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"Gh. Zane" Institute for Economic and Social Research

Romanian Rural Tourism in International Context Present and Prospects

Volume 47

Edited by
Georgia-Daniela Tacu Hârșan, Alina-Petronela Haller,
Dănuț Ungureanu

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Iași Branch of Romanian Academy
“Gheorghe Zane” Institute for Economic and Social Research
Department of Economic Research

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Georgia-Daniela Tacu Hârșan, Alina-Petronela Haller, Dănuț Ungureanu.

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Development of Inbound and Domestic Tourism in the Republic of Moldova in the Context of New Global Travel Trends

Natalia ANTOCI¹

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ABSTRACT

Travel trends determine the evolution of the tourism industry and also has an impact on all sectors operating in this industry. Tourism is an industry with a complex profile, which highlights both the country's tourism potential and a wide range of services, which contributes to meeting certain moral, cultural, spiritual needs and, last but not least, meeting the needs of tourism consumption, of people, who intend to benefit from certain tourist services, thus increasing the world economy. In the conditions of crises of the world economy, which often produce the negative impact on the development of several national economies, tourism has proved, for several countries, to be a good solution to get out of these crises. Moreover, currently, both developing and developed countries pay special attention to the development of strategies to intensify domestic and international tourism as those that contribute to overcoming economic crises.

1. Introduction

As one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world, tourism is increasingly recognized as a vital factor in creating jobs and well-being, protecting the environment, preserving culture and reducing poverty. A well-designed and managed tourism sector can help preserve the natural and cultural heritage on which it depends, empower host communities, create trade opportunities, promote intercultural peace and understanding, according to statistics.

In 2018, according to the World Tourism Organization, the number of international tourists coming worldwide reached 1.4 billion, where tourism exports increased by + 4% exceeded the increase in exports of goods by + 3%. Given this rapid growth rate, the prediction that international arrivals will reach 1.8 billion by 2030 may be valid. This has enormous potential for the tourism sector and the global economy as travel continues to grow. In this context of enormous growth potential, which represents the competitiveness of tourism can be seen simultaneously as a strong economic engine of growth or as a risk for continuous development in the industry, if not managed properly [1].

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Europe remains the most competitive region in terms of tourism. It has some of the best cultural resources in the world and a developed infrastructure, especially for land infrastructure, ports and tourist services [2] (Fig. 1).

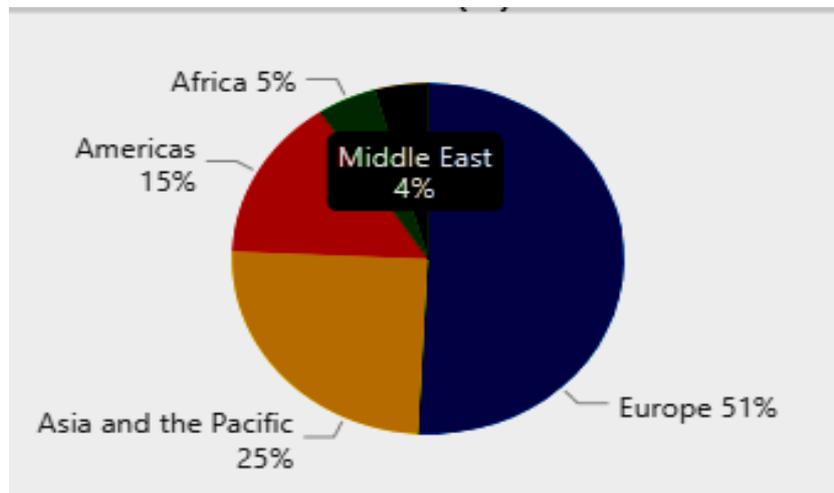


Fig. 1. International tourist arrivals

Source: [3]

Tourism is, through its content and role, a phenomenon characteristic of today's civilization, one of the major components of economic and social life that polarizes the interest of a growing number of countries. Receptive to the transformations of the contemporary world, tourism evolves under their incidence, its dynamics being integrated in the general development process.

Given the great diversity of tourist services, the seasonal nature of tourism, the different forms of tourism practiced, the categories of prices and tariffs differentiated by degrees of comfort, by forms of tourism, etc., the activity in this branch can not be characterized through a single indicator, but through a system of indicators, which has a complex content.

This system of indicators is the main part of the statistical information system in the field of tourism and is a component part, a subsystem of the system of indicators of the national economy.

The analysis of the evolution of the receiving and domestic tourism of the Republic of Moldova is an advantage, because these forms of tourism allow obtaining a much higher added value compared to the sending tourism and most importantly generate net foreign exchange inflows, to balance the national balance of payments. being equally important for foreign exports and investments.

During these four years, there has been an increase in the number of tourists in our country:

- number of arrivals of foreign visitors in the country increased by 3762, 19.5% in 2018 compared to 2015;
- the number of departures of Moldovan visitors abroad increased by 74265, 28.12% in 2018 compared to 2015;

- the number of tourists and hikers in domestic tourism registered an increase of 2882, 7.18% in 2018 compared to 2015.

In 2019, travel agencies and tour operators provided tourist services to 376.6 thousand tourists and hikers, by 16.4% more than in 2018. The increase in the number of tourists and hikers was conditioned by the increase in the number of participants in tourism transmitter (+ 17.6%), domestic tourism (+ 14.9%), as well as receiving tourism (+ 3.0%) compared to 2018 [2].

We can conclude, however, that the number of foreign tourists is insignificant for the economy of the Republic of Moldova. The national tourism potential is practically ignored if we compare the value of the world market for this service.

2. Challenges of Moldovan inbound and domestic tourism

The challenges facing the Republic of Moldova in the field of inbound and domestic tourism are the following [4]:

Challenge 1: The offer of Moldovan tourism is balanced and solicited

- territorial imbalance of the flow of foreign visitors and of the consumption of hospitality;
- the offer of unbalanced territorial accommodation and reduced absorption capacity of foreigners for accommodation in destinations;
 - only by short stays in most destinations;
 - reduced capacity of tour operators to deal with foreign guests visiting Moldova.

Challenge 2: Dynamic rural tourism offer

- rural tourism business operates semi-legally;
- reduced housing capacities in boarding houses;
- fragmentary monitoring of rural tourism;
- insufficient investment in rural infrastructure;
- the unsatisfactory condition of the access roads to the tourist objectives located in the rural localities;
 - lack of adequate training of the population to provide quality hospitality to visitors with little knowledge about the value of the tourist heritage held by the rural community;
 - lack of tourist facilities in the vicinity of rural attractions.

Challenge 3: Attractive ecological tourism in Moldova

- the fund of natural areas protected by a partially open state for tourism;
- low interest in promoting eco-tourism activities;
- the reservation administrations do not apply the management of eco-tourist destinations;
 - low level of road infrastructure in areas of eco-tourist interest;

- the practice of “wild” tourism in the background of protected natural areas compromises the activity of ecotourism;

- lack of an eco-tourism promotion and education program.

Challenge 4: Competitive spa tourism offer

- territorial imbalance of sanatorium services;
- lack of progress in the administration of balneoclimateric tourism;
- the sanatorium system inherited from the former USSR, but requested;
- in the application of the national classification system, the accommodation spaces do not correspond to the national quality requirements;
- buildings and related infrastructure are not upgraded;
- equipment, medical equipment and furniture are obsolete;
- reduced customer service capabilities;
- reduced leisure offer;
- there are no possibilities for a diet diversified according to the requirements of tourists;
- staff do not speak international languages.

Challenge 5: Developed pilgrimage tourism

- low number of religious objects attractive to foreign tourists;
- insufficiently arranged pilgrimage objects for visits;
- local companions or guides have a brief training in visitor management and do not know well the tourist attractions in the area.

Challenge 6: Qualitative and sufficient staff for the industry

- general negative trends in employment for the hospitality industry;
- less labor force employed by tour operators and travel agencies;
- increasing the burdens per employee;
- the degree of training of employees in hotels has decreased significantly;
- very high share of people who do not have special education in hospitality.

We face major problems, which are solvable, but which require a lot of investment, support from the state, the collective involvement of economic agents in the field of tourism, sustainable development strategies, etc.

The Republic of Moldova is a small country with a great diversity of objects of tourist interest located at short distances from the main cities - hotel centers. There are over 15,000 anthropogenic tourist attractions and over 300 important natural areas in Moldova. Several thousand prehistoric resorts were attested, about 400 settlements from different historical epochs, about 50 ancient fortified fortresses, about 500 early medieval settlements, numerous medieval earthen fortresses, six medieval stone fortresses (in different stages of preservation), over 1000 protected architectural monuments, about 50 Orthodox monasteries. This patrimony is relatively uniformly dispersed on the national territory, and its value sufficiently

motivates the tourist visits. Unfortunately, the state of heritage degradation makes it unattractive [4].

The tourist offer of the Republic of Moldova is currently little diversified, although there are important tourist resources that, being properly arranged, could become competitive on the tourist market. Moldova has a varied natural tourist potential (mineral waters, landscape aspects, rivers and lakes, etc.), as well as a valuable cultural-historical heritage, but all of them are insufficiently integrated in the tourist circuit. These are the potential tourist offer of the country. In any country with developed tourism the technical-material basis for tourism (accommodation, public catering, transport, spa treatment, leisure), together with the general and tourist infrastructure (communication routes, supply of thermal and electric energy, water, etc.) and with the tourist potential constitutes the effective tourist offer of the country, which can be promoted on the tourist market in the form of tourist products. The tourist potential in the Republic of Moldova must be capitalized uniformly. Moldovan tourism is not only Orheiul Vechi and wineries that are known abroad, but also nature reserves, the northern part of the Republic of Moldova, Pădurea Domnească, Plaiul Fagului Reserve, Șoldănești area and many places in Moldova, where this could develop. The priority forms of tourism practiced in the last decade in the Republic of Moldova are rural, wine, cultural, health and beauty tourism.

Even though we are at the beginning of the 3rd millennium, in an era of technology, the Republic of Moldova continues to welcome its guests with its villages, where even the landscape, faith and traditions breathe an archaic atmosphere. If in the West the universe and the rural environment have long become a memory, the tourist from the Republic of Moldova now has the opportunity to discover such places where shepherds take their flocks of sheep to pasture, to see fires lit near villages, to meet on narrow streets of the villages sounds "strange": the dogs barking, the roar of the cows returning from the pasture, the geese and ducks in the peasants' yards. Each place is unique and has a different story, has its own traditions, its own folk costumes and traditional cuisine. But one thing is the same everywhere: these villages seem to be born of the same nature that protects them. Most of these places of recreation and rest are located in picturesque areas with landscapes of rare beauty, in protected areas, near forests, natural springs, lakes or rivers. Some of these resorts are decorated in a rustic Moldovan style. Accommodation costs are affordable. The stay chosen by the client can last either just a weekend, or a week or a longer period.

The agricultural communities and picturesque villages of the Republic of Moldova can offer different services to tourists who want to rest in nature:

- accommodation in traditional rural houses;
- the possibility of employment in rural activities and concerns;
- familiarization with local folklore, entertainments and traditions;

- familiarization with the crafts practiced in the given locality, as well as the possibility of participation of those interested in the craft process and the possibility of purchasing handicraft products.

3. Types of Moldovan tourism

3.1. Wine tourism

Our hills are also an important tourist attraction in the rural sector. For centuries, rich traditions of vine cultivation and wine production have been formed in Moldova. Due to their quality, many of the wines produced in our country enjoy a good reputation internationally. As a wine country, the Republic of Moldova offers the chance to choose your favorite routes, so that tourists can visit, as desired, basements and underground cities, wineries, primary wine processing enterprises, champagne production, divine, etc. a whole, being part of the tourist route "Wine Road in the Republic of Moldova", have an essential motivation to visit our country. The most famous wineries in our country: Cricova, it is also called the underground city, Purcari, Mile;tii Mici, Mimi Castle, Brănești, etc.

3.2. Cultural tourism

The Republic of Moldova has a rich cultural heritage, which can be successfully used in tourism. In total, 140 monuments of cultural heritage have been identified. A variety of tourist attractions offer the remains of medieval fortifications, various archaeological complexes, first of all, Orheiul Vechi, cave monasteries, boyar mansions and peasant houses. And in the country's capital there are an impressive number of monuments, representative examples of local architecture from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, able to arouse the interest of tourists. An attractive point of the national tourist product is the variety of cultures from various areas of the country. The Republic of Moldova presents an amalgam of nationalities and cultures, therefore, of traditions, spoken languages, folklore, cuisine, etc.

3.3. Health tourism

Spas in the Republic of Moldova could become a substantial spa product at the international level, provided that an adequate infrastructure is created around them. The best premises in this sense have: Bucuria-Sind, Vadul lui Vodă, Codru, Hîrjauca, Călărași and Nufărul Alb, Cahul. Tourist attractions in the Republic of Moldova natural monuments: One Hundred Mounds, "Emil Racoviță" Cave, Țaul Park.

4. Tourist attractions

4.1. Reservations

Domneasca Forest, Codrii, Iagorlîc, Prutul de Jos, Plaiul Fagului.

4.2. Museums

Alexei Mateevici, Aleksandr Pushkin, Constantin Stamati, Igor Vieru, Orheiul

Vechi Museum Complex, National Museum of Ethnography and Natural History, National Museum of History of Moldova, Folk Crafts Museum, “Dumitru Cara Ciobanu” National Gagauz Museum of History and Ethnography.

4.3. Mansions

Zamfir Ralli-Arbore Mansion, Manuc Bei Hunting Castle.

Monasteries and churches: Căpriana, Hîncu, Rudi, Saharna, Țîpova, Curchi, Frumoasa, Cosăuți, Japca. Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin in Căușeni.

5. Conclusions

The valorization of the tourist potential and the development of the tourism must be correlated, ensuring a balanced evolution of all the economic sectors and requires a combination of the criteria of economic efficiency with those of social order and of protection of the environment.

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Entrepreneurial Opportunities in Tourism for Young People with Traditional Practical Vocations. Application in Ozana Valley Touristic Area

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ABSTRACT

The paper is elaborated on three pillars. The first pillar refers to the tourist basin Ozana Valley from Neamț County (Romania) which is one of the most important and most frequented tourist areas in the country. The second pillar refers to a concept of classification of the component elements using the “order in complication” method, through which each relevant element is developed in order to increase the added value of the tourist services in the area. The twelve cultural districts recombine a diversity and an individuality of each element so that the definition of the target groups, the frequency of the area. The mapping mode is a strong point of the paper. Also, the way ecosystems are organized. The third element refers to local human resources. It is necessary that, both as employment and as entrepreneurship, the human factor be recruited from local resources. This preserves the deepest elements of cultural specificity. The area has the institutional capacity to specialize young people to develop and support local activities in a complex ecosystem. These are the three school units with a technological profile on specializations that can be associated with tourism. The traditional paradigm can make room for small producers. Most importantly, arguments and reasons are provided for population stabilization.

1. Introduction

In recent decades, the emphasis has been on the development of tourism. Tourism investment policies have been somewhat chaotic without a unitary performance-oriented concept.

Both the private environment and the public sector highlighted the peculiarities of the places created opportunities, built objectives that are not correlated with a coherent and consistent message of communication. Thus, gaps

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appear in the territorial puzzle that fragments the message of tourist promotion and the picture of post-visit satisfaction.

The paper is elaborated on three pillars:

1) The first pillar refers to the tourist basin Ozana Valley from Neamț County (Romania) which is one of the most important and most frequented tourist areas in the country. The positive elements that fuel a huge potential for development were highlighted. The area has already been ranked in the world charts, which makes it notorious.

2) The second pillar refers to a concept of classification of the component elements using the “order in complication” method, through which each relevant element is developed in order to increase the added value of the tourist services in the area. The twelve cultural districts recompose a diversity and an individuality of each element so that the definition of the target groups, the frequency of the area. The mapping mode is a strong point of the paper. Also, the way ecosystems are organized.

3) The third pillar refers to local human resources. It is necessary that, both as employment and as entrepreneurship, the human factor be recruited from local resources. This preserves the deepest elements of cultural specificity. The area has the institutional capacity to specialize young people to develop and support local activities in a complex ecosystem.

These are the three school units with a technological profile on specializations that can be associated with tourism.

The traditional paradigm can make room for small producers. They can record incomes necessary for daily living and can find the motivation to preserve the traditions and the local material and intangible heritage. Most importantly, arguments and reasons are provided for population stabilization.

The problem of developing tourism in rural areas is very complex because it must attract a variety of stakeholders: some want immediate benefits, others want to give notoriety to the places where they live, others want to cultivate patriotism and respect for their ancestors. In this context, the theoretical substantiation of tourism must be a permanent concern of some actors who assume responsibilities for future developments: researchers, policy makers, those responsible for technological vigilance, public authorities.

Tourism is given a lot of attention in the current period, being an almost exclusive way of spending free time: weekends, holidays, vacations. Some tourist areas have permanent resources to regenerate the interest for information, relaxation, entertainment, culture, history, religion. Other areas need a permanent infusion of investment: in buildings, in means of transport, in events, in human resources, in events, in trade. The training part of human resources is the most spectacular because it generates capabilities through creativity and innovation, especially on the “surprise your customer” marketing coordinate (IBM, 2007).

2. What we know about tourism in the Ozana Valley

In a territorial hierarchy, Neamț County, but especially the Ozana Valley has a wide variety of active and latent tourist resources. The strong points of the area consist of the following:

- tourism is a priority in the strategy of Neamț County and of the LAG “Bison Land”;
- current tourism in the area has public components: urban arrangements, events and manifestations, objectives to visit;
- the critical mass of private components is exceeded: accommodation, meals, public catering, arranged objectives;
- it involves entrepreneurial initiatives: there are legal entities of various forms: sole proprietorships, authorized natural persons, cooperatives, limited liability companies, joint stock companies;
- tourism implies employment opportunities: the number of jobs is proportional to the number of tourist structures; they are doubled by the skills acquired by young people and adults in various forms of qualification);
- innovation in tourism is manifested mainly through learning (local vocational and technical education) and through investments (modern facilities for processing local resources for tourism purposes);
- the natural components of tourism have uniqueness attributes;
- the spa component is represented by the resorts of Bălțătești and Oglinzi, as well as by numerous salty springs;
- the spiritual components have a high density of distribution: monasteries, churches, hermitages, crucifixes;
- the cultural load of the area is evident and strongly represented: memorial houses, museums, cultural centers, events.

The challenges of the area are determined by the roles that stakeholders take on.

If we look at the Ozana Valley from the outside, the *role of tourist* is diverse:

a1) as a guest; the main elements pursued are: curiosity, expectations, desires, demands, demands, satisfaction, learning;

a2) as a passer-by (in transit); the main elements are: looking at listening, asking, participating, having fun, knowing;

a3) for therapeutic purposes; there is a direct component: spa, climatic, “healthy”, cultural, traditional, historical. There is another common component: rest, curiosity, calm, emotional feeling, experience, emotion, memories.

If we look at the Ozana Valley from the inside, then the *role of host* stands out:

b1) supply and scheduling part (organizing part);

b2) the part of value and minimum viable product (the pragmatic part);

b3) economic-financial part: receipts / costs; profit / loss; work / satisfaction.

It must be borne in mind that the hosts are the captive elements that count both the good things and especially the negative elements. That is why the hosts' effort has been greatly amplified and includes other components that are “invisible”.

c1) food preparation elements: agriculture; zootechnics; harvest / preserve; processing / storage; maturation / refining; emotions / nostalgia (refinement);

c2) non-food preparatory elements: collection; manufacturing; thematic display; security; historical / cultural message; information / knowledge;

c3) events: investigation, thematic display, choreography, security, public message cohesion), local patriotism.

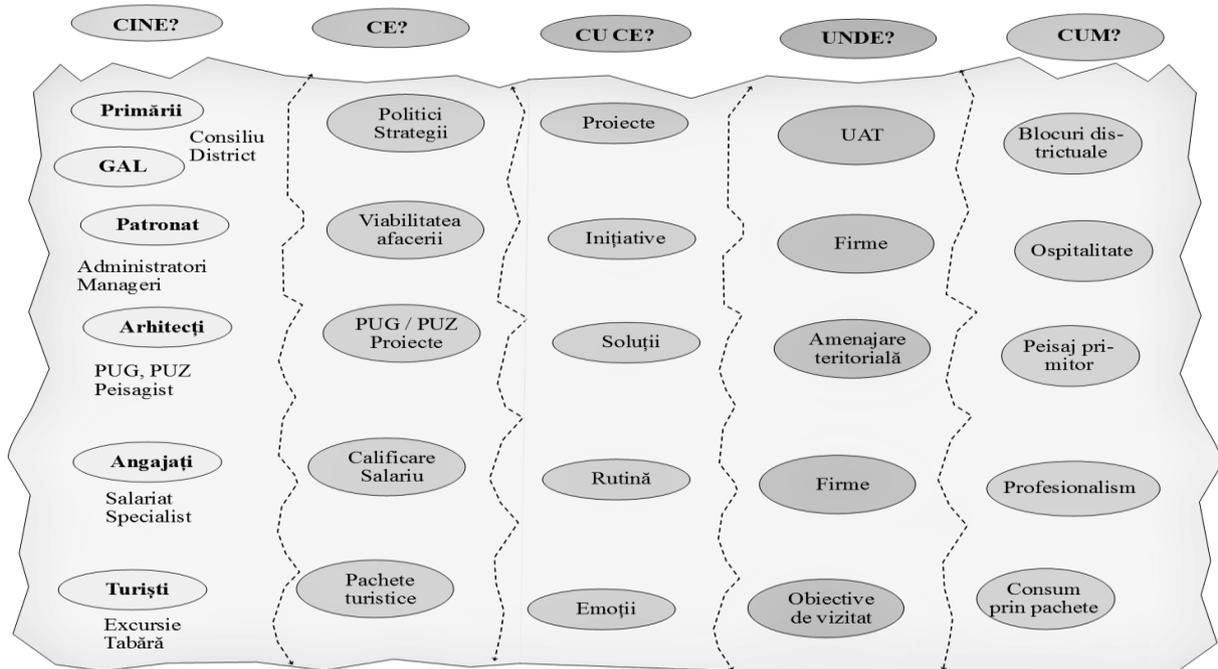


Fig. 1. Map of stakeholders

Source: Authors' elaboration

Based on this complex description of the tourist phenomenon in the Ozana Valley we can identify the stakeholders and draw a map of their complex role (Fig. 1). On one axis of coordinates we placed the representative categories of stakeholders, and on the other axis we placed the six basic questions for defining a topic: Who?, What?, With what?, Where?, How?. I knowingly did not ask the questions Why? and When?, because they mean "tourism development" and "permanent".

