The world is constantly changing, and the managers of today's tourism and sports entities must respond to their challenges. Sports activities, including sports tourism, are also constantly evolving, and market competition requires managers to be constantly innovative and prepared for the realities of society. In this sense, sports federations must adapt and carry out tourism and sports activities that are well thought out and adapted, with an emphasis on the needs of society, in the context where they require long-term development with an emphasis on well-thought-out strategies that bring both economic and social benefits (Ratkowski Wojciech, Ratkowska Jadwiga. 2018. p. 86). The author, (George F. Zarotis, 2021 p. 78) mentions that the organizers of sports tourism activities must adopt effective management to stand out from competitors and able to attract those who wish to participate in such activities.

An eloquent example of such management is the collaboration between the Sports Orienteering Federation and the Sports Tourism Federation of the Republic of Moldova, which in partnership organize various sports tourism activities focused on sports orientation in combination with sports tourism called "3D Labyrinth". At the same time, these sports tourism activities become exciting and attract more and more people if the format and complexity of the route elements change from one activity to another such as the events: "Battle of the Labyrinth", "Galata-Triathlon", etc. They maintain a healthy lifestyle, to promote sports tourism and sports orientation in the country, but also to socialize those who participate in such events.

The management of sports tourism activities includes a series of demanding stages that involve the creation, planning, elaboration, implementation and adaptation of some concepts of sports activities. Currently, the participants of sports tourism activities play an essential role in their organization, a fact that requires direct contact with the managers of the event.

According to (Gang Liu, Hailin Li, Xiaodong Feng, 2024, p. 134), an essential role in the management of sports tourism activities is played by the logistic management activity that emphasises the accommodation and training of the participants, their on-site management, transport management, recycling and garbage disposal. The research subjects consider all this, and this is visible through an efficient management of the sports tourism activities organised in the Republic of Moldova.

Conclusions

Sports tourism activities differ from grandiose sports events that have a higher level of scale, but also complex management. The management of sports tourism activities highlights the importance of the event, being focused on the satisfaction of the participants and ensuring the continuity of their development in various formats, to attract different categories of people. From the analysis carried out, we can see that the management of the federations with a tourist profile in the Republic of Moldova is efficient, but still has great reserves. In this sense, the figures show that every year various sports tourism activities organised in various regions of the country, which must meet a series of criteria, all of which are ensured by efficient management. Specialists in the field mention that in order to stand out on the tourist market with such events, it is necessary to adopt a modern management, focused on technologies, but also activities that attract those who wish to these events, and eloquent examples are the management activities adopted by the two federations with a tourist profile from the Republic of Moldova, which organize a series of sports tourism activities with an emphasis on increasingly interesting and modern combinations: "3D-Labyrinth", "Labyrinth Battle", "Galata-Triathlon".

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