



**TECHNIUM**  
**SOCIAL SCIENCES JOURNAL**

**Vol. 29, 2022**

**A new decade  
for social changes**

[www.techniumscience.com](http://www.techniumscience.com)

ISSN 2668-7798



9 772668 779000

## **Does the activity of passenger transport have growth potential for the sustainable development of Constanța County?**

**Mari-Isabella Stan**

"Ovidius" University of Constanta, Faculty of Law and Administrative Sciences

[stanisabella@yahoo.com](mailto:stanisabella@yahoo.com)

**Abstract.** Transport is a vital sector with a major impact on social and environmental well-being, both in cities and in rural areas. The sustainable development of urban and rural communities depends mainly on the dynamics of the economic activity, transport having a special importance for the local economy, without which human activities would be impossible to organize and carry out. On the one hand, the companies need transport in order to produce and deliver their goods and services, and on the other hand, people need transport in order to get to work, for getting supplies, for education, tourism, recreation, and leisure and other daily activities. Considering these multiple perspectives, we have considered it appropriate to analyze the activity of the companies whose object of activity is passenger land transport at the level of Constanța County based on representative economic and financial indicators, exploring the possible determining factors which influence this sector in the context of the interest for the sustainable development of Constanța County.

**Keywords:** Passenger land transport, sustainable development, turnover, workforce.

### **1. Introduction**

Sustainable development is defined as the development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs. (UN, 1987). The main problem of sustainability is the concern for the disparity between economic and social development and its consequences for the natural resources and the environment. Therefore, the essence of the concept of sustainable development entails achieving a balance between the three pillars of sustainability: the economic pillar, the social pillar and the environmental pillar.

The Territorial Agenda 2030 *A future for all places* (2020) comments on the growing inequalities between territories and people, as well as the fact that non-sustainable developments have reached a critical level in Europe, and it emphasizes the need for understanding the territorial impact of sectoral policies that need to be properly tackled in order to contribute to the sustainable development.

One of the *European Economic and Social Committee's* (EESC) policy areas is transport, which is seen as "an ambitious and dynamic policy". Transport is a vital sector for Europe, covering one of EU's most significant areas of action and it has a major impact on social and environmental well-being, both in cities and in rural areas.

Thus, transport is one of the important economic sectors, which plays a vital role in society and economy, the citizens' quality of life depending on an efficient and accessible transport system. At the same time, it is a major source of environmental pressure in the European Union and it contributes to climate change, air and noise pollution (EEA, 2020).

Although the sustainable development goals set out in the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (UN, 2015) largely cover various aspects related to global economic, social, and environmental challenges, none of them is specifically focused on transport and mobility, transport being found, implicitly, in several objectives.

On the other hand, the year 2020 saw a global pandemic due to COVID-19, which had a negative impact on human life, the economy, the environment, the energy sector, and the transport sector (Nundy et al., 2021). Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has also generated a number of changes which have taken place in key areas of the economy, which are essential for sustainable development. A study conducted by Vancea and Nemirschi (2020) conveys the specific challenges facing each of these areas and identifies possible public policies that can be implemented in the immediate and future period so as to improve the situation of these economic sectors, in particular and of the entire economy, in general. The paper highlights the role of the Fourth Industrial Revolution in finding appropriate answers to how economic development will unfold in the future so that it becomes safer, more sustainable and more inclusive.

Therefore, the sustainable development of urban and rural communities depends mainly on the dynamics of economic activity, with transport being of particular importance to the local economy, without which human activities are impossible to organize and carry out.

## **2. Literature review**

Specialized literature simply defines transport as the activity that deals with the movement of material goods, and / or people, highlighting the main benefit resulting from the transport activity: the transfer of goods, respectively of people (Ilieş and Crişan, 2010).

According to art. 2 of Ordinance no. 19/1997, republished, the national transport system has a strategic character and constitutes an integral part of the economic and social system, having the following components: road, railway, naval and air transport infrastructure; means of transport; transport operators and transport-related activities' operators; traffic management systems and positioning and navigation systems.

Transport is an important area of the economic and social activity that also requires a certain construction infrastructure (Stan et al., 2019), this infrastructure being indispensable for carrying out the transport activity. Thus, the delimitation of the lands, corridors and locations needed for the transport networks is established by urban planning documentation and / or spatial planning documents and by feasibility studies (art. 4 para. (2) of Law no. 363/2006), given that transport involves the occupation of large strips of land and contributes to urban expansion, habitat fragmentation and surface waterproofing (EEA, 2020).

One of the strategic principles for spatial planning is the promotion of urban-rural solidarity and the proper development of the different categories of territories (SDTR), which implies coherence, complementarity of territories in order to provide the residents with the same level of development and the same quality of life, proper access to various services and facilities. At the local level, the General Urban Plan is the most important strategic document, as it includes the medium and long-term vision of urban development, including the development of transport infrastructure. Starting with 2015, based on the provisions of Law no. 350/2001 on Spatial Planning and Urbanism, all the major cities have adopted the Sustainable

Urban Mobility Plan as a strategic tool to support investment decisions in the public and private transport sectors. Therefore, the main promoters of capital investment in public transport goods and infrastructure should be considered the municipalities, with their two branches, the executive and the legislative ones (AMM, 2019).