3. Method

To develop a modern concept of tourism for the Ozana Valley basin, we used the method of cultural districts that we adapted (Suwala, 2015). This method has the role of specializing and customizing territorial divisions. Based on them, ecosystems are defined. In the following stages, the elements of specificity are defined, a content and interrelationship analysis is made and strategies are put in place to highlight the value of the tourist potential. The result of this approach is the transformation of the Ozana Valley basin into a regenerated region.

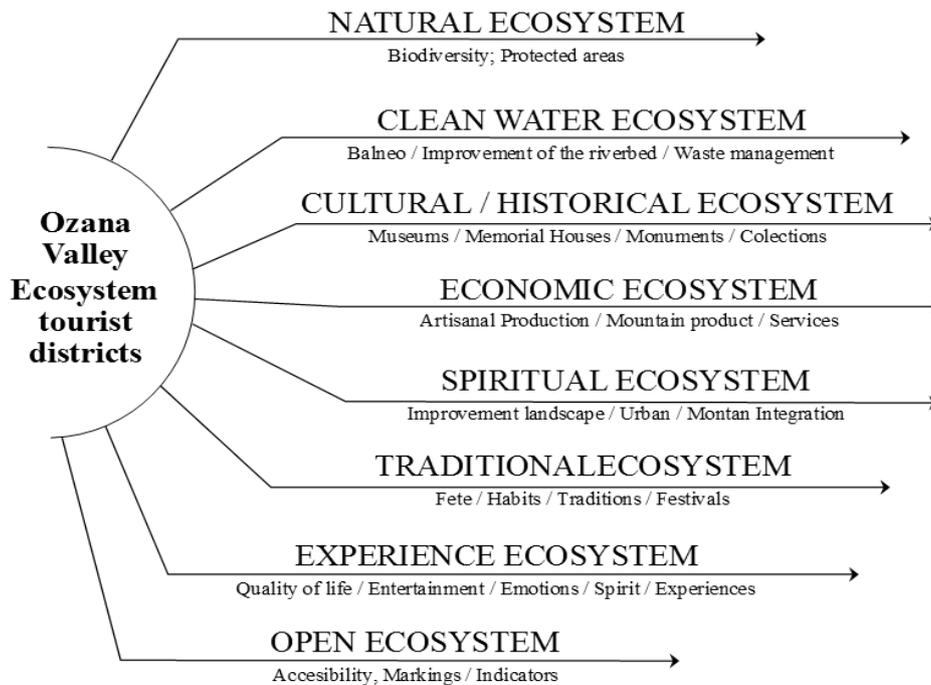


Fig. 2. Configuration in regenerated area

Source: Authors' elaboration

Fig. 2 shows eight identified ecosystems to which a challenge in tourism must be related, be it: business, event, passive / active objective of visiting, etc. A complex model of tourist ecosystem is presented in Fig. 3³. The structuring establishes a proximity by associating the company with the local market of objectives and a family of companies between which competition relations are established, but also of collaboration / cooperation. The operating environment creates the premises for an ecosystem approach. The application of this complete ecosystem model to the eight models in Fig. 2 highlights only the relevant elements of interference with the tourist ecosystem.

In order to consolidate the arguments for structuring tourism on cultural districts, it is necessary to specify the spatiality / territoriality. We have identified four categories of spaces to which we relate all discussions about tourism:

- real territory: physical space, with objectives, routes, distances, access;
- cultural territory: the space of values, attitude, behavior; the place with the mineral structure, hydrography, landscapes;
- virtual territory: sites; the Web; platforms, networks;
- fictitious territory: the identitary space, of the past generations, the place of legends, stories, parables.

³ <https://ro.pinterest.com/pin/534521049519177069/>, accessed 29.03.2021

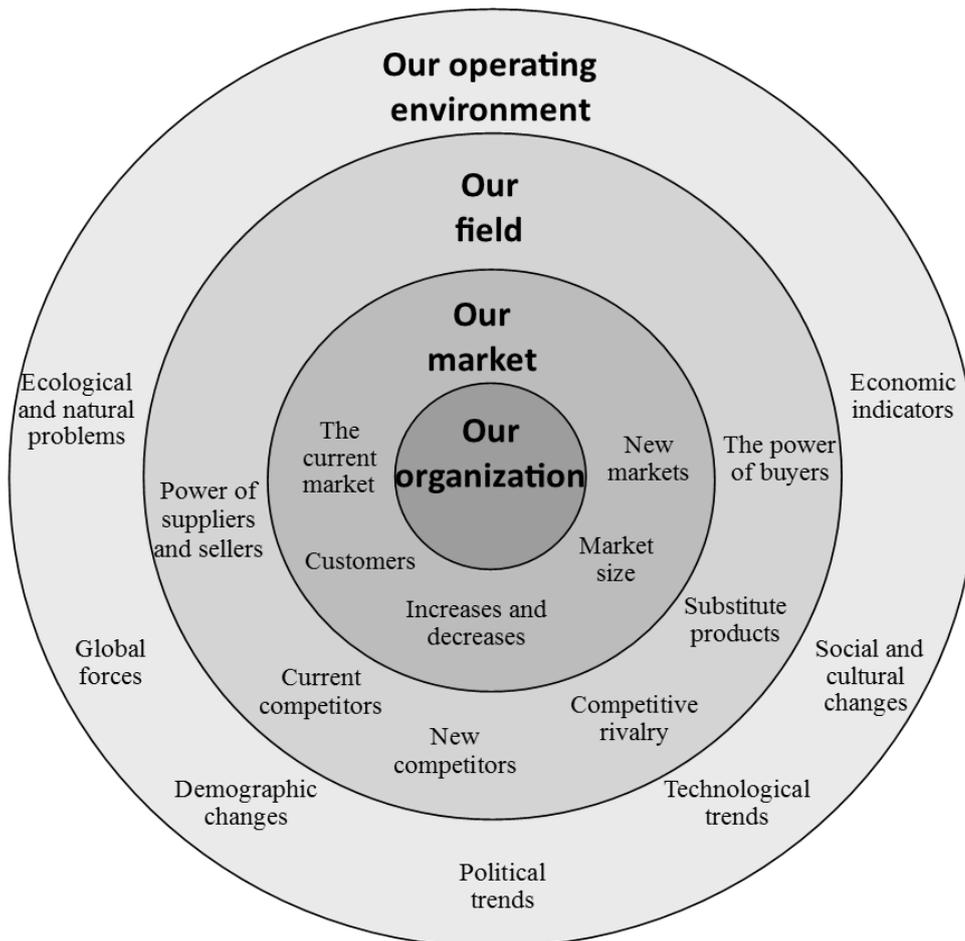


Fig. 3. Structuring ecosystems in tourism
Source: Authors' elaboration

Only real space can be measured, calculated, characterized with mathematical precision. The other types of space are appreciated and approximated.

Semantics is also used to consolidate the arguments for structuring tourism into cultural districts. This is justified by the fact that tourism communicates: hospitality, history, geography, culture, civilization, nature, etc.

Fig. 4 shows the “semiotic file” of tourism described by cultural districts (Avădănei et al., 2017). This makes the correlations between the definition of concepts, the meaning of the components and the extraction of elements with practical applicability in favor of a high-performance and dynamic tourism.

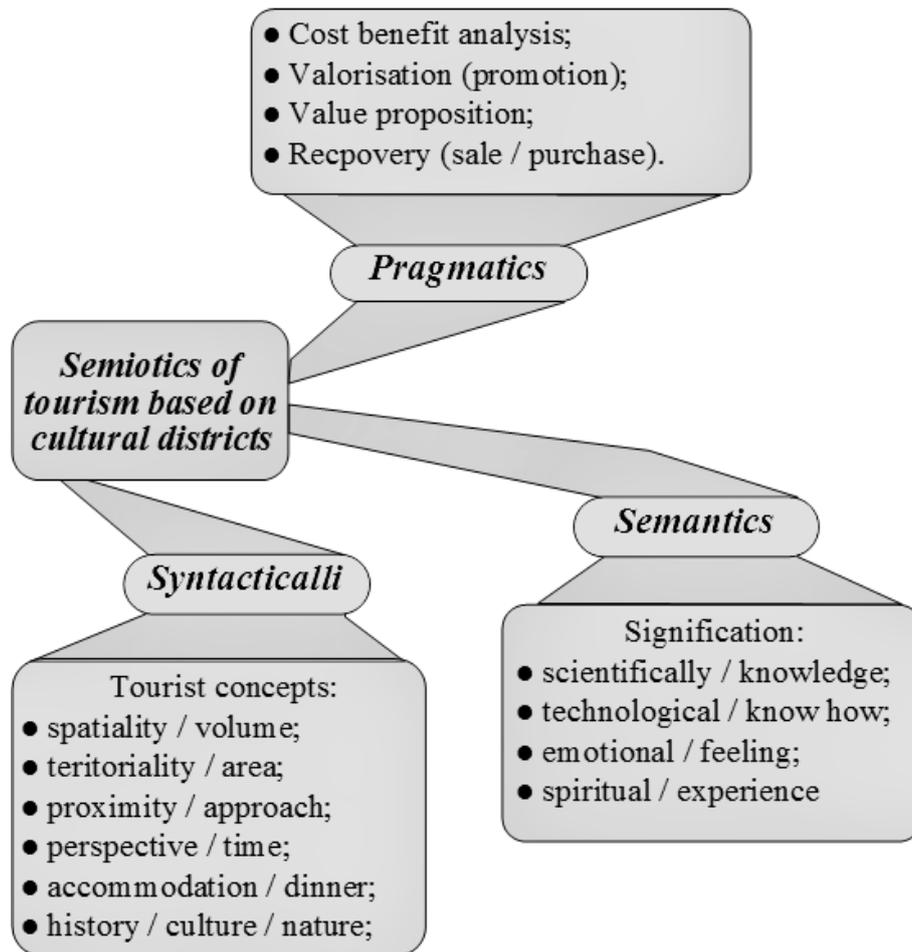


Fig. 4. Semiotics of tourism characterized by districts

Source: Authors' elaboration

In this way, an algorithmic approach is created with a high degree of detail of the description, in which all the stakeholders are found with the elements necessary to create benefits and influences in the field. Each element introduced in Fig. 4 involves extensive developments that lead to results through which the hosts surprise the customers, and the customers surprise the hosts through a communication full of content in a space with a distribution of various elements that make up the tourist act.

Based on these elements designed and defined in the office, we transferred the attention to the main actors that create and enhance the tourism culture. These are the young people involved in vocational and technical education in the Ozana Valley who provide competent human resources to the local tourism industry.

The following connections have been established in the educational environment:

- “Ion Creangă” Technological High School, Pipirig. Here young people prepare for trades in woodworking and the textile industry;
- “Archimandrite Chiriac Nicolau” Technological High School, Vânători, Neamț. Here the young people prepare for the job of mountain farmer;
- “Ion Creangă” Technical College, Târgu Neamț. Here the young people

prepare for the jobs of waiter, cook, agrotourism worker.

In an itinerary of mutual knowledge, we set out to have a more didactic discussion about their purpose in this world.

In another itinerary, the young people participated in an interactive discussion about their work in teaching practice and trained in issuing entrepreneurial ideas that would capitalize on them.

4. Results and discussions

Ozana Valley is a tourist area located in the north of Neamț County (Fig. 5)⁴. It is characterized by an intense visiting rate. It is classified in international guidelines. It stood out at the big international tourism fairs⁵.

A systematization of the elements of tourist attraction consists in the table in Fig. 6 which concentrates the keywords grouped in six categories aimed at people, the role of host, hospitality, gastronomy chain, economic component, basic tourist component. They give life to the area and provide the emotional and spiritual elements: experiences, cultural and spiritual transposition, contact with the tangible and intangible heritage, the souvenir industry and trade. It is necessary to denote (for artistic elements) and co-notation (for scientific elements through semiosis. In the pragmatics of semiosis, the tourist must register an increase of the self, of the personality, of the general culture, after diving in the ecosystem from Ozana Valley.

Within this complex process of significance, we proceeded to an inventory of the tourist objectives in the Ozana Valley based on some classification criteria.

The result was a map of the area as in Fig. 7. There are great differences in meaning, density and content that show an unsystematized, chaotic way of territorial arrangement, based on a certain type of local entrepreneurship: where an opportunity arose. noticed also a local animator, be he a folk craftsman, head of public administration, craftsman, religious leader (abbot of a monastery, parish priest), administrator of a public institution (deconcentrated), cultural leader, etc.

⁴ <https://www.google.ro/maps/@47.1958342,26.23418,10.91z>, accessed 05.04.2021

⁵ <https://www.tinutulzimbrului.ro/>, accessed 05.04.2021

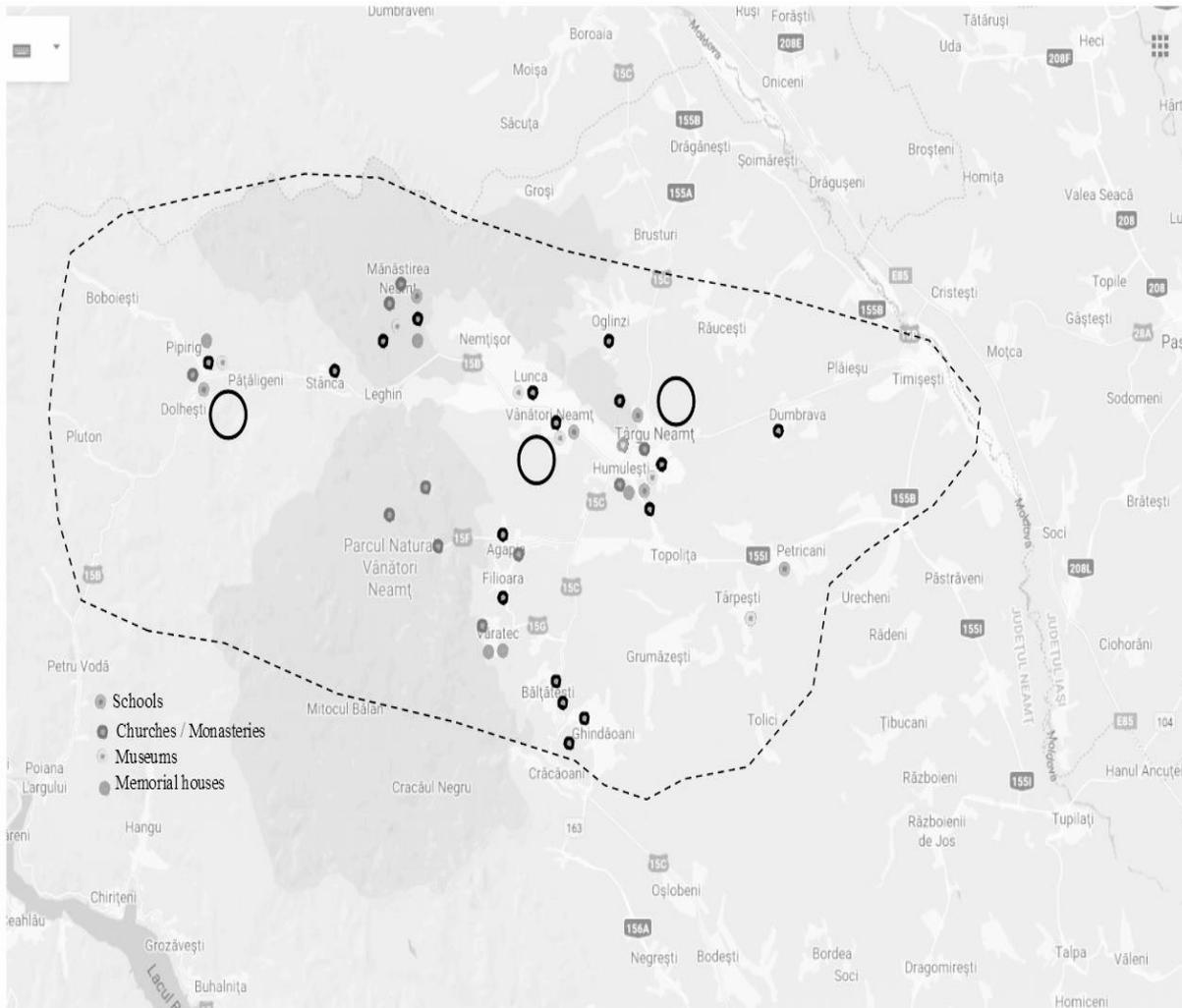


Fig. 5. Map of the Ozana Valley tourist basin

Source: Google Maps

The analysis highlighted some representative elements:

- a series of elements of specificity that can be constituted in market niches,
- a series of cultural and spiritual brands;
- a number of local initiatives that have also turned into brands;
- a constant concern of policy generators for the development of tourism in the area;
- a series of cultural, traditional, spiritual resources with which the area becomes alive, almost all year round;
- an innovation resource resulting from the association of stakeholders;
- the part of human resources (employment and entrepreneurship) remains within the perimeter of the legislation which is quite difficult to adapt to the continuous changes that take place in the tourism ecosystem.

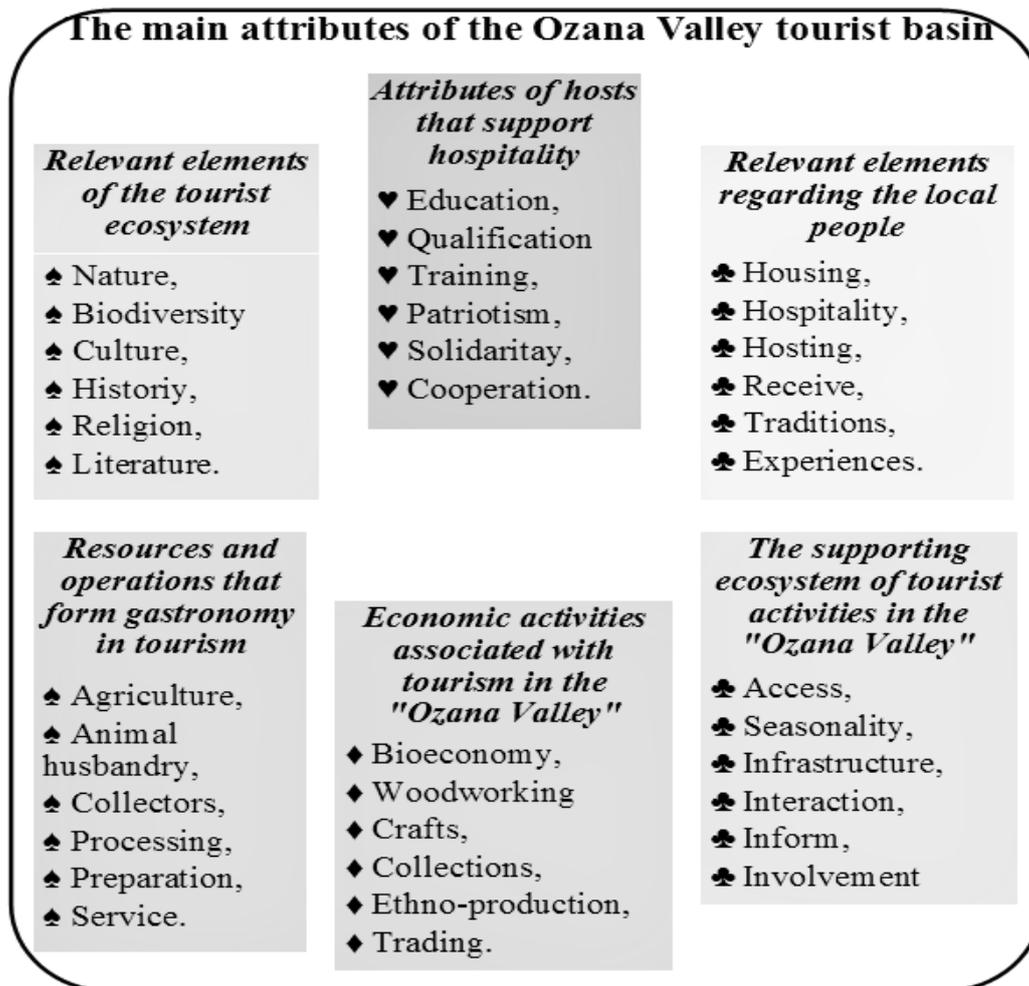


Fig. 6. Necessary elements for defining the Ozana Valley tourist ecosystem
Source: Authors' elaboration

A positive element is the accumulation of a portfolio and a collection of diplomas and trophies.

These confirm a continuous and constant concern of the factors interested in consolidating tourism in the Ozana Valley: four times included in the Top 100 sustainable tourist destinations; inclusion in the EDEN network of tourist destinations of excellence⁶.

