

# GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT AND MICRO MANAGEMENT. COMPARATIVE ASPECTS FROM ROMANIA AND SYRIA

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The study addresses some aspects of the management of two ministries in ROMANIA and SYRIA. But what is surprising as compared with some similar elements, the differences in national culture and characteristics of the external environment for each of the two countries is at the ministerial level as pointed out by the authors, referring to strengths and weaknesses, while pointing out their implications for micro-management. Next, there are reported some problems faced by a number of economic organizations (not only) in the two countries - both domestically and internationally - particularly in terms of bilateral relations. Finally some recommendations are developed targeting various managerial levels.*

## **1. General aspects**

The study takes into account the wider context in which they can be analyzed socio-economic systems at the macro level, so even a state (country) can be considered as organizations, regarding the managerial point of view.[1] Correspondingly, if we think of a possible know how's management, from a country to another, from a culture to another, supposes a good knowledge of the cultural particularities of the two involved and their influence on management. [2]

In the sense defined above, we will give some details about issues related to management of two ministries (Foreign Affairs and that of Tourism) in Romania and Syria, with implications for managerial decisions and actions of companies and governmental and nongovernmental organizations from both countries, including bilateral relations.

In designing their strategies, organizations take into account the external environmental factors, but also governmental decisions and strategies. It is generally known that gaining a national competitive advantage is favored or disfavored the four categories of factors (determinants): national competitive environment, acquisition of resources, links between industries, demand characteristics. [3]

Management requires a program, plan and information given in hand to be shaped by the manager into actions for dealing with a provided case.

Knowledge is also an important factor in this issue. Knowledge as "data information" and also as "digested information" is expressed by this simple example "if you buy a book, you buy information; if you have read the book and understood ("digested") it, you have knowledge". [4]

Of course there are many ways for countries or organizations to store, develop and transfer knowledge from one country to another by its desire, through initiating special strategies to export or import its culture, strategies, life styles, or management methods.

Sometimes transferring ideas, information or knowledge comes into force when occupying or dominating powers, enforcing occupied or dominated countries to implement special educational and cultural policies or trying to change the cultural features (language, traditions, and buildings) of those countries.

Transfer of knowledge and ideas can also come by what is called soft way that is expressed wildly by globalization which may not come with the desire of the country, but it cannot be avoided in any way.

In all cases the influence of the imported knowledge, culture, and ideas depends on how much the country is willing to conserve its identity and how much its culture and people are careful about origin and traditions.

## **2. Opportunities and threats. Characteristics of the external environment**

In its international relations, a state has to recognize its demographic, economical, political and geographical components as compared to the other states and has to exchange the experience, advice and the aid with its friends due to the international circumstances, obtaining benefits from the mutual needs and interests, similarities and differences between the state itself and the other states.

Geographical components of the country play a positive role when it is rich from the natural point of view, fortunes of all kind, and also when it has landscapes, mountains, seashores and others.

Also when the position and location of the state allow it to be in a special environment or in the middle of an important region it may have the opportunity to be appended for all kinds of economical and social activities.

The similarity between Syria and Romania comes from this point of view as both of them has its specialty in its own geographical environment, and each one presents a gate for the other countries in its region, and also because of their old and continued relations.

For Romania, it is a great opportunity to be integrated into the European Union and also to be a NATO member. Similarly we can consider the Arab League for Syria.

Also we can not ignore the threat to the vicinity of the Western Balkans for Romania. We can not ignore that Syria is near Iraq and beyond is this country appalling.

In counterpart, the EU integration represents a strong competition for Romanian organizations, becoming a disadvantage for them.

From the geopolitical point of view, the Black Sea area is located at the intersection of three very important areas: the former Soviet space to the East, the Greater Middle East in the south and the Trans-Atlantic community in the West. All these regions are found in the Black Sea-Caspian Sea. [5] For now, the Euro-Atlantic community lacks a unified strategy in the region. In this context, multilateral cooperation could be the chance to maintain the regional stability and unity.

### **3. The impact of developing and implementing strategies. Other internal constraints**

For companies in any field of work are important national strategies and directions set by the departmental strategies. Regarding the strategy of the branch in which it operates, the company has a major impact in developing and implementing its strategy.

In creating a strategy, the most important problem is given by the environmental conditions. [6] The international relations and development of other sectors in the national economy are factors which lead to the development of tourist activities. Also, in developing strategies are taken into account the specific constraints of that country.

On one hand, there can be addressed the elements of national culture, different for the two countries. The influences of the prevailing religion (Christianity in Romania, Islamism for Syria) will be present. As such internal constraints are different, with corresponding implications in the development of tourism activities.

On the other hand, Romania's poor infrastructure (lack of highways, etc.) creates a disadvantage for the development of tourism. If Syria does not ask such questions (about features, 9000 km of highway) it would be considered a desert climate.

Syria has a clear strategy in tourism. Since 2002, the first objected is the fact that the number of tourists doubles every five years.

In Romania is not yet outlined a comprehensive strategy for tourism development. Various documents have been developed, called strategies, which - besides the limited nature - were not consistently enforced.

### **4. Syrian-Romanian relations**

Relations between Syrian and Romanian people have started when the old Syrian civilization spread in the shores of the Black Sea.

