

Interview with **Catalin Stefan, General Manager, Golden Tulip Bucharest**

Activity: YGGDRASIL project

Subject: Economic global crisis impact in touristic field

Globalization as a real phenomenon and its influences on the
Romanian economy

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Q: 1. The American philosopher Noah Chomsky claimed that "the term *globalization* was appropriated by the Power, conferring it the meaning of economic integration, in which the investors interests are priorities and very rarely humans interests." **To what extent do you consider that the opening of the Romanian market for the foreign investors is beneficial both for the Romanian tourism and for the common people?**

A: I believe that the opening of the Romanian market is indeed beneficial. As one can notice in the last years international brands, that have avoided sistematically Romania so far, entered on the Bucharest market. Among these, the most famous are Novotel, Ramada, Howard Johnson, etc. It has also started the building of a Hilton Hotel in Sibiu, Hilton being the first important player who invests outside Bucharest. The Accor chain has advanced discussions about the opening of a hotel under the Novotel brand in Timisoara.

The hotelier market in Romania is underdeveloped for the present needs, taking into account that many properties are in a severe state of degradation. Only recently Bucharest has outrun 10.000 rooms clasified between 1- 5 stars.

Unfortunately for the common people this opening does not have a very strong impact because of the lack of money.

Q: 2. *Globalization* is not a recent phenomenon, it started when the first European explorers discovered America and on their return they brought the potato and the corn to Europe. Since then, *globalization* has become more and more complex, the culture and the economy in different places of the world started to be in a continuous interconnection. **To what extent this mixture of ideas, resources and people can become advantageous?**

A: This mixture can have as advantage that less developed countries have direct access to technologies and resources needed for development but bare in mind that the present crisis has spread precisely because of this *globalization*.

Q: 3. A report of the Worldwide Organization of Tourism mentions that the number of the tourists that travel abroad will diminish with up to 2% this year due to the worldwide economic crisis, and Europe will be most affected. Also most of the countries, where the tourists came from, are in recession. **Which can be the effects of this fact upon the Romanian**

market and which are the measures that should be taken in order to fight the negative effects?

A: I believe that 2% is too little if we take into discussion business tourism. In Romania we are considering a drop to up to 15% as our country has more business tourism rather than leisure tourism. To fight these effects the hotel owners have to understand that the prices should be adjusted according to the request. It is also necessary for the Government to get involved in this issue through an aggressive promotion of touristic destinations.

On the short run the budgets can suffer but on the long run now is the time when solid partnerships can be created.

Q: 4. A large number of the hotels in Bucharest survive because of the business tourism and as you said earlier, it has been speculated that the price on this segment will drop with up to 20%. **In what way is this fall of the prices related to the worldwide economic crisis?**

A: In a crisis situation the companies usually try to diminish the expenses and the first budgets that get adjusted are travel and communication, thus the prices dropping is tightly related to the present day economic- financial situation.

Q: 5. *Globalization* has been presented by its partisans as being a beneficial, prosperous phenomenon. **In what way could *globalization* face positively the present worldwide economic crisis?**

A: Unfortunately the present day crisis was brought about by *globalization* so from my point of view there are no positive signs of improving this situation with the help of *globalization*.