⁶ <https://www.visitneamt.com/2020/11/bison-land-in-neamt-once-again-included-in-top-100-sustainable-destinations-in-2020/>, accessed 05.04.2021

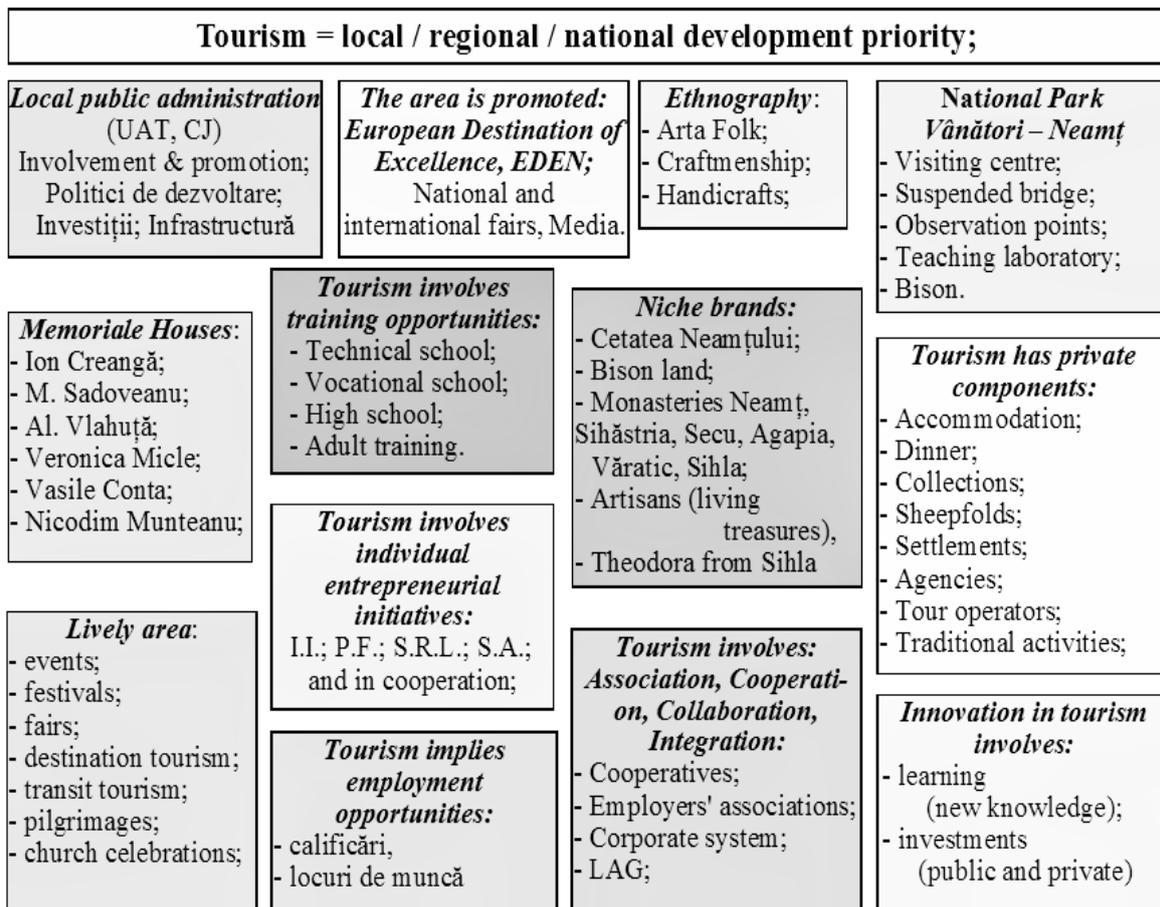


Fig. 7. Mapping the tourist ecosystem Ozana Valley

Source: Authors' elaboration

Fig. 8 shows the mapping application. It is observed the advanced degree of coverage with elements and tourist landmarks and the order in complication (Atanasiu, 1971) achieved by their distribution on cultural districts (Avădănei et al., 2017). According to our science, in Romania there is no such complete configuration with such a rich density of objectives.

This configuration in diversity is useful for several categories of stakeholders:

- tour operators can develop specialized or combined packages of tourist objectives and routes to meet the requirements of tourists;
- policy makers can take measures to harmonize tourism through policies to stimulate established objectives or by placing new attractive objectives;
- employment and entrepreneurship consultancy services can identify income-generating and job-creating opportunities for the specialized human resources available in the region;
- vocational and technical education schools can direct their professional orientation towards the capitalization of local artisanal resources: wood, stone, clay, textiles, gastronomy, farms, etc.

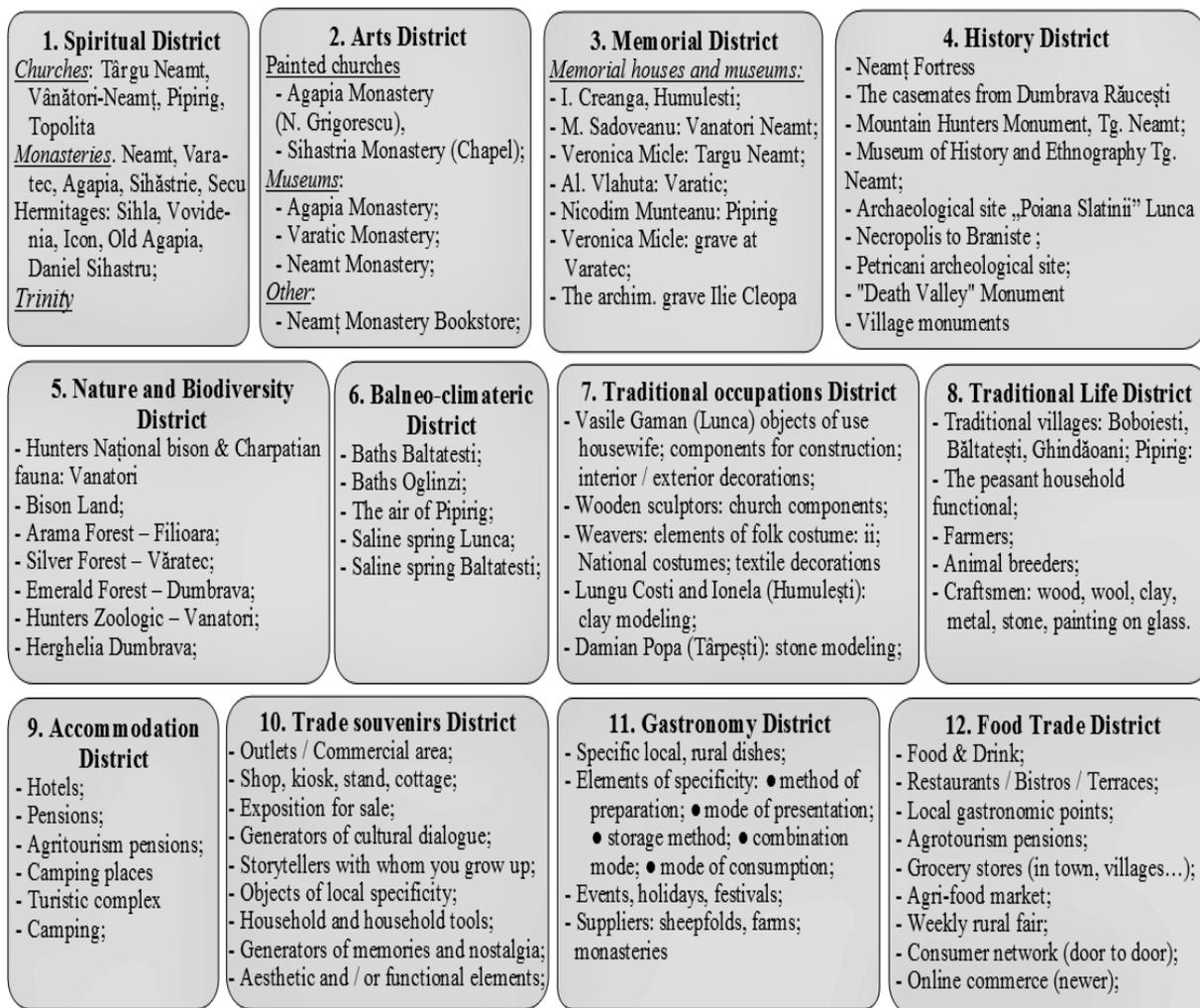


Fig. 8. Defining cultural districts in the Ozana Valley

Source: Authors' elaboration

It is easy to notice that this date is very rich in material and intangible tourist attractions. However, the level of development and well-being of people is far from being as high.

We aim, with the help of this theoretical approach, to identify new aspects, new ideas, and new solutions that will bring tourists and their money to be spent on local economic growth.

5. Customization

The status of tourist basin creates useful chain activities for important flows of tourists, each with expectations, demands, curiosities, needs, but especially with nostalgies.

Supply chains and value chains are set up.

Favorable factors are:

- a history of economic activities and entrepreneurial initiatives;
- a professional profile in schools. Vocational and technical education makes special efforts to adapt to market requirements;

- an effervescence of civil society for the preservation of traditional activities;
- a concern of policy makers to support tourism.

Adequate human resources are needed to sustain these strengths. The problem of human resources is not new in the area, but it is insufficiently adapted to high-performance tourism concepts.

Basically, we need to study the two forms of earning a living for people of working age: employment and entrepreneurship.

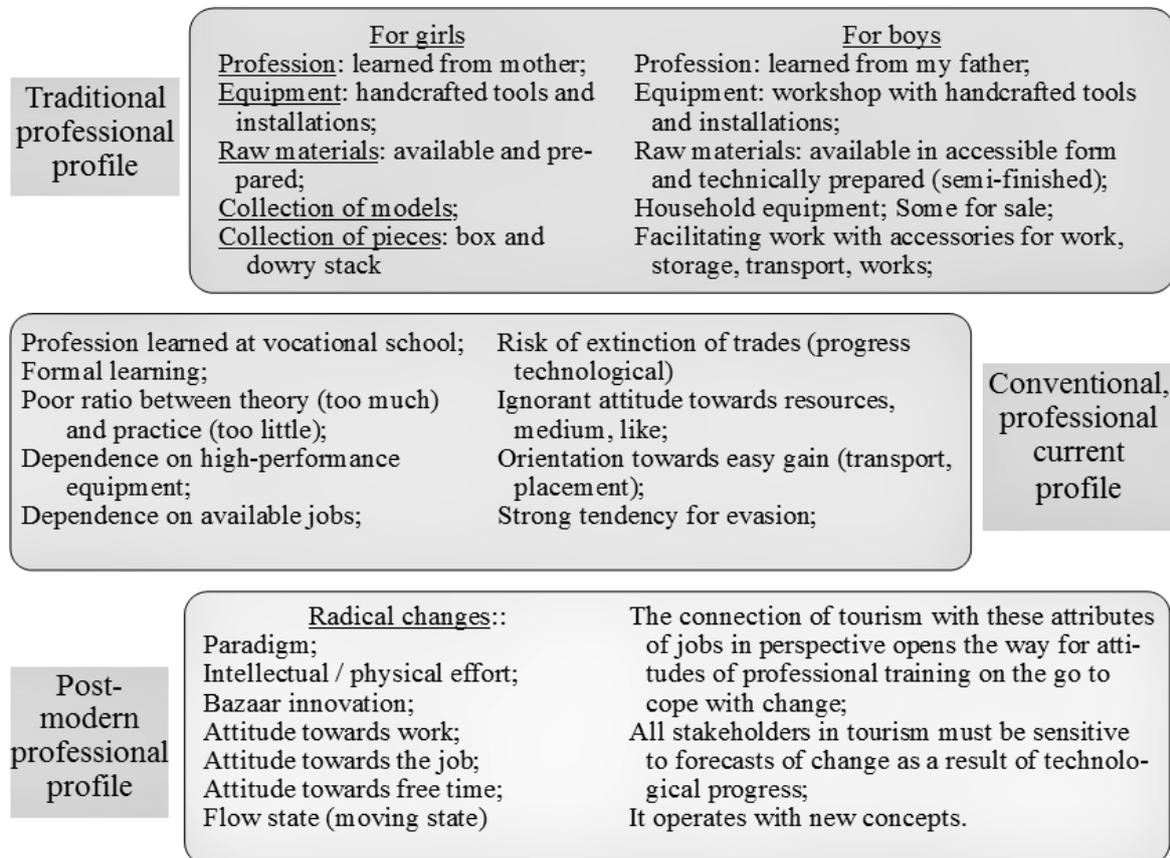


Fig. 9. Employment opportunities space in the Ozana Valley

Source: Authors' elaboration

Fig. 9 shows the professional profile in the area of employment opportunities for people of working age. They are of paramount importance especially for young people. From a historical perspective, the three stages are delimited: traditional, conventional, current and postmodern. It is observed that tourism is exposed to radical changes in an aggressive atmosphere. Vocational training policy makers are confused and do not find the cadence of reforms for adequacy in an occupational and entrepreneurial setting.

There is a language in the space of communication that forces a credit to the traditional element. Behind him are volunteer activities and a marketing that appeals to slogans that have a cultural imprint and not pragmatic / economic.



Fig. 10. Occupations that can be practiced by young people in Ozana Valley

Source: Authors' elaboration

Fig. 10 shows several trades practicable by young people in the tourist environment Ozana Valley. Not all of them can be found in the 6-digit Romanian Code of Occupations (COR)⁷. Some are assimilated (e.g. milkman), some are not updated (e.g. herbalist). The nominated lists refer to different levels of education. Some are studied in school, others are acquired at the school of life or are inherited from father to son. The school of life is a way of acquiring the knowledge necessary to survive in an uninstitutionalized regime. The worst thing is to learn from failures. The easiest is to learn through apprenticeship from those who know (age difference is an essential criterion).

In terms of employment, things are clearer, but not necessarily more successful. Vocational and technical education is geared towards producing qualifications, i.e. young graduates have attested to a profession on the basis of which they can be hired. Only here comes the setback: if the labor market is ready to absorb them.

When it comes to entrepreneurship, things are much more delicate:

- there is no policy aimed at supporting local entrepreneurship; such a policy is limited to ensuring the legal framework and the intervention of the tax authorities and other forms of control that deal with the application of fines;

⁷ <http://mmuncii.ro/j33/index.php/ro/2014-domenii/munca/c-o-r>, accessed 07.04.2021

- entrepreneurship disseminated in the public space is mainly based on companies of mayors and deputy mayors (former and current);
- young people know nothing about business: there is a program to set up exercise companies that do not sell, but only produce and compete; on the other hand, there is an object of very superficial entrepreneurial activity;
- the support of entrepreneurship in the Ozana Valley tourist basin and other tourist areas must be encouraged through fiscal facilities and incentive funding.

These aspects are supported by the vocational and technical education that takes place in the tourist basin there are two technological high schools and a technical college.

- “Ion Creangă” High School, Pipirig specializations: wood processing (carpentry, wood carving); textile industry (knitting, tailoring, handicrafts, furs; furrier);
- “Ion Creangă” Technical College, Târgu-Neamț specializations: public alimentation (cook, waiter, waiter), agritourism (maid, receptionist, agriculture);
- “Archimandrite Chiriac Nicolau” High School, Vânători, Neamț specializations: mountain farmer (agriculture, animal husbandry, horticulture, hay, fodder, pasture).

Table 1. Favorable and unfavorable elements regarding technical education in the Ozana Valley tourist basin

Favorable elements	Unfavorable elements
<p>There are still vocational schools with the written intention of keeping in touch with traditions; There are still teachers dedicated to maintaining traditional practices;</p> <p>There are a significant number of young people included in the vocational education plan;</p> <p>The tourist attributes of the area are complex (as discussed above);</p>	<p>The curriculum follows the pattern of urban qualifications; handicrafts are missing; The attitude of the second generation is linked to nostalgia without a coagulated voluntary intention;</p> <p>Young people are waiting to finish school to take up jobs that have nothing to do with the traditional specifics;</p> <p>There is a deficit of insufficiently exploited tourist activities, especially the souvenir trade;</p>
<p>Young people prepare for employment (implementation skills);</p> <p>There is a concern for mastering artisanal techniques (finesse and manual precision); The commercial sector has elements of attractiveness and branding specific to the area;</p> <p>A strong commercial concept adapted to the Ozana Valley is needed;</p> <p>A concept of knowledge is needed to increase the frequency of the area; It is necessary to open the area for collaboration.</p>	<p>Young people do not prepare for entrepreneurship (no entrepreneurial skills appear);</p> <p>The achievements are limited to the presentation of unique objects without a commercial vision; The souvenir trade has archaic forms: trade at the gate, improvised kiosks and stalls, seasonality;</p> <p>The strong tourism industry is missing from the area: chocolate; dairy, cheese, wooden confectionery;</p> <p>The didactic packages associated with the relics and objectives are missing; Extracurricular initiatives are practiced in a closed model, without availability of cooperation.</p>

The types of entrepreneurial activities are regulated by the 4-digit coded Classification of National Economic Activities (CAEN), which covers almost all income-generating areas⁸.

The interaction with young students (future graduates) highlighted a number of positive and negative features that reflect a series of worrying realities (Table 1).

An important element of perspective is the digitalization of tourism for which investments in hardware, software and human resources are required. There are already elements that show the concern of stakeholders to adapt to the new requirements, but things are far from being resolved.

Another equally important element is the application of non-formal means of learning. For the students from the mentioned target group, LEGO type assemblies (classic, serious play, gamification) were used as non-formal means. Following the free interactive discussions, the interest of young people for unconventional forms of learning was revealed, but not even at the level of enthusiasm. There is a joke among young people about their professional future. The mountain area has not been collectivized and the traditional authentic element has been preserved at a primitive level (no reforms, no investments, no professional perspectives (unskilled workers from the mountain area were used in large industrial plants. At present there is a forced learning environment (curriculum strict without mountain specific, bus transport). Nothing that is attractive and admires tourists is in contact with young people, not even the entrepreneurial prospect of a gain, predictable.

6. Conclusions

Tourism is required to adapt as it goes to the knowledge-based economy in which creativity and innovation become the most visible tools. It is the theater where traditional cultural forms (theater, music, art) fight with notoriety, fashion, design. It is the configuration through which the informal elements are insinuated.

Learning, research must undergo a transformation from the “cathedral” form to the “bazaar” form⁹ (Raymont, 1999) available to anyone, anyway and anytime.

The Ozana Valley tourist basin is one of the densest regions in terms of nature, history, culture and civilization.

Through a careful analysis, it was possible to apply the model of cultural districts. This opened the perspective of modernizing the criteria and rules for developing thematic tourism packages. Also, a mapping of tourism elements, past and present, was made, together with those that have the potential to be put into practice: niche brands, collaborative coagulation, living area, public and private components, training, employment, innovation, entrepreneurship, ethnography, national park (bison), memorial houses. A relevant element is the attribute of European destination of excellence in the EDEN network.

Moreover, the way in which ecosystems are built and the way in which the

⁸ <https://caen.nxm.ro/>, accessed 08.04.2021

⁹ https://ro.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catedrala_%C8%99i_Bazarul, accessed 08.04.2021

tourist ecosystem stands out have been configured.

The semiosis of tourism “made order” in the perspectives of better enhancement of the Ozana Valley tourist basin and of increasing the number of tourists who will attend it. It was based on the map of its attributes such as ecosystem, economic system, gastronomy, people and hospitality, etc.

The definition of tourist districts highlighted twelve categories of relevant elements that define the Ozana Valley tourist basin: spiritual, arts, memorial, history, nature and biodiversity, balneo-climatic, traditional occupations, traditional life, accommodation / meals, souvenir trade, gastronomy, food trade. Such a picture can hardly be identified in other tourist areas.

The key element to be emphasized in the next period is that of human resources. The area of employment opportunities undergoes changes during the transition period from the traditional / modern / transmodern period. There are many risks that negatively influence occupational developments. In addition to demographic factors, it is necessary to take into account the skills needed for occupations that cover the diversity of jobs.

The technical education students from the Ozana Valley tourist basin are the future employees and employers in tourism. It is known that the main virtue of the tourism sector is that the largest share is occupied by the local human factor that has emotional and spiritual connections with the specifics of the place. This is why we operated a series of simulations with a sample from this target group.

Young people want to get involved in the local mission of culture and civilization but the pressure of current policies has a destructive effect on their internal values and psycho-sociological characteristics.

It is time to sound the alarm regarding the need to modernize the education system to adapt to the demands of today’s society and to be prepared to support the sustainability of tourism in the Ozana Valley tourist basin.

Acknowledgments

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Young People Decide on the Tourist Future of Piatra Neamț

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ABSTRACT

The paper starts from the drama of young people after graduating from school. In general, there is an expectation regarding the employment of young people in well-known companies for successful careers. This year was associated with the fact that tourism is a development priority for both Neamț County and Piatra Neamț. We put in front of the young people the hypothesis that they would be the decision makers of some policies, actions, initiatives through which they create job opportunities. Two fronts of work resulted. First front was the hypothetical role of young people as a generator of jobs. The second front was formed by the challenge of building a vision for attracting tourists. The result was an interactive dialogue that generated some interesting ideas and highlighted the fact that youth is a resource worth considering for the future of local development.

1. Introduction

The problems of human resources in tourism are multiple: from those with a broad perspective to identify the evolution of policies and strategies in time and space, but also in the diversity of services, to the specific ones of managing a tourist objective. The management of a tourist objective concerns the nature and quality of the services provided associated with the nature and quality of human resources.

At national level, tourism is a priority and an emergency (National Strategy in Tourism, 2018).

One of the basic attributes of tourism is that it generates jobs. This research track opens an important horizon for human resources management (Mihăilescu, 2010; Stanciu, 2001). Most of the publications dealing with human resources in tourism refer to the status of employee (Cârdei, 2005). But there are publications that deal with entrepreneurial skills (Mirică et al., 2016).

In this context, we approached a new track in terms of human resource management in tourism. We appealed to the hypothesis of young people's decision

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to design policies, strategies, investment plans for the preparation of a development field associated with their vision. We relied on the fact that this generation will reach the age of maximum creative capacity for 10-15 years. If we make them aware that they can anticipate this phase, they will imagine solutions that will be mature by then and will decide from now on how they will act.

2. Method

For the proposed topic, we addressed a sample of young students from four representative high schools in Piatra Neamț. The four selected high schools were: "Petru Rareș" National College, "Victor Brauner" High School of Arts, "Al. I. Cuza" Economic High School, "Calistrat Hogaș" National College.

In a first stage we distributed questionnaires (140 questionnaires) for sensitization + awareness + training. The collected data were processed and based on them an image was made about the attitude of young people towards the community and their professional future in a complex equation, which includes the awareness of belonging to a complex mechanism on the succession of generations and defining Romanian civilization a consistent history.

The answers collected were statistically processed. The results reflect the sociological phenomena that take place in schools, determined by general causes of human civilization and causes specific to Romania.

In the second stage, 3 (young people / high school) x 4 (high school) = 12 young people were selected, with whom we carried out more consistent activities. We organized three workshops, on a succession of stages: incubating ideas, conception, demonstration. First, we organized two online meetings, in which we made the theoretical approach to the problems to be solved. Then I urged the young people to take a tour of the city and its surroundings and to identify points with potential for tourism. We also managed to carry out the three proposed workshops in which we made the elements for the preparation of the album of ideas. They were made works: painting, graphics, computer graphics. We wanted to take young people through the LEGO assembly phase in order to activate their mechanisms of creativity, decision-making, and the development of their own personality, defense and respect for copyright.

Due to the workshops (two virtual and three face to face) the following were carried out:

- a series of "hot spots" were reviewed in the territory of Piatra Neamț Municipality, which supports the realization of investments capable of increasing the number of tourists;
- symbols were created that were also able to create reasons to attract and retain the attention of tourists;
- sketches were made with objectives and visionary locations that can be taken into account by policy makers;
- custom LEGO montages have been built and an album of proposals has been prepared, which together with the course support for the workshops, form the main

evidence base.