Friendly relations were expressed by the Silk Road the most famous trade road in the world which was used to cross from Europe through Turkey and Syria to India and China, 'The Silk Roads are much older than most people realize. They have existed for at least 4,000 years, exchanging ideas, languages, people, diseases, technologies, religions, and goods between the eastern, southern, western and northern edges. [7]

Also Syrians were the most important part of the army of Emperor Hadrian and Trajan, when they came with their campaign in Dacia to annex it to the Roman Empire, while many of the Syrian soldiers remained at that time in Dacia (ancient Romania).

"In his later years around year 114, Trajan worked to expand the empire even more. He led a successful campaign to Dacia". [8]

One of the famous names at that time was the Syrian architect Apolodor, friend of the Emperor Trajan, who designed and implemented the giant, the well-known bridge on the Danube.

Also the spread of Christianity in Europe came in Syria with (Bolus the Messenger) St. Paul. The most important role was played by patriarchate of Antioch and by the patriarch of Antioch in the entire East.

"Now residing in Damascus and Syria, there are also Christians between Arab-speaking even if in Syria, Lebanon, and Iraq". [9]

The relations continued through the common dominating authority of the Ottoman Empire on both Syria and parts of Romania. The emergence of mutual commercial activities led to the usage of hundreds of words of Arabic origin to the Romanian language.

In the modern history, through some important steps:

- Syria and Romania started their diplomatic relation on the level of representative in 1955;
- They upgrade it to be at Embassy level in 1957;
- Syria and Romania signed an agreement of cooperation in the field of tourism on February 1995;
- They signed the first executive program of the agreement for two years in 1998;
- They are preparing for the signature of a new executive program for the years 2011- 2012.

## **5. Ministry of tourism in Syria Strategies and problems**

Syria moved during the past two years to specific measures in promoting tourism to Syria like: advertising campaigns of in the media, road signboards on the buses, and subway stations;

participation in the main tourist Exhibitions; Allocate for that an appropriate budget in 2010 at about / 350 million Syrian pounds / 7 million dollars in order to achieve balance between offer and demand. [10]; marketing studies to determine the tourist markets for Syrian tourism, and to determine the promotional activities in each of them.

Syrian Government plans to invite every year hundreds of Arab and foreign journalists who are specialized in tourism media to visit tourist and archaeological sites to transfer what they have seen in Syria to their readers through their documentation means and in various events such as the celebration of St. Paul 2008-2009, the 4th pilgrimage trip from Lebanon organized by the Syrian Ministry of Tourism to Brad - Aleppo, on 18 and 19 /09/2010, on the occasion of golden jubilee year of St. Mar Maron due to passing / 1600 / years since his death,

and the Silk Road Festival, which launched since 2002 to consignate Syria's role as a unique convergence of the Silk Road coming from the East and West on its territory.

The Ministry patronizes art, sport and cultural activities of world tourist dimensions, offers all exemptions and facilitations, and always organizes tourist weeks in a number of Arab and foreign states and participates in 35 international tourist fairs, inter-percolated by finalized agreements and common programs.

Step by step Syria is trying to update the roles of the tourism marketing by issuing laws like:

- law NO: /65/ of the year 2002 dictating the establishment of the tourist chambers, aiming to organize the tourist private sector;
- law NO: /2/, date: January 11th 2009 related to institutions of organizing tourist tours, travel agencies, activities, media, tourist and marketing promotion;
- law No. /72/ 2010 indicates to transfer the possession of Umayyad Palace for conferences to the Ministry of Tourism.

## **6. Current situation and elements of the tourism in Syria**

The tourist movement to Syria witnessed during the first eight months of the year 2010 a marked a growth compared with the same period of the last year 2009 as the number of tourists arrivals, passers-by and visitors for a day amounted to 6.5 million arrivals as compared to 4.4 million arrivals during the same period in 2009 with an increase of 2.06 million and a growth rate of +47%. The tourism elements in Syria are: a). Syria is a huge museum, harboring the antiquities of more than 20 different civilizations, depicting in all the history of the human civilization and realizing a unique variety on the world level, nature is obviously various, including coast, mountains, forests, steppe, rivers, caves and caverns, natural and artificial lakes and Winter and Summer resorts, intermixing with the variety of antiquity and ancient cities, old houses, handicrafts and traditional industries, forming a compound attractive and unique tourist product, binding visits to seeing historical life styles, in addition to reviewing traditional arts and practicing attractive various tourist activities.; b). Syria's merits regarding the political and security stability; c). Syria has a complemented infrastructure, formed of a network of highways and railways, telecommunication, water and electricity networks, covering all over the state, in addition to five airports; d). Syrian visa isn't required from Arab countries, Turkey and Iran, and for the other tourists visa can be issued at the airports and bordering entrances within a few hours, by calling a tourist agency in his country.

## **7. Horizons and aspirations in the tourism relations between Syrian and Romanian**

The good relation at the Governmental and popular levels between Syria and Romania must be translated as to developed relations in the economic field. They began to be done with the signature of many important agreements like

(Exchange investment, avoiding double taxation, road transportation, direct shipping line between Latakia and Constanta ports and other agreements in other fields.

So there is an aspiration to enrich the mutual cooperation to increase the number of the tourism groups, especially when we know that there are more than 5.000 mixed families Syrian-Romanian resulted from 35.000 Syrian students that have studied in Romania.

Nowadays there are three transport companies with modern buses that work between Damascus and Bucharest and more than five flights weekly form Tarom and Syrian air lines.

But we still have one big problem with the entrance visa which is requested from the Romanian part and hard to be obtained from the Syrian citizens.

And there is a need for encouraging the private tourism agencies and companies as well as associations related to this section to exchange visits and investment activities in both of the two countries.

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