Transport systems influence the spatial distribution of the population and they are involved in all the economic activities that require an exceeding of the space (Rothengatter et al., 2021), and an examination of the way in which transport activity is carried out shows that the field provides the economy and the population with a variety of means and ways of organizing this activity.

On the one hand, private economic entities need transportation in order to produce and deliver their goods and services, and on the other hand, people need transportation in order to be able to get to work, for getting supplies, for education, tourism, recreation and leisure and for other daily activities. Thus, in order to meet their mobility needs, the population uses many types of passenger transport, such as road, rail, air and sea transport or car transport, in order to have greater mobility and flexibility.

Thus, at the level of local communities, transport activity has a special significance from an economic point of view, its accomplishment being the responsibility of both the public and the private sector. From a social and environmental point of view, for local mobility, the transport activity ensures the accessibility of people and goods to and within the urban centers, even though transport continues to be a significant source of air and noise pollution, especially in large cities. The transport sector is important in all the sectors of the economy, as the production of goods, the provision of services and the performance of works require transport activities, transport networks and services being essential factors of business activities. (Rothengatter et al., 2021). At the same time, the workforce in the transport sector makes up a significant share of the total workforce in Romania, even if undeclared work, as well as day labor make up a significant share in the private transport sector (Chivu and Georgescu, 2020), this sector of activity being dependent on wage size and productivity.

Since sustainable development is an increasingly common topic these days, the prerogatives of performance and operational continuity require paying attention to the study for a better future. In this regard, an interesting analysis undertaken by Aivaz (2021) also emphasized the orientation of the companies towards activities which support other businesses, towards identifying innovative solutions to support their performance prospects, towards professionalizing the existing market workforce, towards streamlining outsourced logistics services or providing various staff-related services.

The orientation towards the profitability of the beneficiaries by the nature of the provided services (Aivaz, 2018a), as well as pursuing their own positive results (Aivaz, 2018b), conveys to the analyses a distinct note of interest and relevance. In the generic sense, the predilection for creating a sustainable material base seems to confirm the prospects of continuity and profitability in the case of the companies which offer direct or indirect services to other entities, such as those in passenger transport. Although the number of companies operating in this economic subcategory is not very large at the level of Constanța County, it still includes a number of strong players on the local economic scene, being representative for a number of companies active in promoting innovation and environmental care (Aivaz and Avram, 2021).

In this context, the sustainable development of localities is an extremely complex issue that raises different social, economic, and environmental problems, and which must be tackled as a multi-layered concept, with four pillars (economic, social, environmental and cultural) and

several dimensions, including a territorial one (Petrișor, 2014), being known that sustainability covers all the areas and sectors in which development takes place (Petrișor, 2017).

From these multiple perspectives, we have considered it appropriate to analyze the activity of the companies whose object of activity is passenger transport with the help of economic indicators which are essential for assessing performance, namely: turnover and salaries expense.

### **3. Methodology and data**

The main objective of this paper is to analyze the activity of the companies whose object of activity is passenger land transport at the level of Constanța County based on economic indicators, while exploring possible determining factors of economic development of Constanța County in the context of sustainable development.

Located in the south-eastern extremity of Romania, Constanța County benefits from the advantages of the territory it occupies, by its entry into the Black Sea, being an area with favorable prospects in terms of economic growth and territorial development, due to the fact that it benefits from multimodal transport (port infrastructure, international airport, river transport, rail transport, highway, European roads), this particularity contributing to the shaping of the regional economic environment.

In the conducted analysis we have used the data provided by Romania's National Institute of Statistics (INSSE) and the Ministry of Public Finance (ANAF / National Agency for Fiscal Administration) for the 2018-2020 period. The centralization and systematization of data, as well as obtaining the indicators used in the statistical description were accomplished with the help of the *Statistical Program for the Social Sciences* (SPSS). The empirical study used all the companies from Constanța County whose main object of activity is "Other passenger land transport".

The analyzed database that includes all the companies on the territory of Constanța County whose main object of activity is the field "Other passenger land transport" was created by applying several filters: the NACE code (the companies with codes between 49.31 and 49.39 were selected) and the companies which recorded a turnover value greater than zero.

The activity group (49.3) "Other passenger land transport" includes all passenger land transport activities other than rail transport. However, rail transport is included here as a part of the urban and suburban transport systems. This group comprises the following sub-activities: (49.31) *Urban, suburban and metropolitan passenger transport*, which includes: land transport of passengers via urban or suburban transport systems. This can include various means of land transport, such as buses, trams, trolleybuses, underground and elevated railways, etc. The transport is carried out on scheduled routes typically observing a fixed time schedule, the passengers' boarding and disembarking taking place at fixed stops. This class also includes: town-to-airport or town-to-station lines; operation of funicular railways, aerial cableways etc., if they are a part of the urban or suburban transit systems; (49.32) *Taxi operation*, which also includes: renting of private cars with driver and (49.39) *Other passenger land transport n.e.c.*, which includes: other passenger land transport (scheduled long-distance bus services, charters, excursions and other occasional coach services, airport shuttles, operation of cable cars, funiculars, ski and cable lifts, if not part of urban or suburban transit systems); the activity of transport by school buses, as well as buses for the transport of employees; the carriage of passengers by man- or animal-drawn vehicles.