3. Results and discussions

3.1. Step 1. Processing of data collected through questionnaires

The questionnaires were developed by the authors. They consisted of 30 questions grouped into 6 sets consisting of 6 hypothetical roles that young people had to adopt:

- 1) If I were mayor;
- 2) If I were the owner of a tourist company;
- 3) If I were a tourist;
- 4) If I were an urban architect;
- 5) If I were an employee in tourism;
- 6) If I were a simple citizen (civic observer).

Each question has 5 answer options, one of which ticks the one that best represents the respondent: 5 - I find myself totally; 4 - I find myself partially; 3 - equally; 2 - I don't really agree; 1 - I do not agree at all; 0 - I haven't asked myself the problem yet.

As a result, the effects of each question and the questionnaire as a whole may be:

- *confirmation*: the young person asked such questions, built answers, and these are confirmed by the questionnaire;
- *adjustment*: the young person asked such questions, but his own answers are far from those suggested by this questionnaire; he must confront himself and make the necessary adjustments;
- *self-discovery*: the young man did not ask such questions, but finds that it is time for responsible approaches.

Thus, each young person who completed the questionnaire discovered the difficulty of building a demanding occupational framework.

One hundred and sixty questionnaires were distributed which were completed by 11th grade students from each high school (40 questionnaires each). A total of 137 questionnaires were completed. The answers were collected, systematized, processed, interpreted. The results are presented in the following tables:

- on questions;
- on series (hypostases);
- on questionnaires.

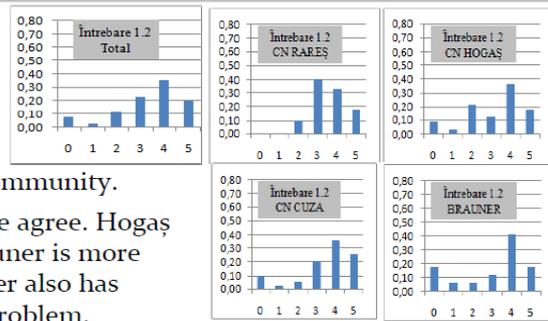
The answers from each high school were compared.

Series 1: If I Were Mayor

Question 1.1. Tourism will be a priority in the development strategy of the city, I have some priorities that I will propose.

Expectations: The quality of being a good host and well organized for the benefit of the community.

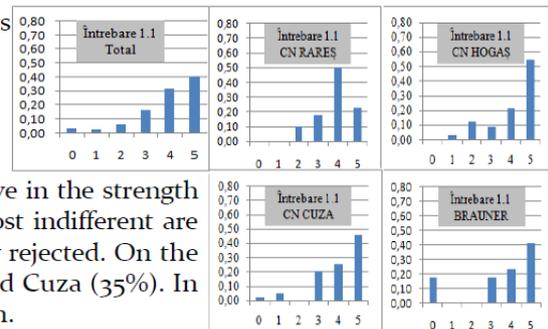
Interpretations: About 40 + 30% of young people agree. Hogaş is more convinced, Rareş is undecided, and Brauner is more considered. Cuza follows the total allure. Brauner also has 16% of young people who have not had such a problem.



Question 1.2. I would form a body of stake-holders to correlate our plans and resources.

Expectations: Community issues are organized by union. The association is one of the solutions.

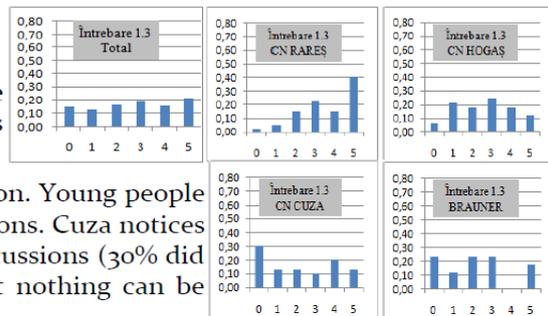
Interpretations: Young people do not really believe in the strength of the association to overcome obstacles. The most indifferent are Rareş (40%). However, the idea is not completely rejected. On the verge of indecision are Brauner (40%) Hogaş and Cuza (35%). In Cuza there are 25% supporters of the association.



Question 1.3. I don't think tourism has a chance in a city without access infrastructure.

Expectations: The City Hall is part of the development of tourism. The mayor imposes and ensures the right framework.

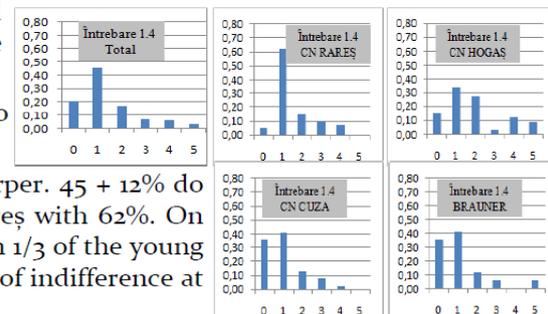
Interpretations: It is the most confusing situation. Young people are divided approximately equally between options. Cuza notices the subtlety of the question and rejects the discussions (30% did not ask the question). Rareş is convinced that nothing can be done (40%). Brauner shyly opposes.



Question 1.4. Tourism is sufficiently developed and no investment is needed, other than those currently underway.

Expectations: self-satisfaction and sufficiency do not take place in the development of tourism.

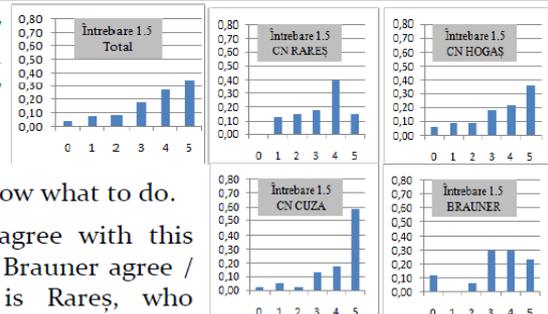
Interpretations: The situation is somewhat sharper. 45 + 12% do not reconcile with the situation. Especially Rareş with 62%. On the other hand, at Cuza and Brauner, more than 1/3 of the young people did not pose a problem. It is an attitude of indifference at least worrying.



Question 1.5. Tourism has great resources for development and capitalization in Piatra Neamt; I want to get involved to create jobs for my peers.

Expectations: If young people from Pietreni want to get involved in politics, they need to know what to do.

Interpretations: About 1/3 of young people agree with this perspective. Especially Cuza with almost 60%. Brauner agree / indifferent. Hogaş disperses attitudes. So is Rareş, who acknowledges that this is the direction.

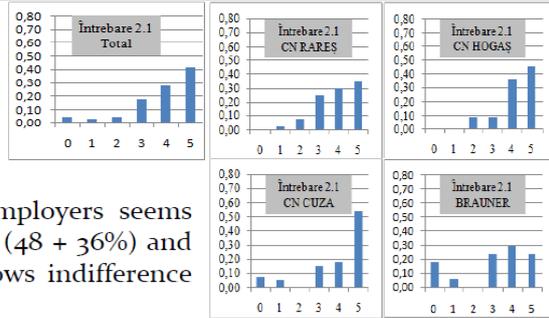


Series 2: If I Were a Tourist Company Owner

Question 2.1. I would collaborate in setting up an employers' organization in order to better represent our interests.

Expectations: In order for my business to grow, I have to rely on competitors. Along with them, I also make performance and profit.

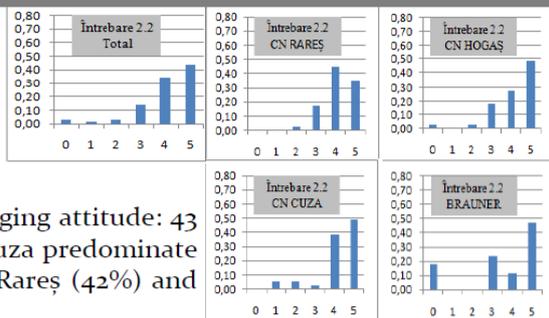
Interpretations: The idea of association in employers seems more attractive (average of 42% - 28%). Hogaș (48 + 36%) and Cuza (52 + 18%) show enthusiasm. Rarely shows indifference (33 - 30%). Brauner has about 18% foreigners.



Question 2.2. I would get involved in adapting my (tourism) business to new requirements: investments, quality of services, diversity of challenges.

Expectations: How attentive I am to market changes. I have to anticipate and act ahead.

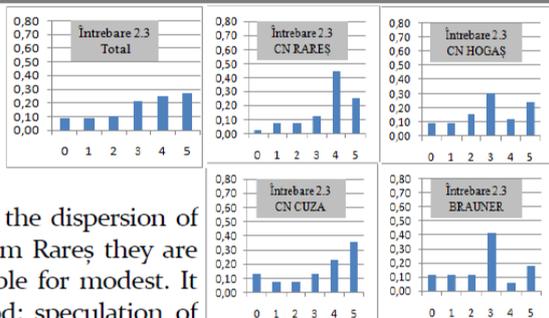
Interpretations: in general a favorable and engaging attitude: 43 + 35%. Those determined in Hogaș, Brauner, Cuza predominate (around 50%). Many indifferent people are in Rareș (42%) and Cuza (38%).



Question 2.3. I would seize the opportunity and speculate on new opportunities: enlargement, forms of monopoly, bankruptcy of competitors.

Expectations: Many of the changes in the market may be favorable to me. I have to take advantage of the new circumstances.

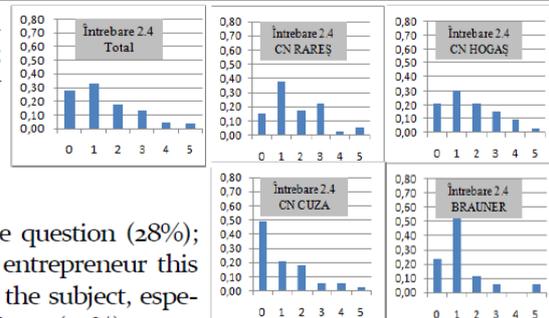
Interpretations: The flattening of the curve shows the dispersion of opinions. From Brauner are not found (40%). From Rareș they are oscillating (25 + 42%). At Cuza the curve is suitable for modest. It seems that the question has not been understood: speculation of opportunities is the engine of business development.



Question 2.4. I don't want to develop tourism because it "steals" my suppliers and the market; market rules usually change and that affects my business.

Expectations: I can't keep development in place. The chance is to adapt to those with better ideas.

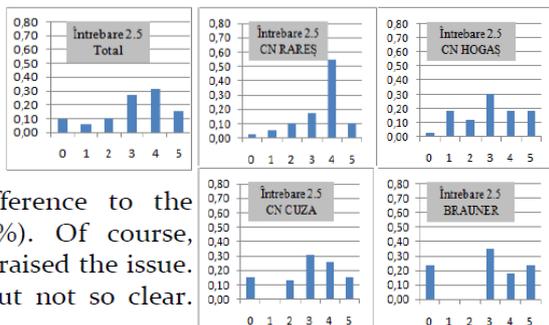
Interpretations: Many young people did not ask the question (28%); especially in Cuza (50%). In the psychology of the entrepreneur this knot must be cut quickly. There is an opposition to the subject, especially in Brauner (55%), but also in Rareș (38%) and Hogaș (30%).



Question 2.5. I follow the evolution of policies and the market; I prepare new projects, even if they are expensive and affect my profit.

Expectations: My strong point must be the initiative. The EU must control the market.

Interpretations: A confusing question. Indifference to the framework of a development dynamic (30%). Of course, Brauner has many young people who have not raised the issue. Only in Rareș there is a favorable attitude, but not so clear. Young people are not willing to risk innovation.

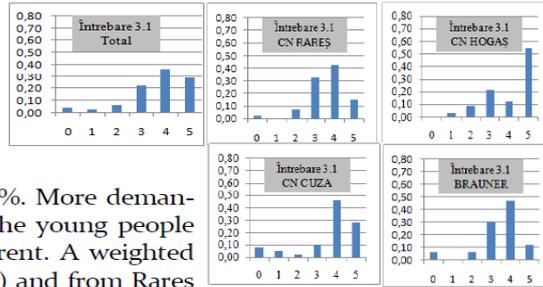


Series 3: If I Were a Tourist

Question 3.1. I expect the hosts to make me live interesting and intense experiences.

Expectations: This empathy highlights the demands and expectations of tourism. It also highlights the complexity of tourism as a tool for development and leisure.

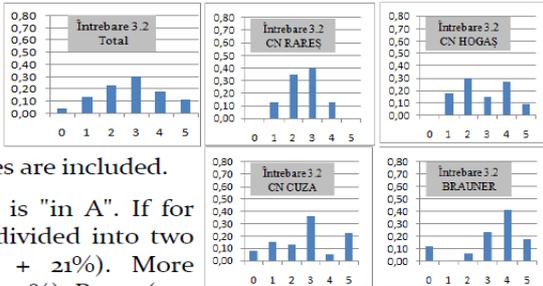
Interpretations: The requirement is high: 29 + 35%. More demanding are the young people from Hogaş (55%). The young people from Rareş (33%) and Brauner (30%) are indifferent. A weighted demand is manifested in Brauner and Cuza (46%) and from Rareş (42%).



Question 3.2. I claim that the hosts offer me maximum hospitality at a low price, regardless of costs.

Expectations: The price of hospitality is set by the owner. The tools of acceptance remain with the client. Quality, promptness, good surprises are included.

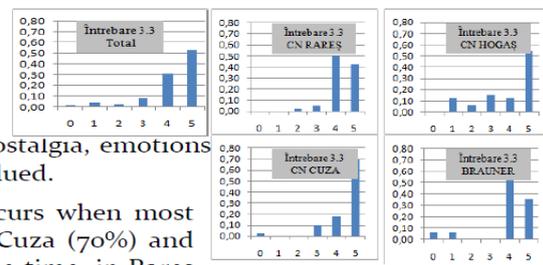
Interpretations: The distribution of preferences is "in A". If for 30% indifference is manifested, the others are divided into two camps: followers (10 + 16%), opponents (11 + 21%). More demanding are Cuza (21 + 5%) and Brauner (18 + 40%). Rareş (11 + 35%) and Hogaş (18 + 30%) are hostile to the idea.



Question 3.3. I expect to find out new things about hosts and places that complement my knowledge: culture and civilization, history, ethnography, gastronomy, spirituality, etc.

Expectations: Tourist destinations are full of nostalgia, emotions manifestations, which need to be known and valued.

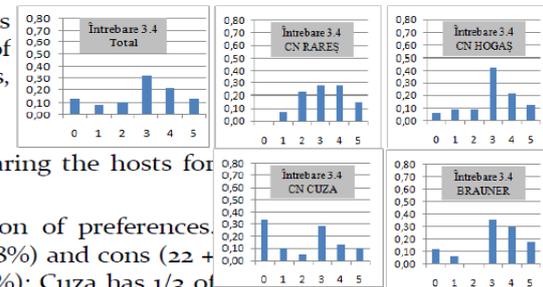
Interpretations: One of the rare situations occurs when most respondents are clearly oriented: (52 + 30%). Cuza (70%) and Hogaş (55%) are clearly positioned. At the same time, in Rareş and Brauner there are more weighted shades (42 + 50, respectively 35 + 55%).



Question 3.4. I do not want to give up the elements of urban comfort. I am very demanding in terms of accommodation, meals, relevant objectives, authentic events.

Expectations: I am very demanding when preparing the hosts for tourism, so that I feel good.

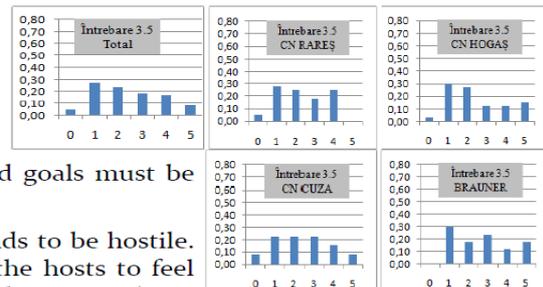
Interpretations: We are dealing with a dispersion of preferences. Most are indifferent (32%). Rareş has pros (15 + 28%) and cons (22 + 28%). Brauner has followers for comfort (17 + 30%); Cuza has 1/3 of the respondents who did not raise the issue of comfort.



Question 3.5. I do not have high expectations regarding the concerns of the hosts to meet my requirements.

Expectations: I'm not picky about accommodation. However, the trip is a dive in a different environment than usual. But the meal and goals must be excellently prepared.

Interpretations: The distribution of answers tends to be hostile. Young people do not care about the effort of the hosts to feel good (22 + 28%) La Cuza predominates. attitude against (22 + 22%). This attitude is more accentuated in Hogaş (30 + 28%). At Rareş the answers are balanced.

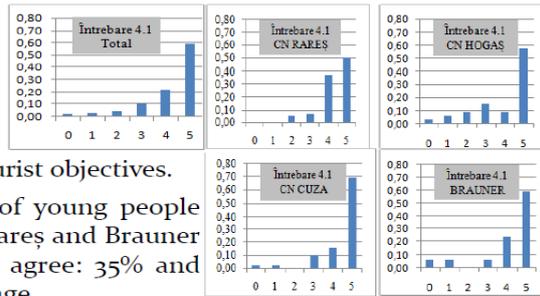


Series 4: If I Were an Architect Responsible for Land Planning

Question 4.1. I would elaborate an attractive landscape, aesthetic and functional arrangement plan as a picture background full of natural elements.

Expectations: An adapted framework with the possibility of integration is needed around the tourist objectives.

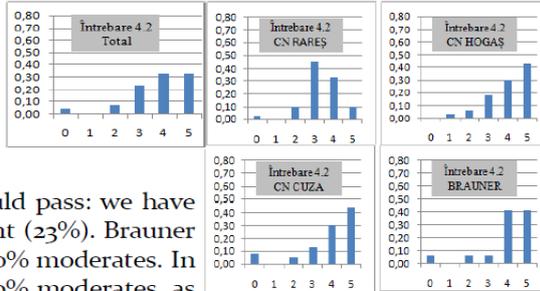
Interpretations: An overlap of attitudes: 60% of young people agree that they can do something for the city. Rareș and Brauner also have less enthusiastic attitudes, but they agree: 35% and 22%. However, 10% are indifferent to the challenge.



Question 4.2. I would develop an anthropic landscape structure (with constructive elements) to turn the city into an open-air museum.

Expectations: The setting around the tourist attractions must be customized, to complete their uniqueness.

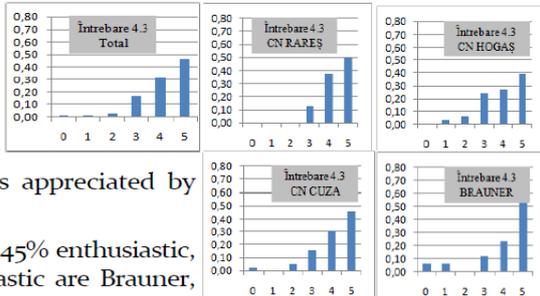
Interpretations: At an electoral vote the idea would pass: we have enthusiasts (32%), moderates (32%) and indifferent (23%). Brauner is the most favorable with 40% enthusiasts and 40% moderates. In Hogaș and Cuza there are 43% enthusiasts and 30% moderates, as well. Instead, in Rareș we have 30% moderates but 45% indifferent.



Question 4.3. I would define a structuring of tourist objectives by categories and areas: nature, culture, history, entertainment and leisure, ethnography, thematic routes.

Expectations: The arrangement within a thematic matrix creates comfort for the experience and is appreciated by tourists.

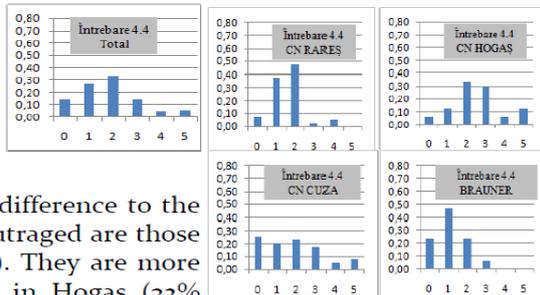
Interpretations: A normal distribution of attitudes: 45% enthusiastic, 30% moderate, 15% indifferent. The most enthusiastic are Brauner, 52%, and Rareș, 50%, Cuza, 45%, Hogaș, 40%. Moderations are distributed in Rareș 38% and Hogaș, 30%.



Question 4.4. No special tourist arrangements are required for the city; we have an allied nature.

Expectations: Nature offers a disorderly and un-developed space which bothers tourists. Wild nature has its place of manifestation and impression.

Interpretations: An attitude of sufficiency or indifference to the hometown is rejected by young people. More outraged are those from Brauner (46 + 21%) and Rareș (37 + 48%). They are more scattered in Cuza. They are more indifferent in Hogaș (32% moderate and 30% indifferent).

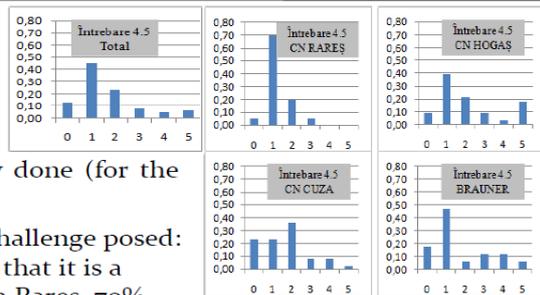


Question 4.5. The problem of tourist planning is beyond me; there are already urban structures that do everything I would like.

Expectations: Situation "at two ends": you can not do anything (you have no imagination) or take advantage of everything that is already done (for the frame) without any contribution.

Interpretations: A hostile attitude towards the challenge posed: 45% hostile, 22% moderate. Young people agree that it is a place for investment efforts. More vehemently in Rareș, 70%.

The young people consider that they can get involved responsibly in the tourist life of Piatra Neamț.

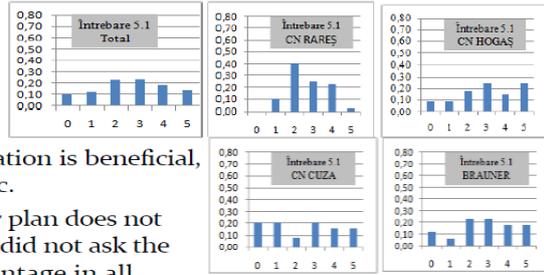


Series 5: If I Were Employed in Tourism

Question 5.1. I am satisfied because the influx of tourists is high and I have work to do; so my job is not in danger.