#### 4. Results and discussion

Based on these considerations, in order to obtain assessments on the average turnover, the average salaries expense and the evolution of the workforce in this sector, an analysis of the economic agents operating in the field “Other passenger land transport” in Constanța County, for the 2018-2020 period will be carried out.

The year 2020 was marked by the crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, and the governments of the affected countries quickly adopted measures to fight the phenomenon (Rus, Sandu and Tasește, 2020); Romania also gradually took measures aimed at the gradual closure of state border crossing points, the gradual prohibition of road, rail, sea, river or air traffic on certain routes (Marin (Barbu) and Condrea, 2021). At the same time, the Covid-19 pandemic also caused dramatic disruptions to the public transport sector, which witnessed a sharp decline in many cities around the world, calling into question the previous efforts to reduce air pollution and CO2 emissions (Schaefer, Tuitjer and Levin-Keitel, 2021).

Table 1 shows the average turnover and the average number of employees for the 2018-2020 period, for each NACE subgroup separately and the number of companies in each subgroup.

**Table 1.** Report on the number of companies and the average turnover.

NACE Code		2018	2019	2020
<b>49.31</b>	No. of companies	72	67	64
	Turnover (lei)	1,870,296.17	2,158,414.24	2,536,605.45
<b>49.32</b>	No. of companies	876	918	879
	Turnover (lei)	57,910.03	66,181.84	52,488.12
<b>49.39</b>	No. of companies	123	117	122
	Turnover (lei)	1,042,272.57	1,011,272.07	495,021.35

A study conducted by the Association for Metropolitan Mobility (2019) states that passenger transport services benefit from a comprehensive and harmonized legal framework in terms of the rules for contracting services and public spending, valid throughout the European Union, being considered as services of general economic interest.

At the level of Constanța County, public passenger transport is carried out, on the one hand by state companies owned by municipalities through the Local Council, and on the other hand by private economic operators. Thus, it can be seen from Table 1 that at the level of sub-activities the largest share is recorded by the subgroup (49.31) *Urban, suburban and metropolitan passenger transport*. In the analyzed period, 2018-2020, although the number of companies has been decreasing, from 72 in 2018 to 64 in 2020, the average value of turnover increased from 1,870,296.17 lei in 2018 to 2,536,605.45 lei in 2020, which indicates a balanced evolution for this period. The decrease in the number of companies can be explained by the fact that in Constanța County, at the end of 2019, RATC - Autonomous Administration of Common Transport (Regia Autonomă Transport în Comun Constanța) became CT Bus SA, by changing its legal form from an Autonomous Administration into a Joint-Stock Company, being rethought/reorganized as a company that has all the prerogatives to become the most powerful operator in the South-East Region. Thus, the transport services carried out by the private

transport economic operators were taken over by the new legal entity, this reorganization producing a radical change in terms of the mobility system in Constanța and in the Metropolitan Area.

The *Taxi operation* (49.32) activity is carried out exclusively by authorized private economic operators and is carried out in the locality of authorization and, occasionally, between this locality and any other locality, with the obligation to return the car to the locality of authorization after each race. In terms of this sub-activity, there is a noticeable increase in the average turnover level, of 14.28% in 2019 compared to 2018, followed by a decrease of 20.69% in 2020 compared to 2019, probably also against the background of the Covid-19 pandemic, which brought significant changes in people's way of life. During the reference period, the number of companies operating in this subgroup increased from 876 in 2018, to 918 in 2019, which means that 42 new players appeared on the Constanța market, followed by a decrease in 2020 to a number of 879 companies. The changes in the number of companies with a turnover over zero are in line with the specifics of the activity, namely the public road transport taxi license is granted for a period of 5 years from the date of issue and it is valid only under the conditions of the annual endorsement/stamp by the issuer, with the payment of the related taxes, the taxi service needing to comply with certain norms and to observe a series of rules imposed by the legal regulatory framework.

As for the sub-activity (49.39) *Other passenger land transport n.e.c.*, it is observed, at the level of 2018, that the companies from Constanta registered an average turnover of 1,042,272.57 lei, followed by a slight decrease to 1,011,272.07 lei in 2019, and then in 2020 a dramatic decrease in turnover was registered, 51.05% lower than the previous year, which once again highlights the fact that the public transport sector registered a drastic decrease in demand and revenues during the Covid-19 pandemic (Tirachini and Cats, 2020). The economic consequences of the Coronavirus pandemic have been intense for the transport sector: coaches, buses, charters, airport shuttles transport services were affected by the restrictions imposed in the tourism industry via closing hotels and restaurants, there were localities that decided to reduce or close public transport services so that the public transport congestion could not increase the risk of contracting Covid-19. This fact favored the choice of people to use alternative transport - a way to ensure the customers' comfort and safety, with ridesharing companies growing exponentially during the restrictions period.