Expectations: The safety of the occupied position is correlated with a large influx of tourists, but a lot of work is required ... Not only the accommodation is beneficial, but also the serving of meals and direct services, etc.

Interpretations: Very scattered answers. The career plan does not include tourism as a priority and opportunity. 10% did not ask the question. About 22% are indifferent (same percentage in all schools). Rareş is even hostile to the idea (40%). Also, 10% of young people did not have this problem.



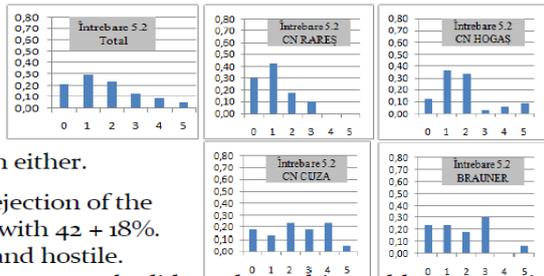
Question 5.2. As an employee in a tourism organization I see that there is too much work and I am no longer interested in working there.

Expectations: Self-discovery is deficient. That's not my place. "A lot of work, little money."

The personal project is not suitable for this position either.

Interpretations: The answers are grouped on the rejection of the idea: 30 + 22%. Rareş is more firm against the idea with 42 + 18%. Also, Hogaş with 36 + 33%. Brauner is indifferent and hostile.

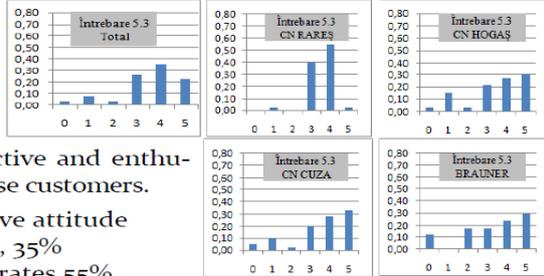
At Cuza the situation is scattered. Also, 20% of young people did not have this problem, more in Rareş and Brauner.



Question 5.3. I like to work in the tourism industry and I am concerned with increasing the quality of services to meet customer requirements.

Expectations: I'm excited about my job. I am active and enthusiastic. I am looking for ideas and solutions to please customers.

Interpretations: The answers go towards a positive attitude but without much enthusiasm: 23% enthusiastic, 35% moderate, 25% indifferent. Rareş excels in moderates 55% and indifferent, 40%; without enthusiasts. The other high schools have about 30% enthusiasts and 28% moderates and about 20% indifferent.

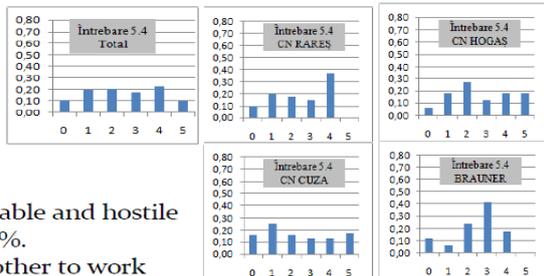


Question 5.4. A service in tourism is the same as in other organizations: a lot of work, low salaries, little satisfaction.

Expectations: Highlighting personal frustrations for a dull job. It's not right for me. It doesn't represent me, it doesn't delight me.

Interpretations: Very scattered answers: both favorable and hostile and indifferent. Favorable to comment on Cuza, 18%.

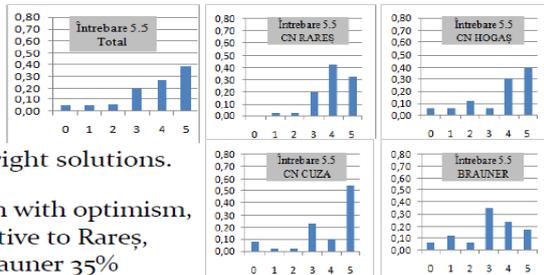
Indifference to Brauner 40%. About 10% did not bother to work without enthusiasm in tourism. In Rareş 35% moderates are in favor of the idea. Young people do not see much of a career in tourism.



Question 5.5. I am excited to work as a tourism employee in my city. It contributes to the increase of its notoriety.

Expectations: High job satisfaction. A work full of accomplishments. The desire to improve. The desire to learn more and find the right solutions.

Interpretations: When reformulating the problem with optimism, things are better: 30 + 28% favorable. More receptive to Rareş, 32 + 42%, Hogaş, 40 + 30%, Cuza, 54 + 10%. At Brauner 35% indifferent. With clearer wording, the attitude towards a career in tourism has become an exciting one.



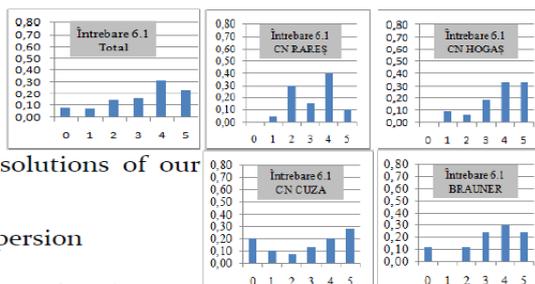
Series 6: As a Simple Citizen

Question 6.1. A city of water: drinking water station, kayaks, hydropower plant, siren fountain, taps, spas.

Expectations: Opportunities for my city. I'm excited to live in a water town. Water is an important living environment and I love the solutions of our mayors.

Interpretations: The metaphor produced the dispersion of young people: only 22% enthusiastic and 30% moderate.

Hogaş stands out with 33% enthusiasts and 33% moderates; Brauner with 24 + 30%; Cuza with 28 + 20%, Rareş with 10 + 40%. In Cuza, 20% of young people did not identify this opportunity.

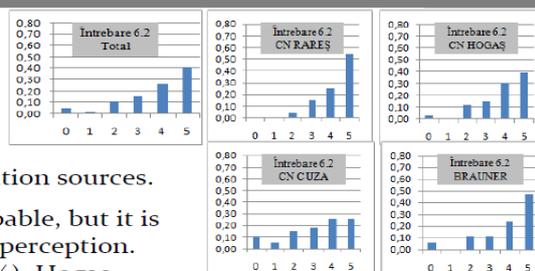


Question 6.2. A city of fresh air: climatic island, mountains, forest (filter), climatic.

Expectations: My city has a reputation for being a clean city. The air is dominated by forests. Mayors are also looking for other purification solutions, closer to people and pollution sources.

Interpretations: The climatic aspect is more palpable, but it is not modelable. 40 + 25% favorable is a sensitive perception.

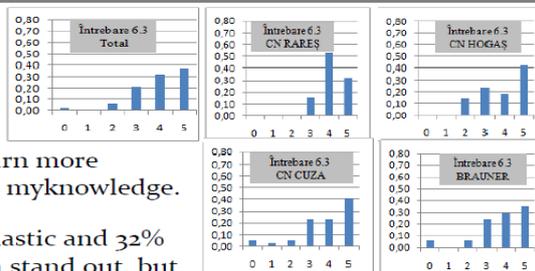
More enthusiastic are Rareş (55%), Brauner (48%), Hogaş (39%). Over 10% indifferent and hostile are Cuza, Hogaş, Brauner. One can count on surprise imaginative projects.



Question 6.3. A city of culture: history, arts, traditions, museums, memorial houses, statues.

Expectations: I like the culture of my city. I benefit too. They can be a guide for guests or learn more about the city's past. I can assert myself through my knowledge.

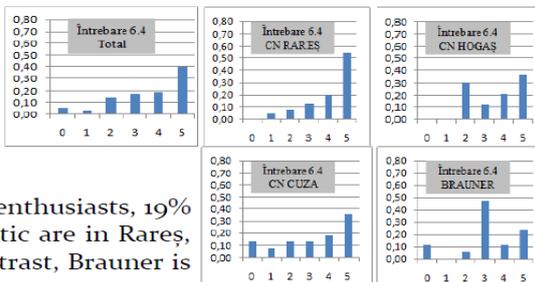
Interpretations: Enthusiasm is high: 37% enthusiastic and 32% moderate. The enthusiasm from Hogaş and Cuza stand out, but the moderates from Rareş and Brauner change their attitude. Projects based on this metaphor are likely to be much more consistent, which is a good thing.



Question 6.4. An accessible city: access roads, alleys, tracks, train, carriages, open minibuses.

Expectations: My city has grown as a tourist host (urban), but there is still much to do. The general tourist footprint is not yet clear. I can also participate with ideas and solutions.

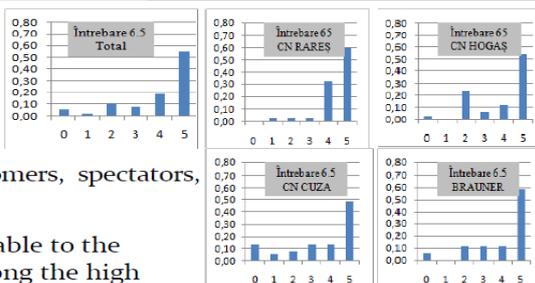
Interpretations: Again, a normal cast with 40% enthusiasts, 19% moderates, 18% indifferent. The most enthusiastic are in Rareş, 54%, then in Hogaş and Cuza, 35% each. In contrast, Brauner is very indifferent to these things (47%).



Question 6.5. A living city: nature, geology, landmarks, landscapes, mobility, events, entertainment.

Expectations: The city is full of life. Residents and tourists, participate in various events: hosts, animators, interlocutors, organizers, customers, spectators, multipliers etc.

Interpretations: The distribution is mostly favorable to the challenge: 55% enthusiastic, 19% moderate. Among the high schools, Rareş excels with 60 + 32%, followed by Brauner, 58 + 12%, Hogaş, 54 + 12%, Cuza, 48 + 14%. At the opposite pole is Cuza with 12% young people who have not raised this issue. It is interesting that on the whole the attitude of indifference barely reaches 8%.

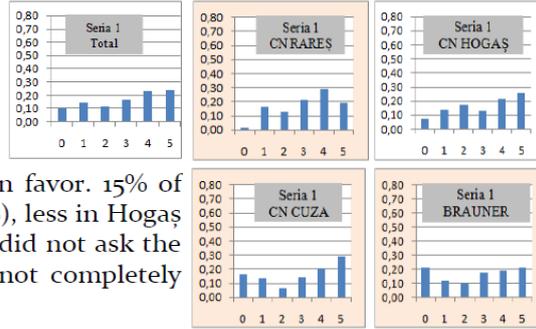


Series 1. If I Were Mayor

The position of mayor put the young respondents in difficulty. The dispersion is tight. Cuza and Hogaş are better prepared. They have 28 and 25% enthusiasts.

Add 20% moderates. In total, Rareş has 56% in favor. 15% of young people are more indifferent in Rareş (21%), less in Hogaş 12%. At Brauner and Cuza there are many who did not ask the problem: 20% and 16%. However, the idea is not completely rejected. The hostile are 14 + 11%.

The idea of being a mayor is scary, but it is necessary to have the ability of the community to generate leaders. Otherwise...



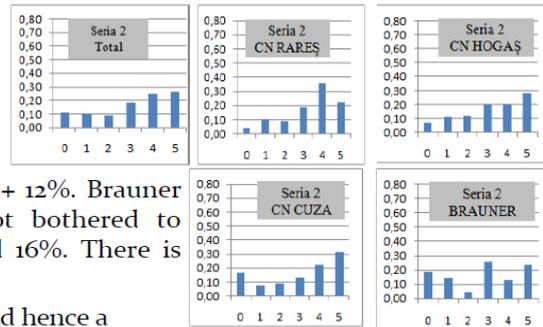
Series 2. If I Were an Employer of a Tourist Company

The position of employers or investors is also confusing. About 26 + 24% favorable. The order of preferences is: Rareş, 22 + 36%,

Cuza, 32 + 22%, Hogaş, 28 + 20%, Brauner, 23 + 12%. Brauner and Cuza have young people who have not bothered to become owners of tourism companies: 18 and 16%. There is more than 10% hostility in Brauner.

There is obviously a deficit of entrepreneurship and hence a

shyness in approaching some grandiose project ideas for the development of tourism in the city.



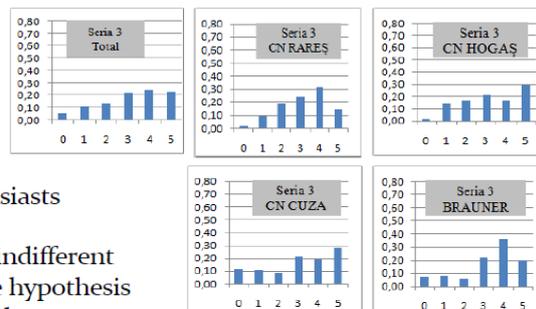
Series 3. If I Were a Tourist

The idea of being a tourist in Piatra Neamţ surprised young people. The answers are distributed on a fairly flattened curve. 22% enthusiasm and 24% moderation are affected

by 22% indifference and 10 + 12% hostility

Enthusiasts predominate in Hogaş, 30%, Cuza 28%; and moderations at Brauner, 36% and Rareş, 31%. The indifferent ones reach 12% (the same for all high schools). The hypothesis of being a tourist in Piatra Neamţ delights and saddens.

To grieve, young people need to mobilize to find solutions and resources to make things better.

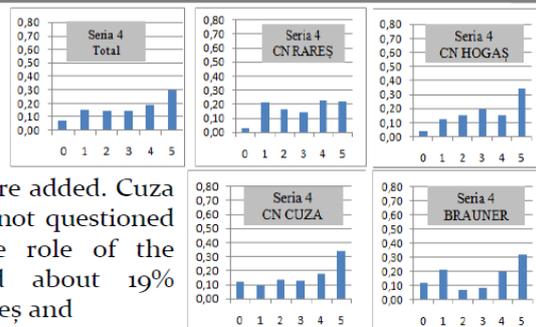


Series 4. If I Were an Architect Responsible for Land Planning

A more flattened curve that also includes favorable attitudes and opposition. Favorable attitudes are at the level of 30 + 19%, and

opposite attitudes are 15 + 14%. 15% indifferent are added. Cuza and Brauner also have young people who have not questioned their role. Cuza and Hogaş understand the role of the landscape architect (35% enthusiastic and about 19% moderate). Brauner is nearby as a score. But Rareş and

Brauner have many young people who reject such an approach (20% each). Thus: Cuza has 35 + 18%, Brauner has 31 + 20%, Hogaş has 33 + 15%, Rareş has 21 + 22%. They understood the role of the architect. The landscape architect was introduced to delimit a group of activities (read "jobs") valid for young people who have finished school and are looking for a job. It is a very useful creative and execution component for creating a favorable environment for tourism without significantly affecting the environment. It includes natural arrangements (flowers, hedges, green filters, etc.), decorations, aesthetic / historical / cultural accessories, occasional arrangements, etc.

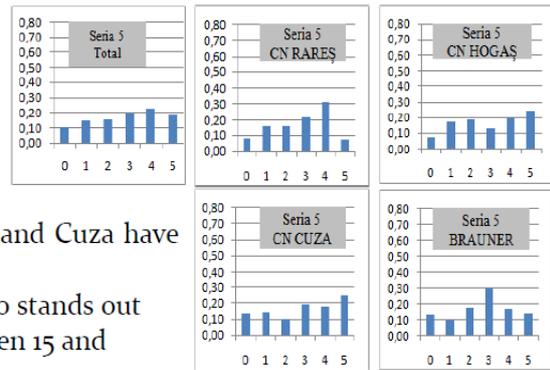


Series 5. If I Were an Employee in Tourism

The role of the tourism industry is to keep the tourist objectives ready for operation. The opinions of the young respondents are very diverse, which is a weak point.

Each attitude is on average below 20%. Hogaş and Cuza have favorable attitudes (23%). Rareş has 8% enthusiasts, but 31% moderates. Brauner also stands out with 30% indifference. The hostilities are between 15 and

19% in Rareş, Hogaş. It turns out that young people will find it difficult to accept working in the tourism industry. They can hold executive positions (sleeping and dining) and consulting and advisory functions, sales, etc.

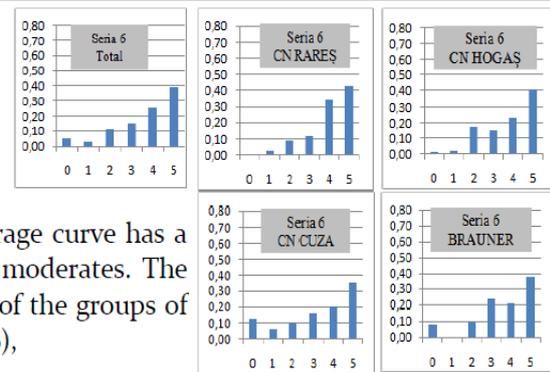


Series 6. As a Simple Citizen

This role is of passive observation and can mobilize or twist. The average curve has a normal shape. With 40% enthusiasts and 25% moderates. This role is of passive

observation and can mobilize or twist. The average curve has a normal shape. With 40% enthusiasts and 25% moderates. The indifferent are below 15% on average. The order of the groups of respondents is: Rareş (41 + 33%, Hogaş (40 + 22%),

Brauner (38 + 20), Cuza (35 + 20%). Most indifferent are in Brauner: 23%. Hostile (moderate) are in Hogaş (18%). Such an attitude strengthens the civic spirit and can influence the decision-making process of prioritizing tourist investments, but also of finding the subsequent impact.



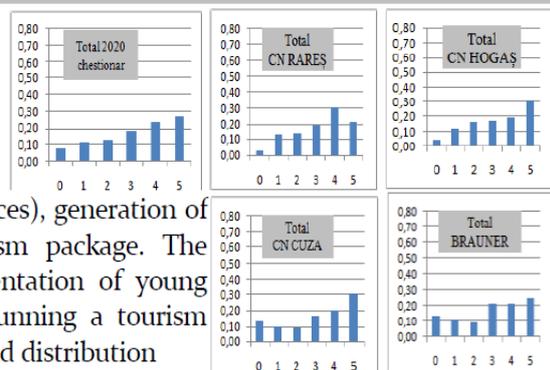
Total questionnaire

The testing approached young people around the transition from school to active life on issues of identification, organization,

production administration, (of goods and services), generation of policies that form the profit-generating tourism package. The answers to the questionnaire show the disorientation of young people in the perspective of employment or running a tourism business. The mean curve shows a normal flattened distribution

generating optimism. Enthusiasts are in the lead (28%). Moderations (22%), indifference (18%) follow. These percentages result from the mediation of high school results.

Enthusiasts are in Hogaş (30%) and Cuza (also 30%). Moderations predominate in Rareş (30%). The indifferent are relevant in Brauner (21%), Rareş (20%). Hostile, over 10%, are in Rareş and Hogaş. From the data collection program based on the questionnaire, based on the sincerity of the respondents, it results that the young people in school have an attitude of confusion and confusion towards what awaits them in their active life. There is a fear of the responsibilities they will face and an attitude of waiting.



3.2. Evaluations of schools

1) *"Petru Rareș" National College, Piatra Neamț* (in discussions we used the abbreviation "Rareș")

Young people are grouped by the result of action and understanding of realities. There is a platoon of people who know the prospects of active life and assume them. The assumption is rather moderate. There is a large enough group of indifferent people who increase the confusion within the generation. In addition to them, there is a group of enemies who will not face the tourism case (they have a different, firm, career plan). Young people with a favorable attitude took the role of mayor, employer and citizen seriously. He manifests himself less as a tourist, as an employee. They have a moderate attitude towards the role of landscape architect. It can be said that the young people from Rareș have a clearer perspective of their future, probably due to the fact that the pace of professional absorption of young people is quite reassuring.

2) *"Calistrat Hogaș" National College, Piatra Neamț* (in discussions we used the abbreviation "Hogaș")

Here the curve is better laid out (without "teeth") in terms of planning the future staff in tourism. 30% of respondents respond favorably to the proposed hypotheses. 19% moderation is added to them. It is assumed that they know more clearly their way forward and their future. The indifferent ones form a group of 15%. Next to them are hostile, more numerous than in other high schools (12 + 15%). They proved that they play well the role of mayor, employer, tourism, architect and citizen. They managed less in the role of employee. Here, too, hostility and indifference are significant (but not exaggerated). It can be said that the young people from Hogaș can influence things in the field of tourism and can generate opportunities for members of their generation to benefit.

3) *"Alexandru Ioan Cuza" Economic High School, Piatra Neamț* (in discussions we used the abbreviation "Cuza")

Here, the curve like a parable. It means that many young people have appeared who have not thought about the subject. There can be two reasons: either they do not know how to "read" the future and act, or they have another personal project. They have a representative group favorable to the development of tourism (enthusiasts + moderates); They are 18% indifferent; they have a smaller group of enemies. Hostility comes either from a lack of projects or from preconceived attitudes. They played well the role of mayor, employer, tourist, architect, employee, or civic observer. Many are indifferent to the role of tourist, employee. Hostility is low. However, the number of those who do not worry about them is significant (but not exaggerated). It can be said that the young people from Cuza are closer to their professional perspectives in tourism through specializations and concrete practice. They can cover several opportunities created by tourism, including in the category of entrepreneurship and management.

4) *"Victor Brauner" High School of Arts, Piatra Neamț* (in discussions we used the abbreviation "Brauner")

It may look parabolic, but the large number of indifferent ones distorts the curve. Also, those who do not care about their future is high (12%). The hostiles are near the minimum part of the curve. They played according to the role of mayor, tourist, architect, civic observer. He played the role of boss modestly. He has many indifferent, especially in the role of employee and civic observer. He shows hostility to the role of architect. This role was expected to be better covered, but the framing results are modest. There are unoptimistic prospects for social integration. I don't even know how to communicate in order to be listened to, understood and valued. The "misunderstood" between them is announced. This high school is vocational and focuses on talent and not on economic and social integration and integration. They know how to solve problems, but they don't know how to formulate them.

3.2. Step 2. Concept: *Piatra Neamț - regenerated city*

Tourism in Piatra Neamț needs a regeneration, an urban "break" without inappropriate stereotypes and symbols.