It can be seen that turnover, i.e., the total income generated by a company as a result of the activity it carries out, whether state-owned or from the private sector, has a significant contribution to local development and can be one of the possible determining factors, although the road infrastructure and related public investment are not sufficiently well developed in Constanța County.

Table 2 shows the average level of salaries expense for the 2018-2020 period, for each NACE subgroup and the number of companies in each subgroup.

It is well known that for an employee his/her salary represents the consideration of the work performed based on the individual employment agreement. From the perspective of the economic operator, it represents a cost that includes not only the remuneration and salaries paid to the employees, but also non-salary costs, in particular the social contributions to be paid by the employer.

From the data described in Table 2 one can notice that at the level of sub-activity (49.31) *Urban, suburban and metropolitan passenger transport* the growth trend is obvious in the analyzed period. Thus, at the level of 2018, the average level of salaries expense was 984,542.76 lei for 51 companies, followed by an increasing figure of up to 1,252,943.40 lei in 2019 for 45

companies. Despite the fact that 2020 was a pandemic year, this activity registered a significant increase (18%) compared to 2019, reaching the value of 1,478,596.44 lei for the same number of companies. This can be explained by the fact that the minimum wage increased from January 1, 2018 to 1,900 lei / month and social contributions were moved from employer to employee, which led companies to pay more for the entire minimum wage cost, in 2019 the minimum gross salary increased to 2,080 lei / month, reaching in 2020 a value of 2,230 lei / month, i.e., an increase of 7.2% compared to the previous year. As a result, the average monthly labor cost increased in most economic activities due to the increase in the minimum wage. In 2020, mainly due to the situation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic and the state of emergency / alert, key economic sectors were affected, some of them benefiting from active support measures for employees and employers in order to resume their economic activity and maintain their workforce.

**Table 2.** Report on the number of companies and the average salaries expense.

NACE Code		2018	2019	2020
<b>49.31</b>	No. of companies	51	45	45
	Salaries expense (lei)	984,542.76	1,252,943.40	1,478,596.44
<b>49.32</b>	No. of companies	655	596	513
	Salaries expense (lei)	22,442.32	22,721.72	16,660.90
<b>49.39</b>	No. of companies	86	84	78
	Salaries expense (lei)	270,149.02	283,139.11	212,338.86

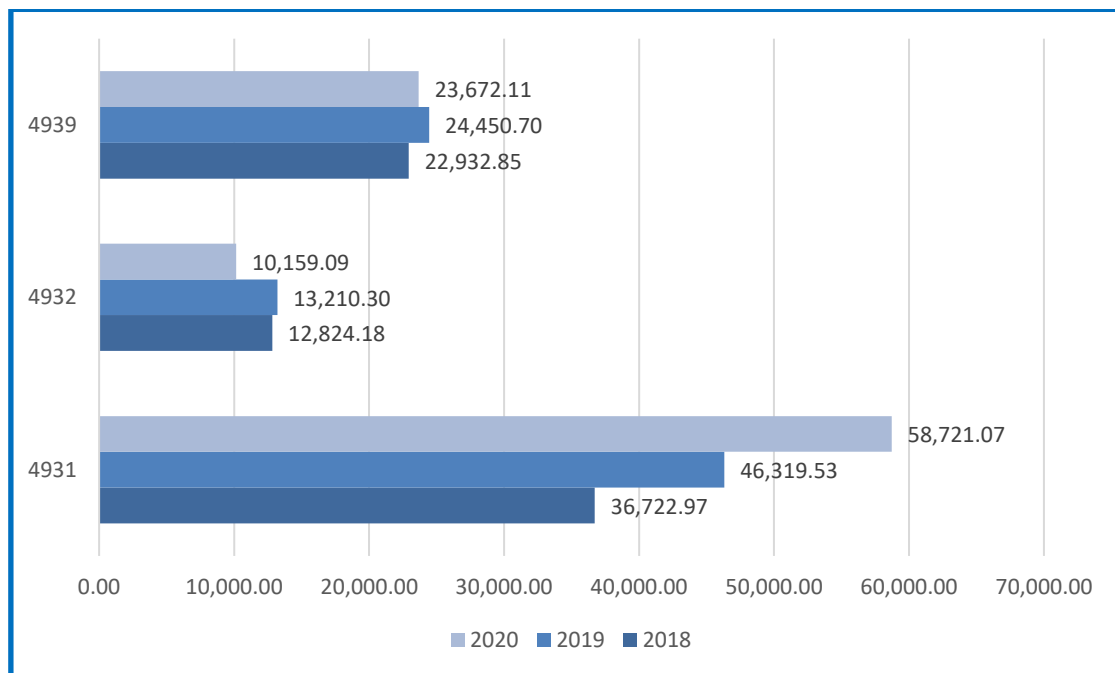
The examination of the financial situation of the average salaries expense from the 2018-2020 period for the subgroup of activities (49.32) *Taxi operation* shows a fluctuation in values: in 2018 there was a value of 22,442.32 lei for a number of 655 companies, followed by a slight increase in 2019 to the value of 22,721.72 lei for a number of 596 companies, whereas the year 2020 was marked by a decrease to 16,660.90 lei for a number of 513 companies. The decrease in the number of economic operators may be due, on the one hand, to the non-fulfilment of the criteria for obtaining taxi authorizations (age of the vehicle, classification according to Euro pollution norms, degree of passengers' protection), and on the other hand, to the unfair competition in the taxi business (companies with one license and several cars, undeclared work) that exists due to the fact that the local public authorities do not exercise their control right. This is in line with the declining average level of salaries expense.

As for the sub-activity (49.39) *Other passenger land transport n.e.c.*, the number of active economic operators is on a decreasing trend, from 86 companies in 2018 to 84 in 2019, and reaching 78 companies in 2020. On the other hand, the values of the labor costs fluctuate during the 3 years analyzed. Thus, in 2019 the average level of salaries expense increased by 4.8% compared to 2018, followed by a decrease of 25% in 2020 compared to the previous year. This level is correlated on the one hand with the increase in minimum wage, and on the other

hand, there were areas in which the activity remained restricted due to the situation created by the Covid-19 pandemic.

An indicator for the analysis of employee efficiency is *the average employee cost*, an indicator which measures the ratio between the average salaries expense and the average number of employees.

Gross average monthly wages is the ratio between the gross amounts calculated to employees in the reference period (regardless of the period for which they are due) and the average number of employees and the number of months in the reference period. Gross wage income accounts for most of the labor cost.



**Figure 1.** The dynamics of the average salary at the level of the companies in Constanța County operating in the “Other passenger land transport” field

From the graph presented in Figure 1, it can be seen that for Constanța County the main transport activities in the 2018-2020 period are those of subgroup (49.31) *Urban, suburban and metropolitan passenger transport*, which registers a positive dynamics throughout the period. Thus, starting from the registered values of the average salaries expense for the employees of 36,722.97 lei in 2018, there is an increase of 26.13% in 2019, followed by an increase of 26.77% in 2020 compared to 2019. The trend of this indicator is positive due to the fact that the dynamics of wage costs is correlated with the evolution of labor market conditions, and for economic agents the salaries expense is correlated with their performance. Urban, suburban and metropolitan public passenger transport is a part of the public utility services of the communities, being of local and general economic and social interest.

It should be noted that passenger transport is characterized by the round-trip direction of passenger flows, meaning that they are generally balanced activities, however, the salaries expense incurred by companies due to the remuneration of labor as a factor of production and the contribution for insurance and social protection can be valuable as a determining factor in

the sustainable development of communities, as the money can be used for local investment programs.

Table 3 summarizes the average number of employees for the 2018-2020 period, for each NACE subgroup and the number of companies in each subgroup.

Workforce plays a major role in the functioning of an economy, labor market being influenced by the specific processes of employee fluctuation, the structure of the economy, as well as its level of development (Chivu and Georgescu, 2020).

**Table 3.** Report on the number of companies and the average number of employees.

NACE Code		2018	2019	2020
<b>49.31</b>	No. of companies	43	41	44
	Average no. of employees	26.81	27.05	25.18
<b>49.32</b>	No. of companies	469	458	428
	Average no. of employees	1.75	1.72	1.64
<b>49.39</b>	No. of companies	79	73	73
	Average no. of employees	11.78	11.58	8.97

From the perspective of the number of companies and the average number of employees at county level, in the 2018-2020 period, which operate in the *Urban, suburban and metropolitan passenger transport* field (49.31), a constant trend can be observed. Thus, there is a slight increase in the average number of employees from 26.81 for 43 companies in 2018, to 27.05 for 41 companies in 2019, followed by a reduction in the average number of employees to 25.18 in 2020 for 44 companies. The fluctuation of the workforce can be determined on the one hand by the level of qualification and professional training for the driver job, and on the other hand by the demand and supply of the labor market, the level of pay, the working conditions. The number of companies in this subgroup may be influenced by the fact that the private economic operators carrying out the activity of public passenger transport must meet the performance indicators, the mandatory technical conditions regarding the infrastructure and the equipment used according to the legal regulatory framework.

As for the subgroup of activities (49.32) *Taxi operation*, one can notice a downward trend in the analyzed 2018-2020 period (Table 3). Thus, for 469 companies in 2018 the average number of employees was 1.75, followed by a reduction to 458 companies in 2019 and an average number of employees of 1.72, a decrease that continued down to 428 companies in 2020 and an average number of employees of 1.64. The decreasing trend is a natural one, since the company operates on the basis of an authorization issued by the local public administration, the taxi driver having certain obligations of public interest when exercising this function.