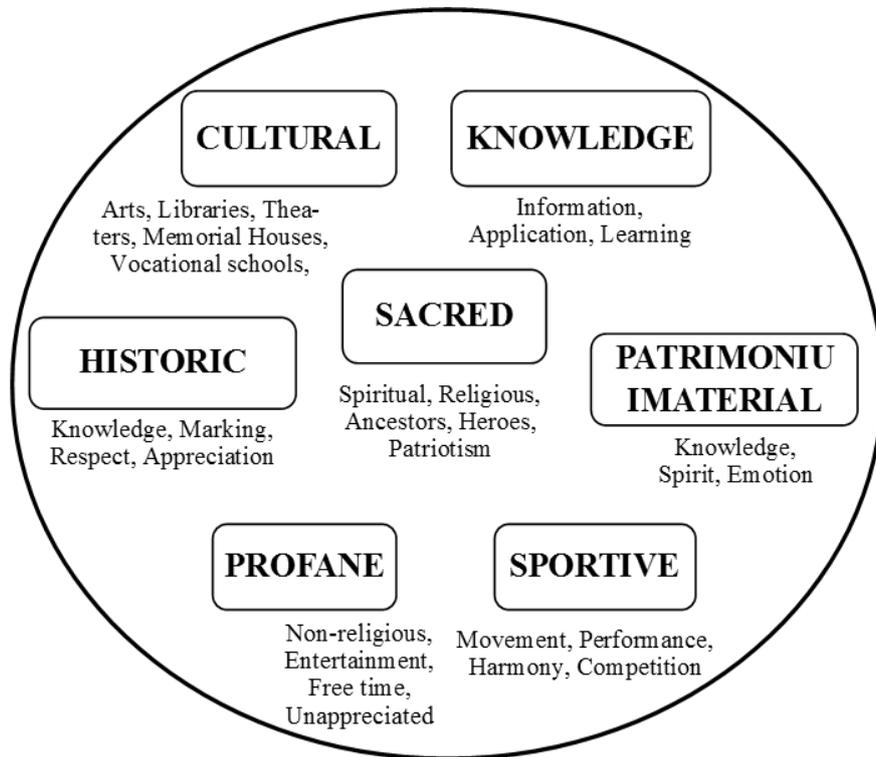


Fig. 1. Cultural districts for tourism in Piatra Neamț

On the other hand, tourism in Piatra Neamț needs a favorable conceptual alignment to attract visitors who, after being ecstatic in front of the symbolic and artistic elements, will invade hotels, pensions, terraces and restaurants for the benefit of the hosts.

The model of cultural blocks adapted to urban destinations is different from that applied to rural areas. An inventory and classification of tourist elements in Piatra Neamț, applying the method of orders in complication (Atanasiu, 1971) leads

to a concept proposal presented in Fig. 1.

Based on the combination of specific tourist elements, as well as based on the classifications and detailed descriptions, a regenerated city model specific to the Municipality of Piatra Neamț was built. This model is composed of metaphors that contribute with specific imprints to the business card of the city.



Fig. 2. Metaphors for tourism in Piatra Neamț

3.3. Step 3. Identification of areas with high tourist potential

These are the elements for confirming the status of Piatra Neamț Municipality as a permanent tourist destination.

The municipality of Piatra Neamț has two types of resources for tourism development:

- natural resources: landscape, balneo-climatic, botanical, zoological, geological, energetic;
- cultural resources; artistic, literary, lyrical, epic, musical, religious, historical, ethnographic, spiritual.

Most of them are already highlighted and constitute the current tangible and intangible heritage of Piatra Neamț Municipality.

But, the current generation is called to bring its own imprint to the cultural universe of Neamt County. In the proposed context of the project in which young people are called to build their own careers and existence in the current complex provided by policy makers and passionate people, we are sure that it will not be difficult for the people of the city to mobilize and build parallel universes, which can

generate opportunities.

In this context, the present project aims to “disturb the waters” and bring to attention new ideas and solutions in the field of tourism generated even by young people.

During the workshops, creative resources were mobilized and solutions were developed. The activity took place on three levels:

- the “classroom theme” took place under the pressure of the brainstorming and generated possible tourist landmarks on several itineraries along and across the Municipality of Piatra Neamț. The set of ideas was named “Tourist Dreams”.
- the “LEGO theme” highlighted the creativity of young people on a large scale. Several types of entertainment parks have been invented.
- the “homework” took place in a comfortable space of creativity, with the usual tools.

Some of the themes are new and impactful, others are complementary to the urban landscape.

The young people participated with interest in the proposed themes and contributed with ideas and products. The discussions raised the issue of developing business ideas or designing and arranging spaces with elements of attractiveness for tourists.

Subjects, phases, stages proposed by the project were covered and the proposed objectives were achieved.

The results obtained will be presented to the financier and in the policies that will be established in the field of tourism, the ideas formulated and results in this project will be taken into account.

3.3.1. Place of pilgrimage and spiritual experiences

There is in Medjugorje, Herzegovina, a place of religious pilgrimage in a place where the church validated the production of a divine event by the appearance of the Virgin Mary in front of young people. The arrangement of the place of pilgrimage was made through an accumulation of ideas and took the form of the Way of the Cross, the symbolic route taken by Jesus Christ on Good Friday.

Such an arrangement can be made on the eastern slope of Mount Pietricica as a support for spiritual experiences for pilgrims.

3.3.2. Mountain cliffs at Piatra Neamț

Piatra Neamț is the confluence place between the Cvejdiu and the Bistrița rivers. The Cvejdi River is unpredictable and often came out of the womb to the detriment of the residents. For some time, its riverbed has been arranged and the danger of floods has faded.

Arrangement comprising a minor riverbed to a relatively constant rate during periods of drought and normal precipitation and a major channel which takes over the excess flow. The rate of massive flow increases is 5-7 years. Meanwhile, the major riverbed is intended for modern urban sports: cycling, skateboarding, scootering. An

arrangement and a security algorithm are needed when heavy rainfall is announced.

3.3.3. Urban biodiversity observation point. Swan feeding platform

The accumulation lakes in the vicinity of Piatra Neamț form a special microclimate. The phenomenon is due to the accumulation lake from Bicaz. For a normal water level in the lake the water intake for the hydropower plant is at a depth of 70m. Here the water temperature is constant at 4°C throughout the whole year. Hydropower plants operate intermittently on the daily peaks of energy consumption (morning and evening). The synchronization in operation makes large volumes of water flow through the three small lakes upstream of Piatra Neamț. As a result, on a certain temperature of the air above the water to decrease. This aspect was “identified” by swans, which, in their migration, land on these lakes.

Sometimes the winter is plentiful in the snow and swans can't find food. Then NGOs and some institutions intervene that procure food and distribute it to swans.

This situation can be capitalized on as a tourist destination. It is proposed to arrange access pontoons in which good people help the swans to survive in harsher winters. Already the friendship between humans and swans has been established at the bridge at the Food Market, where the Cuejdiu flows into the Bistrița. We propose the arrangement of pontoons near the Căprioara Bridge.

3.3.4. The imprint of Crăciun

The old name of the city is the Crăciun Stone. The current name comes from the National Railway Network, when two Piatra stations appeared. They were differentiated in Piatra Neamț and Piatra Olt (in Olt County).

It can be built in the roundabout in front of the Ceahlău Hotel, an alpine petrographic ensemble, to which the symbolism “Crăciun Stone” can be attributed.

Also, through underground arrangements, a public fountain can be built, for which the name “Crăciun Fountain” can be assigned, with drinking water. A possible location, which we propose, is in front of the History Museum, by adapting the existing artesian well. Water from the drain under the Ceahlău Hotel or the mineral water reserve under Mount Cozla can be used as water sources.

The two objectives can be the symbols of the city in a broader tourist vision. In the same context, the restoration of the mineral water tank in the wake of the 1975 floods that destroyed a previous development should also be considered. The toponym Apele Minerale Street.

3.3.5. Didactic archeological site Cucuteni

Neamț County was distinguished by the multitude of archaeological sites belonging to the Cucuteni culture and civilization. We were happy with the first Cucuteni Museum in Piatra Neamț, which acquired a monumental headquarters.

In order to diversify the ways of capitalizing on the museum, we propose to complete it with an arrangement in which children can imagine themselves as archaeologists. It is a sand basin that covers a famous Cucuteni pattern, such as the

Ladies' Choir made of stone or other hard material. The children will have at their disposal archeological tools (spatula, knot, broom) and will discover the archeological structure from under the sand. It can be covered again with the sand removed and is an archaeological challenge for other children. Thus, archeology becomes the subject of entertainment or "School differently".

3.3.6. Eminescu Boulevard

The biggest challenge is the idea of changing the face of Eminescu Boulevard. It was called Chemistry Boulevard and was built on the symbolic imprint of the past. For an integrated arrangement with traditional elements, we propose the construction of six gates of the city to establish a symbolism and a branding as a traditional tourist city.

These gates can have allegorical meanings identified by young people in the project: the city of light, the city of water, the spa town, the city of culture, the city of nature, the living city.

Through these arrangements, a local heraldry can be built, an area of spiritual emulation and historical adaptation of the city's face to the values imposed by post-modern society.

4. Conclusions

Involving young people in strategic tourism decisions is becoming a source of innovation in tourism.

The young people were called to decide on the prospects of tourism in Piatra Neamț by transposing a hypothetical role: mayor, employer, urban architect, employee, simple citizen. The result was a complex picture based on questionnaires that showed the readiness of the young generation to take on responsibilities.

The young people were asked to identify possible places for the development of new tourist attractions that would increase the number of tourists. Then the young people went through a non-formal training program to activate creative talents (LEGO constructions) and apply to the identified cases. The result was an album of proposals that highlighted the innovative strength of the young generation and the creative fertility of the tourist sector in Piatra Neamț.

A number of important observations have emerged from the proposed plan:

- young people have perfectly adapted the project-induced environment for creativity both in the closed space through workshops and in the open space by exploring urban peculiarities and surroundings, which can generate new objectives and can attract more tourists for new experiences and for new curiosities;
- young people took part in discussions about how they see their immediate future. Things are not very optimistic. Their thoughts and plans are oriented towards other lands;
- the young people participated in the practical activities and built LEGO assembly models in connection with the school activity, with the family activities, beliefs, aspirations, jump planning, capitalization of native talent, collaboration

between them;

- the steps of adaptation to the creative process generated by the montages were highlighted: imagination, idea formulation, idea adaptation for transposition, assembly elements and operations, assignment of symbolism, introduction of functionality elements, way of supporting ideas and of the model and correlation with the elements of one's own personality in the face of a creative challenge.

It may not be insignificant that there are three relevant issues related to the number 7:

- 7 cultural blocks for systematization "in complication" of the tourist components of Piatra Neamț Municipality;
- 7 metaphors for building the global vision of tourism in Piatra Neamț;
- 7 unique and unconventional proposals regarding the increase of the diversity of the tourist objectives that will generate history.

Acknowledgments

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The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Cultural Tourism

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ABSTRACT

During recent decades, tourism has become one of the most dynamic and fastest growing economic sectors in the world. Tourism is the economic sector that contributes to job creation both directly and indirectly, especially for women and young people. Thus, in 2019, the number of jobs in tourism accounted for 10.3% of total jobs worldwide, and the contribution of tourism to global GDP was 8%. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic is an important and evolving challenge for the tourism sector. Measures taken by countries around the world to counter the pandemic have severely affected the tourism industry, and recent developments in this health and economic crisis show that the likelihood of this sector returning to normal in the near future is very low. Based on the latest developments in quarantine measures, travel bans, border closures and previous crisis patterns, various international tourism bodies anticipate significant reductions in jobs and incomes in this economic sector. The widespread impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and measures to combat it significantly affect all aspects of our lives and living environment, including tourism and cultural heritage. The paper presents a brief assessment of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on tourism in general and especially cultural tourism, worldwide, at European and at national levels.

1. Introduction

Tourism is one of the main economic sectors in the world, in 2019 its contribution to world GDP being \$ 8.9 trillion USD (accounting for 10.4% of global GDP), and represented (directly and indirectly) approximately 330 million jobs worldwide, equivalent to 10.3% of total employment worldwide. Tourism exports amounted to \$ 1.7 trillion, representing 6.8% of total global exports and 28.3% of global services exports.

For every job created directly in tourism, almost one and a half jobs are created, indirectly or induced. In 2019, the accommodation and food sub-sectors provided employment for 144 million workers worldwide (including approximately 44 million self-employed and 7 million employers). Characteristic for the tourism sector is the fact that most enterprises are small and medium-sized micro-enterprises with less than 50 employees. Also, about 30% of the total workforce was employed in

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companies with 2-9 employees. All this makes the impact of the pandemic on tourism businesses and on the livelihoods of workers in this sector very high.

As humanity faces an unprecedented global health, social and economic crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic, travel and tourism are among the most affected sectors, with ground planes, closed hotels and travel restrictions in place in almost every country in the world.

According to the World Tourism Organization (World Tourism Barometer, Vol. 18/7, Dec. 2020), the arrivals of international tourists decreased by 71.9% in the first eight months of 2020 compared to the same period of 2019.

Despite the gradual reopening of an increasing number of destinations in the second half of May and June 2020, the improvement expected in June was almost non-existent compared to May.

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the first half of 2020 in the field of tourism consisted, worldwide, of losses of 900 million international arrivals and approximately \$ 935 billion in export earnings from international tourism (which is more than ten times revenue losses in 2009 due to the global economic and financial crisis).

By regions, in Asia - Pacific there was a decrease of 82.3% in arrivals in the first eight months of 2020, followed by the Middle East (-73.4%), Europe, with a decline of 68.5%, Africa (-68.6%) and America (-67.7%).

The evolution of the pandemic, the additional blockages, the diminished people's confidence in travel, but also the economic recession made that in the first eight months of 2020, in Europe, the arrivals of international tourists decreased by 61% (statistics: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)).

2. The impact of COVID-19 on the tourism sector

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, travel and tourism were some of the most important sectors in the world economy, accounting for 10.4% of global GDP and over 330 million jobs worldwide (in 2019). If in 1950, at the dawn of the jet age, just 25 million people took foreign trips, in 2019, that number had reached 1.5 billion persons.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused a global health crisis, which quickly turned into an economic and labor market crisis which, in turn, led to a global job crisis of unprecedented magnitude.

And in the tourism sector, the health and economic crisis has endangered almost 100 million jobs, many in micro and small enterprises, which employ a large share of women (representing 54% of the tourism workforce).

The measures taken to counter the pandemic, but also the low confidence of travelers and the travel restrictions still in force in countries from various tourist destinations in the world have meant that in the first ten months of 2020, international tourist arrivals decrease by 71.9% compared to the same period of the previous year (Fig. 1).

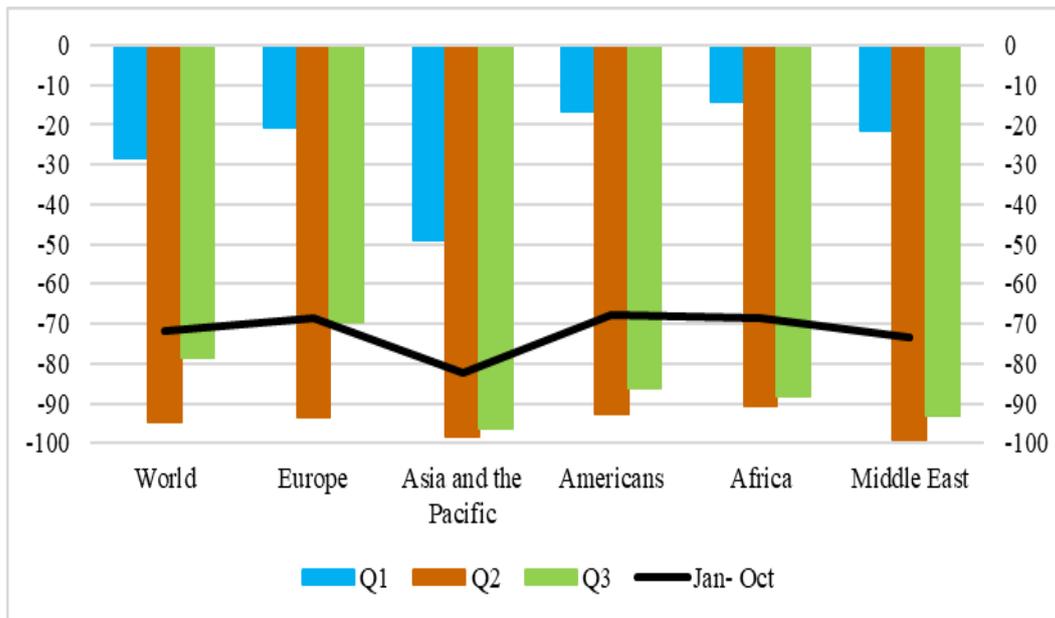


Fig. 1. Evolution of the number of arrivals worldwide and by major development regions in the first ten months of 2020 and by quarters, (% change over the same period of the previous year)

Source: UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, Statistics, Vol. 18/7, 2020

The first region to suffer the impact of the pandemic and the one with the highest level of travel restrictions still in force to date is Asia and the Pacific (which saw an 82.3% drop in arrivals in the first ten months of 2020). The Middle East fell by 73%, while Africa fell by 68.6% over the same period. Substantial reductions in international arrivals were also recorded in Europe (-68.5%) and America (-67.7%) (Fig. 1).

The analysis of the evolution of the number of international arrivals by quarters in 2020 (Fig. 1) highlights the fact that they decreased dramatically in the second quarter, as a result of the global pandemic and quarantine and border closure measures.

The decline of January-October 2020 with 1 billion fewer international tourist arrivals compared to the same period in 2019 translates into a loss of \$ 935 billion in export earnings from international tourism, which means losses more than 10 times higher than those generated by the global economic crisis of 2008-2009. Of all the European sub-regions, the one most affected by the pandemic, in terms of the number of international arrivals, is the northern one, where in the quarter 3/2020, under conditions of relaxation of the restrictions imposed by the pandemic, this indicator of the tourism industry was 81.6% lower (Fig. 2).

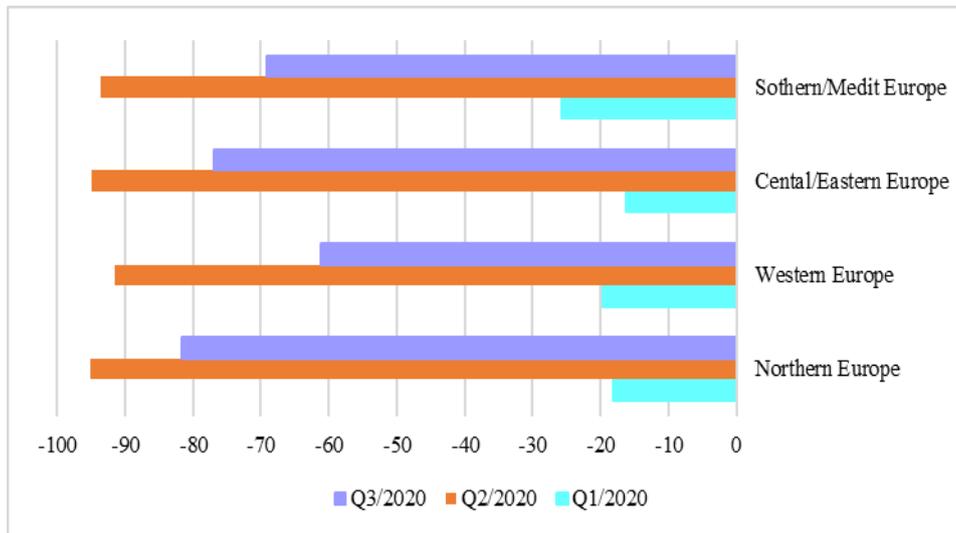


Fig. 2. International tourist arrivals by European (sub)region (percentage change over same period of previous year)

Source: UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, Statistics, Vol. 18/7, 2020

Romania, Cyprus and Finland were the most affected European countries in terms of the reported decrease in visitor arrivals in the 3/2020 quarter, recording a decline of about 85%, according to statistics provided by the International Tourism Organization (Fig. 3).

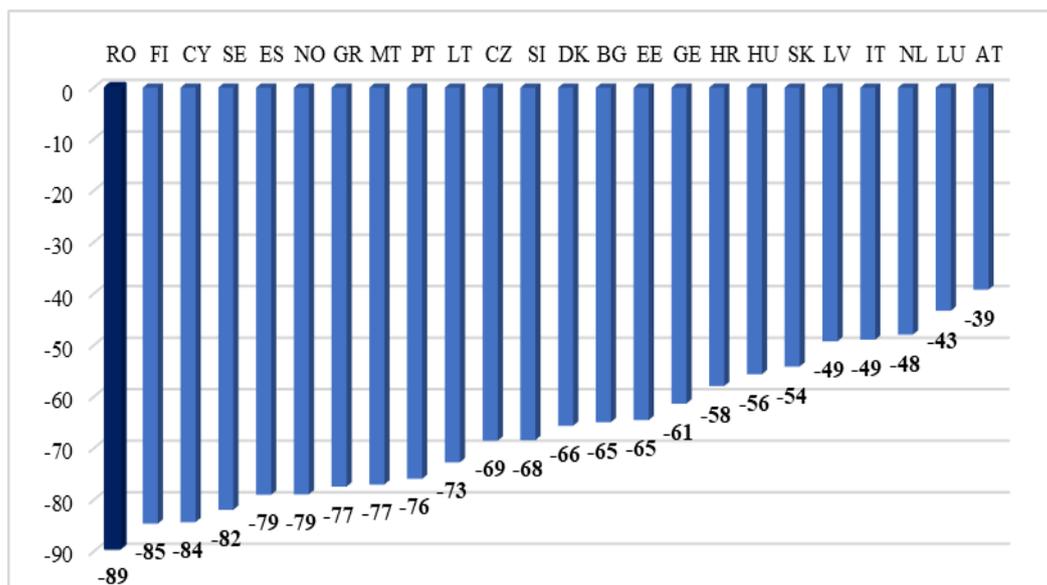


Fig. 3. International tourist arrivals by European countries (percentage change over same period of previous year) in the quarter 3/2020

Source: UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, Statistics, Vol. 18/7, 2020

Austria performed slightly better than other European countries in the 3/2020 quarter (Fig. 3). As a winter destination, Austria benefited from normal travel trends at the beginning of the year to a greater extent than many other destinations. Greater dependence on short-distance travel has also placed Austria in a favorable position

to achieve a less volatile recovery in 2020 so far, as travel restrictions have relaxed more quickly. However, an increase in coronavirus outbreaks has led to a tightening of restrictions and thus, in October 2020, there was a substantial decrease of 76.1 % in visitor arrivals. Characteristic for Luxembourg is the fact that in the 3/2020 quarter there was a decrease in the number of international arrivals by 43.3% compared to the same period of 2019, and in October 2020 by 42.8% compared to October 2019.

While demand for international travel remains low, domestic tourism continues to grow in several large markets, such as China and Russia, where demand for domestic air travel has largely returned to pre-COVID levels.

According to existing data, the International Tourism Organization estimates in December 2020, worldwide, a loss of \$ 1.3 trillion in international tourism revenues, which could lead to an economic loss of over \$ 2 trillion in Global GDP, more than 2% of world GDP in 2019.

The health and economic crisis has endangered between 100 and 120 million direct jobs in tourism, many of them in small and medium-sized enterprises. Based on existing statistics, the largest job loss in the tourism sector due to the COVID-19 pandemic was in the Asia-Pacific region (approximately 63.4 million jobs), followed by Europe, with an estimated decrease in employment of 13 million.

The number of small businesses is also expected to decline due to widespread failures following the COVID-19 pandemic. The cancellation of flights and the closure of airports have led to the suspension of more than 10 million jobs in the civil aviation sector.

Another challenge the tourism sector is facing is related to the relatively large number of informal workers, this being partly due to the seasonality of the activities of this sector, weak regulations on work organization, protection and discrimination, etc. In this context, migrant workers, women and young people are the most vulnerable to informal or occasional employment in the tourism sector.

3. The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on tourism in Romania

The year 2020 was full of trials and challenges, the most atypical year in the history of Romanian tourism. The effects of the pandemic on Romanian tourism are reflected by the statistical data of the National Institute of Statistics. Thus, the arrivals of tourists in Romania in 2020 were 6.3 million, down 52.3% compared to 2019 (Fig. 4), of which almost 93% of tourists were Romanians and only 7% foreigners.

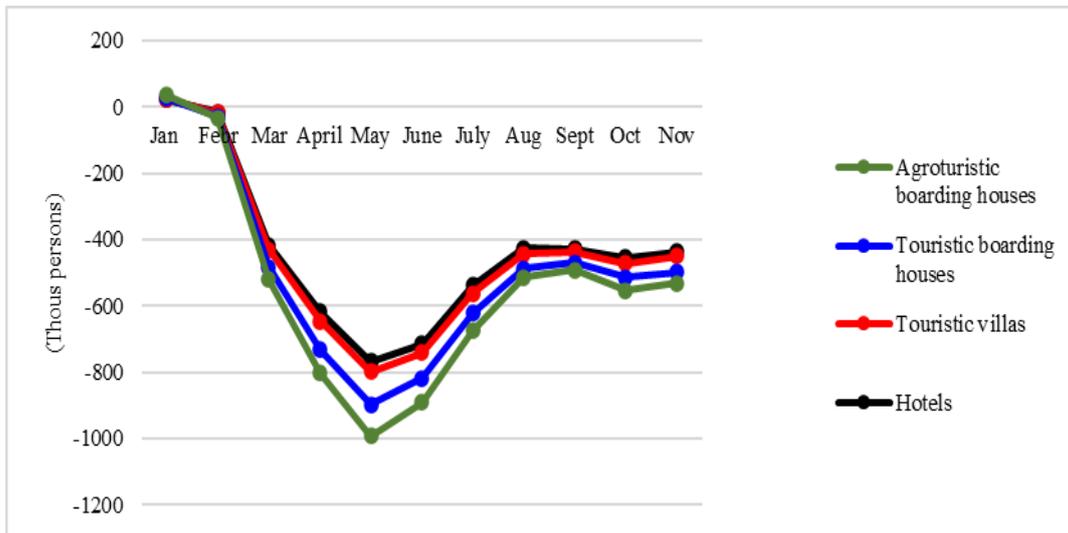


Fig. 4. Reduction of the number of tourist arrivals in tourist reception structures, for the first 11 months of 2020, compared to the same period of 2019

Source: Author's processing based on data from TEMPO online, www.insse.ro

In the first 11 months of 2020, hotels held the largest share, respectively 63.23% in total tourist accommodation capacity in operation, followed by agritourism pensions (11.14%), tourist pensions (9.98%), tourist villas (4.14%), hostels (2.74%), motels (2.27%).

Overnight stays in the period taken into account amounted to 14.4 million, down 51.6% compared to 2019. Of the total number of overnight stays in the first 11 months of 2020 for which statistical data are available, those of Romanian tourists in the tourist reception structures with accommodation functions represented 93.27%, while the overnight stays of foreign tourists represented only 6.73%, the largest reduction in the total number of overnight stays, compared to the same month of 2019 - in June 2020 a reduction by 1.76 million people being recorded (Fig. 5).

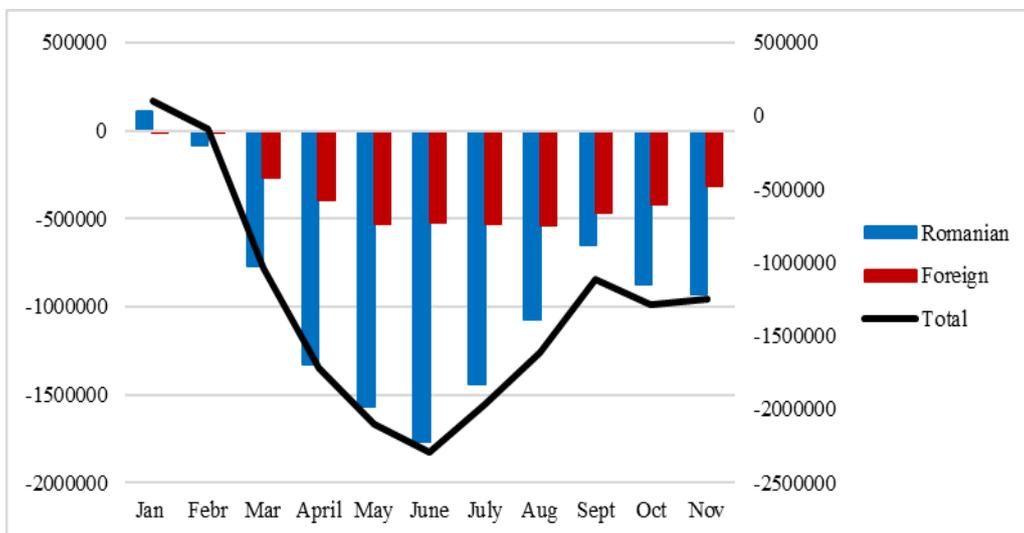


Fig. 5. Reductions in the number of overnight stays in tourist accommodation structures in Romania, by types of tourists, per month

Source: Author's processing based on data from TEMPO online, www.insse.ro

The analysis of the number of overnight stays by tourist reception structures by development regions and by months (Fig. 6) shows that the most affected by the health crisis was the Bucharest-Ilfov region, a region where cultural tourism was strongly affected (being the form of tourism dominant in this region).

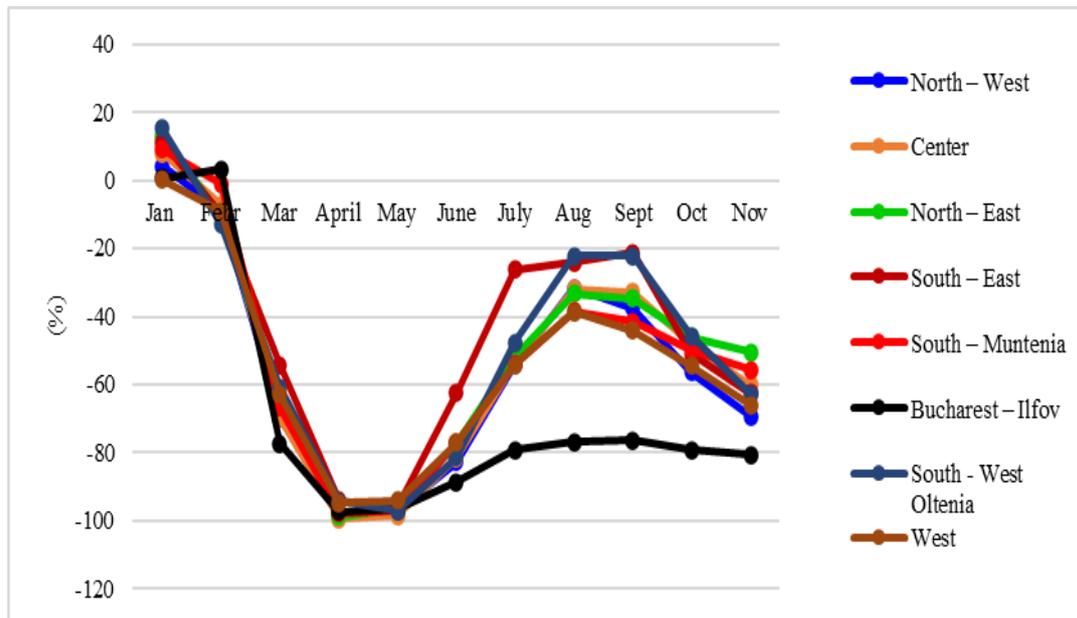


Fig. 6. Rate of decrease in the number of overnight stays in tourist reception structures by development regions, per month (percentage change over same period of previous year)
Source: Author's processing based on data from TEMPO online, www.insse.ro

The index of net use of accommodation places in 2020 was 22.9% on total tourist accommodation structures, decreasing by 11.3 percentage points compared to 2019 (Fig. 7). Higher indices of accommodation use in 2020 were registered for accommodation on ships (29.3%), bungalows (28.9%), hotels (26.7%), campsites (24.3%), tourist cottages (22.1%), tourist villas (21.4%), tourist stops (19.4%) and agritourism pensions (16.7%) (Fig. 8).

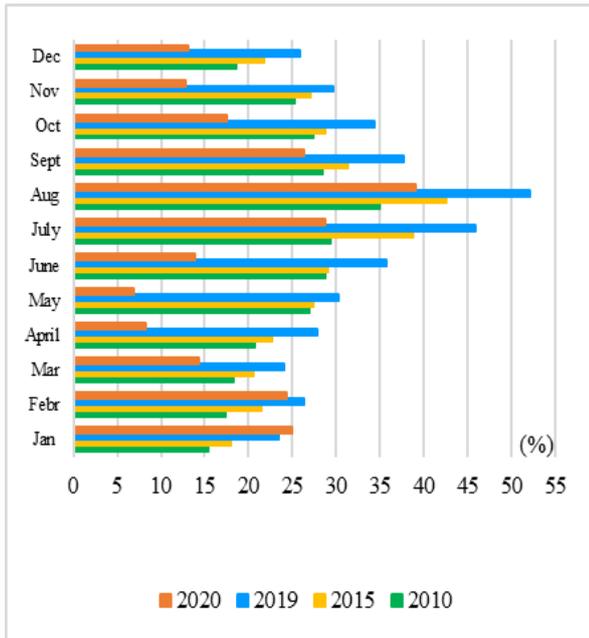


Fig. 7. Evolution of the index of utilization of the tourist accommodation capacity

Source: Author's processing based on data from TEMPO online, www.inse.ro

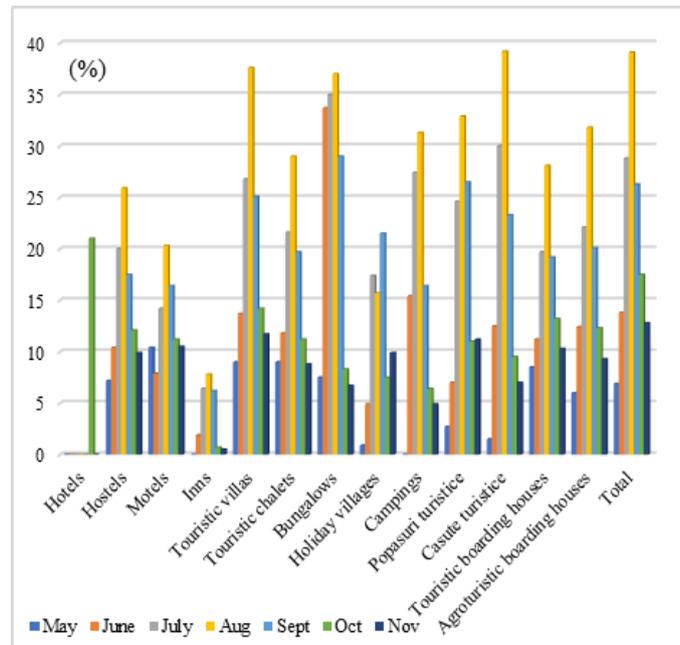


Fig. 8. The index of utilization of the tourist accommodation capacity in operation by types of tourist reception structures and by months in 2020

As a result of the restrictions decided by the Government in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, the HoReCa sector lost about 100,000 jobs, and the industry suffered losses of over three billion euros (according to the statement Călin Ilie- president of the Hotel Industry Federation from Romania, December 14, 2020).

4. COVID-19 and cultural tourism

The study “The Impact of Culture on Tourism” conducted by the OECD in 2009 highlights the mutually beneficial relationship between culture (which attracts tourists) and tourism (which improves culture and creates income, while supporting cultural heritage, production and creativity).

With the elaboration by UNESCO of the Convention on the Protection of the World Heritage (16 Nov. 1972), cultural tourism has experienced a significant increase worldwide, but especially in Europe. Worldwide, there are currently 1121 World Heritage Sites, most of them spread across three countries: Italy (55), China (55) and Spain (48).

Cultural tourism is almost as diverse as culture itself in that it can embrace virtually any activity related to or specific to a country, area or city: art, cinema, language, sports, religion, architecture, gastronomy, nature or folklore. Even less conventional and, in some cases, very alternative types of cultural tourism (so-called tombstone tourism: cemeteries such as those in Paris, London or Recoleta - in Buenos Aires) are some of the most visited places by tourists. for their history and beauty, tourism in the areas where scenes from famous movies were filmed, war tourism - which visits sites where historical battles took place, UFO tourism leading to sites

known for UFO sightings; phantom tourism in forests and houses that are supposed to be haunted and so on).

At the third conference on cultural tourism organized by the World Tourism Organization and UNESCO (Cultural Tourism Sustains Communities and Living Heritage, 2018), the Secretary General of the World Tourism Organization, Zurab Pololikashvili stated that, “culture is one of the driving forces for the growth of tourism”. To these can be added the statistical data in the field: cultural tourism worldwide represents almost 40% of the total sector in 2019. Among the benefits of this type of tourism can be mentioned: conservation of cultural and artistic heritage; local prosperity for non-traditional tourist destinations; establishing links between different cultures; impact on the economy and jobs (for example, in Europe, more than 300,000 people are employed in the EU cultural heritage sector and 7.8 million jobs in the EU are indirectly linked to heritage (interpretation and security, etc)).

According to the World Tourism Organization’s World Tourism Barometer of January 2021, tourism suffered a loss of \$ 1.3 trillion in export earnings, with a negative impact on those working in the cultural sector and on the mobility of artists due to the cancellation of festivals and of closing borders.

The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically affected the arts and culture sector around the world. Measures taken by countries to reduce the risk of the virus spreading have led to the closure of museums, cultural institutions, world heritage sites and other historical monuments, which has deprived communities of culture and significant income. At the height of the global blockade, 90% of countries have closed their World Heritage properties.

The reduction of human and financial resources has an impact on the arrangements for the operation and maintenance of heritage sites, with archaeological monuments particularly at risk, including due to the growth of vegetation. Also, the continuous closure of painted cave temples could have a negative impact on the paintings due to the lack of adequate ventilation systems or effective monitoring. As it has been experienced in several countries, reduced security can increase the risk of artifact theft at cultural sites and illegal activities in natural heritage areas. In this context, the medium and long-term implications are significant, as many World Heritage natural and cultural sites rely on tourism revenues to carry out conservation or archaeological work.

The cancellation of national and local cultural and religious events (festivals, rituals and various forms of traditional practices) has had a direct socio-economic impact on communities and cohesion.

With the stopping of global tourism by the COVID-19 pandemic, millions of people in quarantine have sought cultural and travel experiences from their homes. Culture has proved indispensable in this difficult period, and the demands for virtual access to museums, heritage sites, theaters and shows have reached unprecedented levels. In the face of these challenges, the tourism and culture sectors face the opportunity to create new partnerships and collaborations. Basically, they

need to jointly reinvent and diversify the offer, attract new audiences, develop new skills and support the world's transition to new conditions.

In order to diminish the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on all forms of tourism and the return of this sector of activity on an ascending trend, the Department of Ethics, Culture and Social Responsibility of the World Tourism Organization has prepared a series of recommendations, among which can be mentioned:

- improving the exchange of information and data between the tourism sectors;
- launching innovative alliances between the tourism sectors and companies specialized in new communication technologies;
- developing strategies for a more sustainable future for cultural tourism;
- the formation of a workforce in all sectors of tourism more resistant to possible shocks, given that the professional profiles of workers in cultural tourism and tourism in general will require new skills for immediate action and participation in actions to recover losses caused by various events;
- building intersectoral governance models between key players in tourism and culture;
- strengthening emotional ties between citizens and cultural creators.

Mass digitization, together with new augmented technologies, can create new forms of cultural experience, dissemination and new business models with market potential.

At European level, the Expert Group on Digital Cultural Heritage and Europeana (DCHE) has developed a study to help professionals in the field of cultural tourism and cultural heritage in their attempt to digitize 3D cultural heritage (European Commission, 2020).

In addition, Europeana provides online access to millions of books, music, artwork, etc. (with sophisticated search and filtering tools to make it easy to find what you are looking for) and has brought together a range of initiatives and resources from the whole sector, providing support and guidance to institutions to take a digital approach to the crisis, including a series of web-based seminars on Home Culture.

Two sites have also been launched to help the tourism industry: Discovering Europe Professional, where cultural heritage professionals can get ideas on how to digitize the content of this field and Discovering Europe with art collections. and images that allow people to visit their favorite places online or find new cultural gems in Europe.

The European Cultural Heritage Digitization Program also contributed to:

1) INCEPTION (a consortium supported by a stakeholder group representing UNESCO, European and national public institutions and NGOs in all fields of cultural heritage) which carries out innovation in 3D modeling of cultural heritage through an inclusive approach to the dynamic 3D reconstruction over time of artifacts, built and social environments;

2) ARCHES helps European museums become barrier-free with 3D art replicas, in mobile phone applications, games and video sign avatars;

3) PLUGGY, the first social media platform in Europe for cultural heritage, giving voice to citizens across Europe, enables them to protect and enrich the European cultural heritage landscape. The PLUGGY social platform and connectable applications (PLUGGY3D, PLUGGY Pins, PlugSonic Suite and Games Hunter) were built on the idea of empowering European citizens to be actively involved in cultural heritage activities and to act not only as observers but also as maintainers, creators, major influencers and more importantly as ambassadors of the culture and history of their country;

4) the i-MareCulture project aims to increase public awareness of European identity, focusing on maritime cultural heritage, which implicitly connects different civilizations; v) i-Media-Cities is a platform that allows viewing unique historical films and images of cities from the collections of famous European film archives, etc.

5. Conclusions

Tourism was one of the first sectors to be severely affected by the pandemic, as measures taken to reduce the spread of the virus led to an almost complete cessation of tourism activities around the world.

Travel restrictions imposed at the world level to reduce the spread of the virus and the massive decline in tourist demand have reduced the number of international tourist arrivals by 74% in 2020 compared to the previous year. The collapse of international travel has led to an estimated loss of \$ 1.3 trillion in export earnings (more than 11 times the loss during the 2008-2009 global economic crisis).

At regional level, Asia-Pacific saw an 84% drop in international arrivals in 2020, about 300 million less than in the previous year. The Middle East and Africa saw a 75% drop in arrivals. In Europe, arrivals fell by 70%, representing more than 500 million fewer international tourists, while in America they fell by 69%.

The COVID-19 crisis has hit the tourism economy hard, with unprecedented effects on jobs and businesses. Tourism offers a large number of jobs for both low-skilled and high-skilled workers. The scale of job losses is not yet obvious, as government support has protected workers in this sector from the full impact of the pandemic. Worldwide, it is estimated that approximately 174 million jobs in tourism and travel could be lost due to COVID-19 and travel restrictions (WTTC Press Release, 29 October 2020).

At the level of the European Union, a loss of 6.6 to 11.7 million jobs is also estimated in companies operating and / or dependent on tourism-related activities in 2020, which represents 3.2%-5,6% of the total active population in the European Union.

The effects of the pandemic on Romanian tourism are reflected by the 52.3% reduction of tourist arrivals in Romania in 2020 compared to 2019, by an index of net use of accommodation in 2020 of 22.9% on total tourist accommodation structures, in decrease by 11.3 percentage points compared to the previous year, by the decrease by

60.8% compared to 2019 of the arrivals of foreign visitors in Romania, and by a decrease by 58.8% compared to 2019, of the departures of Romanian visitors abroad.

As a result of the pandemic, 90% of World Heritage sites and museums have introduced total or partial closures. In many cases, sites of special significance to humanity have been closed to the public for the first time in decades. Lost revenues from tourism in general and culture in particular severely affect communities, heritage sites, cultural events, spaces and institutions, while weakening the competitiveness of destinations and market differentiation. The sudden decline in tourist arrivals has been felt around the globe, while millions of people have turned to virtual cultural experiences for comfort and inspiration. In this context, support from policy makers is needed to ensure the relevance of cultural tourism in emergencies and the implementation of intervention plans for such situations.

Tourism is likely to be among the latest recoveries, with travel restrictions and the global recession, with consequences beyond the tourism economy and in many other sectors that support and are supported by tourism. The unprecedented shock of the tourism economy is aggravated by the evolution of the health situation. Although there has been some resumption of international tourism, it remains very limited.

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Registered Traditional Agri-Food Products from Dobruja Region in Romania

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ABSTRACT

Local traditional products have been “rediscovered” in the last years and are taking on a more and more important role in the preferences of the consumers, both because of the fact that they have a powerful symbolic value, and for their nutritional properties and qualities. Prepared after methods and recipes that have been passed on from generation to generation, with local raw materials, these products represent a viable alternative to the excessively processed products that are typical of industrial products intended for mass consumption. The present study sets out to bring into focus the traditional food from Dobruja registered at a European and national level with the purpose of making them better known and promoting them in the activities of gastronomic tourism. Furthermore, the endeavour of their identification and presentation has the role, on the one hand, to raise the consumer’s awareness on the existence of some traditional foods that follow certain quality standards, and, on the other hand, to set an example of good practice for all the producers interested to adopt a higher production stage that can offer them better visibility on the market.