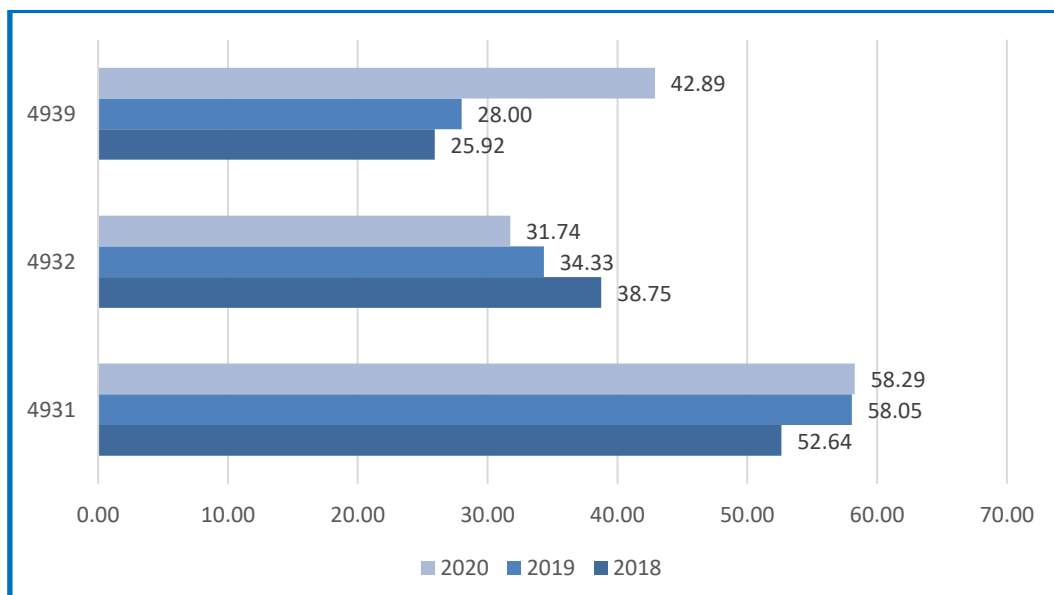
As far as the sub-activity (49.39) *Other passenger land transport n.e.c.* is concerned, one can observe that in 2018 for 79 companies the average number of employees was 11.78, followed by a reduction in the number of companies to 73 in 2019 and 2020. Even though the number of companies remained the same, the average number of employees decreased by

22.54% in 2020 compared to 2019. The decrease in the number of employees was influenced on the one hand by the employees' income and on the other hand by the impact of the crisis generated by the Coronavirus, which has caused an obvious transformation on the labor market.

It is important to note that, at the level of local communities, the passenger transport activity is particularly important and can be a determining factor in the sustainable development of communities, given that sustained economic growth, as a part of the Sustainable Development Goal 8: decent work and economic growth, should be identified in the evolution of citizens' well-being (UN, 2015).

Improving the performance of a company, of a sub-activity, reflected by the level of turnover, can also lead to the improvement of the company's image from the perspective of investors, creditors, employees, customers (Aivaz, 2020). This creates the possibility of attracting new sources of financing, in the form of bank loans and bond issues, on more advantageous interest rate and repayment terms. The improvement of the company's image also determines staff's stability, the appeal it has for qualified staff on the labor market and customer loyalty. Within the policy of penetrating new markets or expanding into existing markets, the increase in turnover, accompanied by the concern for diversifying the sources of income and the product supply, is a way to reduce the risks and uncertainties that arise on the market segments in which the companies operate (Micu et al., 2016). Thus, the risk of being subjected to the excessive fluctuations that characterize modern economy can be reduced and they have the possibility to take measures so as to counteract disruptive situations that may arise in their activity.

In this context, another analysis indicator for companies is the *share of average staff costs in turnover*, an indicator that measures the share of average salaries expense in average turnover.



**Figure 2.** The dynamics of the share of staff costs in turnover at the level of the companies from Constanța County that operate in the “Other passenger land transport” field

The data analyzed in Figure 2 show that, in the 2018-2020 period, the sub-activities (49.31) *Urban, suburban and metropolitan passenger transport* and (49.39) *Other passenger*

*land transport n.e.c.* register an upward trend, while the sub-activity (49.32) *Taxi operation* registers a descendant one. By comparing the data for sub-activity (49.31) *Urban, suburban and metropolitan passenger transport* we notice an increase in the share of staff costs in turnover of 10.28% in 2019 compared to 2018, followed by an increase of only 0.41% in 2020 compared to 2019. Similarly, the sub-activity (49.39) *Other passenger land transport n.e.c.* recorded an increase in the share of staff costs in turnover of 8.02% in 2019 compared to 2018, followed by an obvious increase of 53.18% in 2020 compared to 2019. The biggest reduction was registered by the sub-activity (49.32) *Taxi operation*, with the decrease in the share of staff costs in turnover being 11.41% in 2019 compared to 2018, followed by another decrease in 2020 compared with the year 2019, the decrease rate being 7.54%. This once again highlights the important role of the expenses that companies incur on workforce, in the context in which this multiplies companies' ability to successfully cope with market changes.

The increases noticed in certain sub-activities of passenger land transport at the level of Constanța County, in the 2018-2020 period, reflect a revitalization of some localities that have developed investment programs at the local level.

The year 2021 brought for Constanța County the adoption of the *Sustainable Development Strategy of Constanța County for the 2021-2027 period*, an ambitious county development plan of the current local public administration, the development of infrastructure for public transport and goods being one of the priorities.

## 5. Conclusions

Transport is one of the most dynamic national economic sectors, which is facing major challenges. At the same time, at the level of local communities, the transport activity has a special significance, the sustainable development of the localities being an extremely complex issue that poses various social, economic and environmental problems (Stan et al., 2021).

As an economic and social activity, transport solves people's travel problems and it ensures the transfer of goods for the companies, but at the same time it causes pollution, traffic congestion and accidents.

In order to achieve safe transport, in conditions of efficiency and accessibility, local public administrations have the task of making investments from public funds for the transport infrastructure, creating more sustainable transport models that meet the transport needs of people, while at the same time minimizing the negative effects (Vintilă et al., 2017). Moreover, companies are signaling the need for the development of the potential to create quality jobs within a new sustainable economy.

The emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic has brought significant changes in key areas of the economy, and transport is not an exception (e.g., the changing preferences of the passengers for certain modes of public transport), the analysis of the impact of Covid-19 on the transport sector requiring a careful investigation of economic and social factors of transport activities (Rothengatter et al., 2021).

In conclusion, although road infrastructure and public investments related to the transport sector are not sufficiently well developed at the level of Constanța County, by analyzing the companies whose object of activity is passenger transport, and by using essential economic indicators in order to assess performance, the possible determining factors of the economic development of Constanța County in the context of sustainable development have been identified.

## References

- [1] K.A. AIVAZ: Financial Performance Trends and Corporate Responsibility Incentives in a Group of Support Services in Constanța County, Romania. *Annals of "Dunarea de Jos" University of Galati, Fascicle I. Economics and Applied Informatics*, Print ISSN: 1584-0409, Online ISSN: 2344-441X, **1**, 52-60 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.35219/eai15840409167>.
- [2] K.A. AIVAZ: Dynamics of the Profit Rate of Companies Grouped by Activity Fields in Constanta. *Ovidius University Annals, Economic Sciences Series*, ISSN: 2393-3127, ISSN-L: 2393-3119, **XVIII**(2), 82-87 (2018a).
- [3] K.A. AIVAZ, C. AVRAM: An analysis of the performance of the companies in Constanta County which operate in the real estate transactions field in the context of sustainable development. *Technium Social Sciences Journal*, ISSN: 2668-7798, **26**(1), 475-487 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.47577/tssj.v26i1.5315>.
- [4] K.A. AIVAZ: Considerations on Asset Management and Turnover Factorial Correlations: The Case of Dobrogea Region, Romania. *Ovidius University Annals, Economic Sciences Series*, ISSN: 2393-3127, ISSN-L: 2393-3119, **XX**(2), 68-74 (2020).
- [5] K.A. AIVAZ: Aspects Regarding the Profitability of Companies in the Towns of Constanta County, in 2016 and 2017. *Ovidius University Annals, Economic Sciences Series*, ISSN: 2393-3127, ISSN-L: 2393-3119, **XVIII**(2), 88-93 (2018b).
- [6] Asociația pentru Mobilitate Metropolitană/The Association for Metropolitan Mobility (AMM), *Transportul public local și metropolitan la nivelul a 20 de poli de creștere/poli de dezvoltare urbană/municipii reședință de județ. Studiu privind analiza situației existente/ Local and metropolitan public transport at the level of 20 growth poles / urban development poles / county seat municipalities. A study on the analysis of the existing situation*, July 2019, <http://metropolitan.fzmaur.ro/studiutransport.pdf>.
- [7] L. CHIVU, G. GEORGESCU: Vulnerabilități ale pieței muncii din România sub impactul COVID-19/Vulnerabilities of the Romanian labor market under the impact of COVID-19. *Munich Personal RePEc Archive*, 2020, [https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/101676/1/MPRA\\_paper\\_101676.pdf](https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/101676/1/MPRA_paper_101676.pdf).
- [8] European Environment Agency (EEA), *Transport*, 2020, <https://www.eea.europa.eu/ro/themes/transport/intro>.
- [9] L. ILIEȘ, E. CRIȘAN: TRANSPORTUL DE MĂRFURI concepte, internaționalizare și management/FREIGHT TRANSPORT concepts, internationalization and management, ISBN: 978-973-53-0392-, Ed. Risoprint, Cluj Napoca, 2010.
- [10] Legea nr. 350 din 6 iulie 2001 privind amenajarea teritoriului și urbanismul, publicată în Monitorul Oficial nr. 373 din 10.07.2001, cu modificările și completările ulterioare [Law no. 350 of July 6, 2001 on spatial planning and urbanism, published in Official Gazette no. 373 of July 10, 2001, with subsequent amendments and completions].
- [11] Legea nr. 363 din 21 septembrie 2006 privind aprobarea Planului de amenajare a teritoriului național - Secțiunea I - Rețele de transport, publicată în Monitorul Oficial nr. 806 din 26.09.2006. [Law no. 363 of September 21, 2006 on the approval of the National Spatial Planning - Section I - Transport Networks, published in Official Gazette no. 806 of September 26, 2006].
- [12] C.A. MARIN (BARBU), E. CONDREA: The Influence of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Tourism in Romania, *Ovidius University Annals, Economic Sciences Series*, ISSN: 2393-3127, ISSN-L: 2393-3119, **XXI**(1), 601-610 (2021).
- [13] A. MICU, A.E. MICU, K. AIVAZ, A. CAPATINA: The Genetic Approach of Marketing Research. *Economic Computation and Economic Cybernetics Studies and Research*,

- ISSN: 0424-267X, eISSN: 1842-3264, **50**(3), 229-246 (2016).
- [14] Ministerul Dezvoltării Regionale și Administrației Publice/Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration, *Strategia de dezvoltare teritorială a României (SDTR) - România policentrică 2035 [Romania's territorial development strategy (SDTR) - Polycentric Romania 2035]*, <http://www.sdtr.ro/>.
- [15] A. NEMIRSCHI, D.P.C. VANCEA: Industry Redesign Directions in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Ovidius University Annals, Economic Sciences Series*, ISSN: 2393-3127, ISSN-L: 2393-3119, **XX**(2), 418-423 (2020).
- [16] S. NUNDY, A. GHOSH, A. MESLOUB, G.A. ALBAQAWY, M.M. ALNAIM: Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on socio-economic, energy-environment and transport sector globally and sustainable development goal (SDG), *Journal of Cleaner Production*, ISSN 0959-6526, **312**, 127705 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2021.127705>.
- [17] Ordonanța nr. 19 din 18 august 1997 republicată privind transporturile, publicată în Monitorul Oficial nr. 425 din 11.11.1998, cu modificările și completările ulterioare. [Ordinance no. 19 of August 18, 1997, republished, regarding transports, published in Official Gazette no. 425 of November 11, 1998, with subsequent amendments and completions].
- [18] A.I. PETRIȘOR: A diversity-based approach to the spatial development of socioecological systems. *Urbanism Architecture Constructions*, ISSN: 2069-6469, **8**(2), 143-162 (2017).
- [19] A.I. PETRIȘOR: The territorial competitiveness of sustainability cannot be assessed by a single domain. *Urbanism Architecture Constructions*, ISSN: 2069-6469, **5**(4), 27-34 (2014).
- [20] W. ROTHENGATTER, J. ZHANG, Y. HAYASHI, A. NOSACH, K. WANG, T.H. OUM: Pandemic waves and the time after Covid-19 – Consequences for the transport sector. *Transport Policy*, ISSN 0967-070X, **110**, 225-237 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tranpol.2021.06.003>.
- [21] M. RUS, M.L. SANDU, T. TASENȚE: Covid-19 crisis in Romania - between perception and attitude. *Technium Social Sciences Journal*, ISSN: 2668-7798, **6**(1), 69–87 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.47577/tssj.v6i1.332>.
- [22] K.J. SCHAEFER, L. TUITJER, M. LEVIN-KEITEL: Transport disrupted – Substituting public transport by bike or car under Covid 19. *Transportation Research Part A: Policy and Practice*, ISSN 0965-8564, **153**, 202-217 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tra.2021.09.002>.
- [23] M.I. STAN, K.A. AIVAZ, I. IONIȚIU: Projects to Reduce the Coastal Erosion of the Romanian Black Sea Area. *Ovidius University Annals of Constanta-Series Civil Engineering*, **21**(1), 109-114 (2019), DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2478/ouacsce-2019-0013>.
- [24] M.I. STAN, K.A. AIVAZ, D.F. VINTILĂ, I. IONIȚIU: Assessing the perception of stakeholders regarding the impact of coastal tourism on the environment in the Romanian Black Sea coastal area. *Journal of Eastern European and Central Asian Research (JEECAR)*, **8**(4), 628-639 (2021), <https://doi.org/10.15549/jeecar.v8i4.695>.
- [25] A. TIRACHINI, O. CATS: COVID-19 and public transportation: Current assessment, prospects, and research needs. *Journal of Public Transportation*, **22**(1), 1-21 (2020), <https://doi.org/10.5038/2375-0901.22.1.1>.
- [26] United Nations: *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED): Our Common Future* (Brundtland Report), 1987,

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf>.

- [27] United Nations: *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2015, <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>.
- [28] D.F. VINTILĂ, C. FILIP, M.I. STAN, D.D. ȚENEA: Considerations regarding a sustainable economic development in the Romanian Black Sea coastal area in the context of Maritime Spatial Planning (MSP). *Proceedings of the 8th International Conference of Management and Industrial Engineering "Management in the Innovation Society" ICMIE 2017*, No. 8, Niculescu Publishing House, 667-675 (2017).
- [29] \*\*\* European Economic and Social Committee (EESC), *Transport*, <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/policies/policy-areas/transport>.
- [30] \*\*\* *The Territorial Agenda 2030 A future for all places*, 2020, [https://territorialagenda.eu/wp-content/uploads/TA2030\\_RO\\_romana.pdf](https://territorialagenda.eu/wp-content/uploads/TA2030_RO_romana.pdf).