1. Introduction

In our contemporary society, in which a standardisation and a globalisation of taste and of consumption are taking place, foodstuffs included, we witness more and more the rediscovery and the valorization of local traditional products. This reaction against trend has more explanations, such as: the wish of diversification, the rediscovery of the local ingredients and products, the need of a healthy diet, the return to origins. According to the definition given by Caterina Barilaro, a traditional food product represents a mixture of the land it comes from, of its natural and cultural resources, it is the result of the work of generations that carries with it the echo of history, a history that refers not only to the production technique, to the ingredients or taste, but also to an entire socio-cultural context (Barilaro, 2004). The production and sale of traditional products has other effects as well, such as the important economic contribution that it can bring to certain regions, supporting the diversification of rural areas and preventing their depopulation (Nistoreanu, Dorobanțu, & Gheorghe, 2013).

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The attention shown to local products has been, however, a different one over time, although they have always existed and evolved. If in Antiquity, in the Middle Ages and in the Renaissance the types of food and the local products did not have the purpose to promote local cuisine, only over time, very slowly, the attention towards them starts to grow. "The inversion in trend can be noticed when the medieval and Renaissance universalism is over: it is then that national identities consolidate themselves and, within these, regional identities are defined or, better said, are built." (Montanari, 2018, p. 112).

In Italy, for instance, the moment of the development of regional cuisine coincides with that of the industrialisation, so with the 19th century. Massimo Montanari thinks that the main factors that led to this change were, first of all, precisely the reaction to the tendency of certifying tastes as a result of industrialisation, and inherently, the rediscovery of authentic tastes. Then, the historian mentions that tastes have evolved, are simpler and more defined than in the pre-modern period, when artificial and exaggerated combinations were more valued. Lastly, an important factor in the establishment of simple local tastes was represented by the evolution of the social mentality, when food did not represent a status symbol but one available to everyone, and the local product made its way as a distinguishing element." (Montanari, 2018).

As the authors of the study "Typical Aspects of the Traditional Food Behaviour Within the Romanian Rural Environment" claim, despite the numerous hardships encountered over time, the Romanian culinary tradition has maintained itself and evolved: over the course of history, the specifics of everyday life, sometimes of hardships, of taking refuge in forests, of plagues, of restrictions and obligations of all kinds, failed to destroy Romanian culinary tradition. It is known how to prepare traditional Romanian food, but culinary traditions have evolved continuously." (Nistoreanu, Nistoreanu, & Nicodim, 2020, p. 275).

In Romania, the historical events after World War II and the entire economic and political evolution up to the Revolution of December '89 had a negative contribution in the development of a local and regional consciousness: the agricultural land as state property, the country's centralised and guided economy, the relocation of people from one town to another in various stages of their professional life, are just a few of the aspects that slowed down the process of establishing a local identity. In the last years, we notice a growing interest in the exploitation of the products and specialities connected to a certain territory and, therefore, a better identification and understanding of them is necessary.

2. Policy at a European and national level

It can be stated that the interest of the European Commission towards the protection of quality agri-food products started with "The Green Book regarding the Future of the Rural World" signed in 1988. Meanwhile, new regulations have appeared and at present the European legislation in the food industry can be divided into four big categories of regulations regarding: food safety; product sale; product

labelling and information transfer to consumers; quality products (MIPAAF, *Fondazione Qualivita*, 2020).

3. European legislation regarding geographical indications and organic products

The most recent set of regulations in the field of quality agri-food is comprised in Regulation no. 1151/2012, which replaces EC. Reg. 510/2006 and EC Reg. 509/2006. As for wines, EU Reg. 1308/2013 applies, and for alcoholic drinks the Appendix III of EC Reg. 110/2008, together with EU Reg. 787/2019 regarding the definition, designation, aspect, labelling and protection of geographical indications of alcoholic drinks. Flavoured wines are regulated through EU Reg. 281/2014 regarding the definition, labelling and protection of geographical indications of flavoured winery products.

This complex regulatory system is in the review stage, with the purpose of simplifying the bureaucratic process for the approval of new products and for the change of the specifications of existing products. For this purpose, the European Commission has launched a consultation regarding the recording system of quality products, opened between January 15 and April 9, 2021.

A special category is represented by the organic products, regulated at a European level by the EU Regulation no. 834/2007 regarding the production, labelling, principles and technical standards for organic plant products, of animal origin or for processed products, together with the criteria for their control and certification. The organic wine also enjoys attention from the community legislator who issued the EU implementation Regulation no. 203/2012, which sets the technical standards for its production, for the entire vinification process, not just for the grapes used, as the previous legislation specified.

At a community level, the indication “mountain product” can also be used, optionally, as provided in article no.31 of the EU Regulation 1151/2012 and in the EU Regulation 665/2014.

Besides the centralised system at a European level, each Member State can create registers at the national level with different categories of recognised products by applying a national or regional logo. These registers must follow the provisions of article 16 of the EU Reg. 1305/2013 and stipulate the implementation of some specifications that impose the compliance with a certain production process, verified by an external control entity.

4. Regulation at a national level, in Romania

4.1. Traditional product

In Romania, at a national level, the certification of traditional products is regulated through Order no. 112/2020, which modifies Order no. 724/2013. According to art.1, paragraph 2, letter “a”, “the traditional product” is that foodstuff for which local raw materials are used, does not contain food additives, presents a traditional recipe, a traditional production and/or processing method and differentiates itself

from other similar products of the same category". Letter "b" of the same paragraph defines the concept of "traditionality" - which represents "the element or the set of elements by which a product differentiates itself from other similar products belonging to the same category; traditionality cannot limit itself to a qualitative or quantitative composition or to a method of production set through a community or national regulation or through voluntary standards; however, this rule does not apply if that regulation or standard was set with the purpose of defining the traditionality of a product".

Besides the criterion of traditionality, the products must not contain in their composition additives obtained through chemical synthesis and other processes, such as: food additives, flavours, vitamins, minerals.

4.2. Romanian established recipes

Certification of foodstuffs obtained according to traditional Romanian recipes is regulated by Order no.394/2014. According to art.2 letter "a" of the above-mentioned Order and to the clarifications on the site of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Romanian established recipe represents "the Romanian foodstuff produced by following the composition used more than 30 years before the date the order came into force" (April 2, 2014).

4.3. Dobrogea, identity features

Historical region of Romania, situated in the South-East of the country, Dobruja ("Dobrogea" in Romanian) is made up of the counties of Constanța and Tulcea, two entities linked by many historical and cultural resemblances but between which there is not a unique system of administrative-territorial organisation.

From the data collected during the census of 2011, the total population of the two counties was 897.165 inhabitants (Tulcea 213.083 and Constanța 684.083), with 18 different ethnicities (19, if we also include the Aromanians that do not appear in the census as a separate ethnicity from the Romanian one), many of them having a presence of centuries on these territories.

As Narcisa Știucă stated, in the definition of the general frame of a food system we must take into account ethnographic, anthropological, sociological and ethnological factors. The situation is much more complex in case of multicultural areas, such as Dobrogea where, besides the above-mentioned factors, socio-cultural phenomena of cohabitation intervene: "in these cases we must operate with the concepts of interculturality and transculturality that reflect mutual interferences and exchanges, as the acculturation process and the principles of syncretic operation activate themselves in the case of food as well as in the other segments of the life of the human society" (Știucă, 2013).

When trying to search for the origins of a cuisine, you sometimes have the impression to be the survivor of a calamity that seemed to have erased all the traces of the early days (Rowley, 2006, p. 13). This statement is also confirmed in the study dedicated to the gastronomy of Dobrogea by Ofelia Văduva: "The study of food in

the past reveals the difficulties as you go further back in time. The documents mention this aspect very little, considering entire ages as lacking any importance” (Văduva, 2010, p. 18). The reconstruction of the process of food identity is also hindered by the fact that “each period brought new elements (and it is not just about raw materials, but about the fact that each generation added extra experience and received different elements, either inherited or innovative ones)” (Văduva, 2010, p. 18).

As other elements characteristic to areas situated at the confluence between peoples and trends, the products from Dobrogea were “created, moulded and structured progressively by time and by the contacts between cultures that intersect and confront each other and, depending on the moment, they overlap or mix.” (Flandrin & Montanari, 2011, p. 703).

4.4. Products from Dobrogea registered at a European and national level

When we speak of local food products, natural factors are obviously important, but taken in isolation, they are not the only explanation. The connection between a certain place and its products will be established due to “Anthropic activities – knowledge, ways of social organisation, practices and representations. We speak of *prone* places, inside which the productions develop thanks to the human activities” (Bérard & Marchenay, 2004, p. 71). Thus, the human factor is decisive in obtaining these products.

4.5. Geographical indications

At the level of the European Union, according to the GIview portal², launched by the European Commission and the European Union Intellectual Property Office (consulted in February 2021), about 3200 food products and wines are registered, and other 248 products, in different stages of examination, are waiting for the decisions of registration. Italy is on the first place with 870 products registered, followed by France (762), Spain (377), Greece (275), Portugal (190), Germany (179). Romania has a total of 69 products registered and 3 products in the examination stage. Of all these, the category best represented is that of wines (53), followed by spirit drinks (9) and, last but not least, food products, with only 7 names registered (8 in April 2021).

Analysing the list of registered names and the technical details from the description of each product in the advertisements published in the Official Journals of the European Union, we notice that the producers from Dobrogea registered:

- four wine designations: *Adamclisi* (PDO), *Babadag* (PDO), *Colinele Dobrogei* (PGI), *Murfatlar* (wine, PDO), *Murfatlar* (liqueur wine, PDO);
- an alcoholic spirit drink: *Vinars Murfatlar* (PGI);
- a food product: *Scrumbie de Dunăre afumată* (Smoked Danube mackerel) (PGI).

Other two food specialities are waiting registration: *Plăcintă dobrogeană* (PGI) and *Salată cu icre de știucă de Tulcea* (Pike roe salad from Tulcea) (PGI).

² <https://www.tmdn.org/giview/gi/search>

According to the definitions given in art. 5 of EU Reg. 1151/2012, “origin designations” and “geographical indications” are used to indicate the name of a region, of a place or, by way of exception, of a country, which determines the characteristics of a product due to the geographical environment and to natural factors that contributed to the production of this product. While in the case of origin designations the connection between the product and the territory of origin is essential in all the elements, aspects and stages of the production process, in the case of geographical indications, the connection with the territory remains important but this can concentrate on one or more elements or production stages which are decisive for the product to identify with that same geographical area.

The three food products mentioned above are indicative of the specific of Dobrogea but still too few in comparison with the potential of the area. Unfortunately, as previous studies emphasised, in Romania there is still an insufficient understanding of the distinctive signs PDO and PGI, as well as of the products protected by these recognitions (Nistoreanu, Tănase, & Gheorghe, 2019), while in Italy the consumers mentioned them as the main reason for purchase, when they have a good understanding of the designations, and when they do not, they choose the products with the lowest price, more so if they have an Italian resonance (Vecchio & Annunziata, 2011).

4.6. Traditional products

Analysing the data from the Certified Food Products Catalogue³, published by the Romanian Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development, we notice that from the total number of 641 “traditional product” certificates registered nationally, in accordance with Order no.112/2020, Constanța County has just one product assigned, *Ghiudem tătăresc Moș Iosif* (Moș Iosif Tatar ghiudem). On the other hand, Tulcea County has 20 registered traditional products: *Salată Deltaica cu icre de crap* (Deltaica carp roe salad), *Salată Deltaica cu icre de știucă* (Deltaica pike roe salad), *Pastramă Deltaica de crap argintiu* (Deltaica silver carp pastrami), *Sardeluță Deltaica marinată în ulei* (Deltaica marinated sardine in oil), *Sardeluță Deltaica marinată în ulei picant* (Deltaica marinated sardine in spicy oil), *Batog Deltaica de crap argintiu* (Deltaica silver carp preserved fish), *Batog Deltaica de somn* (Deltaica catfish preserved fish), *Pastramă Deltaica de somn* (Deltaica catfish pastrami), *Zacuscă Moesis* (Moesis spread), *Tocană de legume Moesis* (Moesis vegetable stew), *Gem de prune Moesis* (Moesis plum jam), *Dulceață de cireșe Moesis* (Moesis cherry jam), *Dulceață de vișine Moesis* (Moesis sour cherry jam), *Cozonac Comoara Măcinului* (Comoara Măcinului sweet bread), *Dulceață detrandafiri Moesis* (Moesis rose jam), *Dulceață de nuci Moesis* (Moesis walnuts jam), *Cornulețe cu rahat Moesis* (Moesis Turkish delight pastry), *Cornulețe cu unt și nucă Moesis* (Moesis butter and walnuts pastry), *Biscuiți de casă Moesis* (Moesis homemade biscuits), *Telemea de capră Picurarlu din Stejaru* (Picurarlu goat cheese from Stejaru). Many of these products actually have the required characteristics and comply with

³ <https://cpac.afir.info/>

the conditions to get to the superior stage of certification, which is the European level. Even the names of the products evoke in many cases geographical denominations: *Moesis* brand takes us back to the ancient Roman province Moesia (Dobrogea of today), *Deltaica* brand places us in the proximity of the Danube Delta, *Picurarlu* goat cheese comes from Stejaru, and the sweet bread *Comoara Măcinului* from Măcin, Tulcea County.

The products listed correspond to the two areas in which Dobrogea is divided by Narcisa Știucă: that of fish and that of products made of meat, milk and vegetables (Știucă, 2013). In the second area we could also add fruits, which are defining for the gastronomy of Dobrogea.

As for taking into account the etymological aspect in the assignment of a gastronomic origin, starting from the etymological analysis of the terminology used in recipes and cookery books, in the specialised reviews there are different trends that start from the radical standpoint of denying the existence of a Romanian cuisine, such as that of Vlad Macri from *Stufat or Estouffade or Does Romanian cuisine exist?*, up to the more permissive theories, which, even if they admit the assignment of an origin according to the etymological criterion, they support at the same time the importance of the successive contributions, which sometimes fundamentally transforms the initial product. The theory supported by Elena Cristina Andrei signs up along the same lines in the Preface to *Anthology of texts essential for the history of the Romanian gastronomy*: “If etymology has undoubtedly its place and role in the clarification of some obscure aspects of history (including the culinary field), it can in no case be the exclusive factor in establishing a historical truth” (Andrei, 2019, p. 18). In the case of two of the certified traditional products, the etymological aspect is indicative for the origin of the recipes. Thus, while the Tatar *Moș Iosif ghiudem* (*ghiudem* < Turkish *ğöden*, dry beef and mutton salami) is a product obtained after a recipe of the Tatars, *Picurarlu* cheese (*picurarlu* in Aromanian language means *shepherd*) from Stejaru follows a recipe used by generations in the community of Aromanians from Dobrogea.

The human factor has an essential contribution in obtaining these products which distinguish themselves from the others due to the typically local production methods, authentic and consecrated over time, in which certain procedures are still handmade.

4.7. Established recipes

Another category from the Certified Food Products Catalogue is represented by “Established Recipes”. Of all the 141 nationally certified recipes, Tulcea has 3: *potato white bread*, *rye bread*, *potato black bread*, while Constanța has none.

From the data presented above, a more dynamic activity can be noticed in the county of Tulcea for the certification of food products and specialities, at all levels, in comparison with Constanța.

5. Case studies

5.1. *Picurarlu goat cheese from Stejaru*

From the register of traditional products, among others, there is also *Telemea de capră Picurarlu din Stejaru* (Picurarlu goat cheese from Stejaru), obtained from freshly milked goat milk, non-refrigerated and unpasteurised.

The Migit family from Stejaru, Tulcea county, obtain this type of cheese after a method inherited from generation to generation, from their Aromanian shepherd ancestors (*picurarlu*, means shepherd in the Aromanian dialect) deported from Greece in Bulgaria and then settled in the present Dobrogea. About the special talent of the Aromanian shepherds from the Balkan Peninsula in the craft of milk processing, Tudor Pamfile wrote in 1910 that “they are cheese masters that are sought not only in the Turkish empire but in other parts where there is export through Thessaloniki.” (Pamfile, 1910).

From the interview taken to a member of this family at the beginning of 2021, we find out that, initially, the homestead had 250 goats of Romanian Carpathian breed, now reduced to 134 because of the great amount of work necessary for a family type activity, which can only be handled with a lot of effort and sacrifice. The daily working schedule starts at 5 am, with the first grazing, followed by two milkings, one in the morning and the other one in the evening, intercalated with another round of grazing, and end late into the night. This schedule repeats itself until October when the goats go into the gestation stage that lasts 5 months.

During the time when the goats can be milked, about 800 ml milk/1 litre of milk can be obtained in the two rounds. To obtain 1 kilo of cheese, 5 litres of milk are necessary in spring and 7/8 litres of milk in the summer when the milk is less fat. The rennet used is naturally obtained from baby goat stomach. From the presentation sheet in the Certified Food Products Catalogue we learn that “all the operations from the process of obtaining the product are carried out manually with traditional utensils. The obtained product, in section presents a uniform compact aspect, with a taste typical of aged cheese, adequately salty”. After it is kept in salt brine, the product is aged for 4 months, period in which a fall of 400 grams in weight from the initial product is registered.

The taste of the cheese from Stejaru concentrates both the perfume of the grass from the steppe of Dobrogea and the experience of generations of shepherds. Obtaining the certificate of traditional product is a recognition both for the ancient craft and for a gastronomy with a value of cultural and multicultural inheritance.

5.2. *Pie from Dobrogea*

“The pie from Dobrogea, maybe the most famous Romanian pie” (Roman, 2001, p. 300), product in process of being registered at a European level as Protected Geographical Indication, has a long tradition in the Romanian cuisine, which dates back to the II or III century A.D., after the Romans conquered Dacia: “the legions did not bring to Dacia the luxurious meals of the masters from Rome, but simple campaign recipes. It is certain that *plăcintă* (Latin “placenta”) entered Dacia, even if

the Romans had taken it from the Greeks, as doughs filled with various hash [...].” (Nistor, 2004, p. 12).”

Other testimonies regarding this speciality comes from the author of a publication from 1895, who describes the gastronomic traditions of a family from Tulcea County on the days of the celebrations of Saint Dumitru and Saint Mary: for lunch “they eat pie made of filo pastry with 5-10 spoons of cream in between. In the evening they again eat *plăcintă* with a type of breadcrumb, which is also a type of *plăcintă*” (Manolescu, 1895)

Plăcinta dobrogeană, a perfect equilibrium between salty and sweet, both dessert and snack, celebration food but also daily food, is the excellent result of a combination of local raw materials which, according to the specifications published on the site of the Ministry of Agriculture, are the following: salty cheese (feta cheese), curd, wheat flour, eggs, yoghurt, sunflower oil, wine vinegar, salt.

As it can be noticed, the main ingredients are dairy products and wheat flour, products with a long tradition in the gastronomy of Dobrogea. In the newspaper “Constanța” from November 14, 1893, the following is mentioned: “Dobrogea is very famous in the Orient for the big quantity and the good quality of cheese and butters (*butter*) that is delivered from here. In the country, across the Danube, the superiority of the local products from the dairy industry barely now starts to be appreciated. The types of hard cheese that are produced here by a few cattle traders compete in quality and taste against those from the mountain”.

The newspaper “Istrul” from January 29, 1898, writes about Tulcea County: “This county presents itself admirably from many points of view, especially from the point of view of the good standard of living of the rural inhabitants. Agriculture is the only occupation of the villagers in the county, and fishery of the population in the ponds, different from the famous vineyards from Sarica, Babadag, Jurilofca and Sarichiol. [...]. The only local industry is represented by the windmills for the grinding of grains necessary for the food of the rural population.” (“Istrul”, I, no. 6, January, 29, 1898: 2-3)

The grinding of grains in Dobrogea was done in the past with the help of windmills. Their first written record dates from 1585, while in 1901, on the territory of Dobrogea, 639 windmills were registered, among which 437 in Tulcea County (Valerie & Voina, 2012, p. 22).

At the end of 2018, the Association Traditional Moesis, located in the commune of Greci in Tulcea county, started the registration procedures with the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development from Romania in order to obtain the protection of Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) - *Plăcintă dobrogeană*. In April 2019, when the file was in the stage of opposition at a national level and of “Certind” certification for the protection of copyrights, the Association Traditional Moesis together with Dobrogea Group SA, one of the most famous enterprises in the field of baked goods in Dobrogea, formed a simple association, with the name *Plăcintă dobrogeană*, with the main purpose of obtaining the protection of the name at a European level, of promoting the product *Plăcintă dobrogeană* - PGI and of

maintaining its certification by ensuring the compliance with the level of quality required by specifications.

From the description of the product in the specifications, it results that this is a “baked, pre-baked, frozen and raw frozen pastry product, obtained from filo pastry, filled with salty feta cheese mixed with curd and eggs. The filo pastry of *Plăcintă dobrogeană* is obtained from rolling and flattening the dough. The pastry, together with its filling, is rolled, pleated and placed in a spiral shape in round trays. [...]”. The product “has a soft texture, tender, because of the mixture of yoghurt and egg poured on top, in contrast with other similar products that have a crispy texture with a mildly crispy surface”.

While the geographical area in which the production stages take place is delimited by two administrative areas, the counties of Tulcea and Constanța, there are however no exclusions in terms of the raw materials used.

The human factor plays an essential role in obtaining the product: “the flattening and drying of the pastry is done until a very thin, translucent, elastic and a little shiny filo sheet is obtained, qualities only known to local women. The preparation of the filo pastry in this way ensures, after baking, a texture and a taste of puff pastry, without the rolling typical of puff pastry.”

Once the registration at a European level will be obtained, according to article 13 from EU Regulation no. 1151/2012, paragraph 1, letter b, the name *Plăcintă dobrogeană* – PGI will be protected against “any misuse, imitation or evocation, even if the true origin of the products or services is indicated or if the protected name is translated or accompanied by an expression such as ‘style’, ‘type’, ‘method’, ‘as it is produced in’, ‘imitation’, or similar, including when those products are used as an ingredient”.

6. Conclusions

The present study had as its main purpose the presentation of food products from Dobrogea which are registered and protected at a European level, and of those certified at a national level. We could notice a greater number of denominations recorded in Tulcea County than in Constanța County and, in general, a wide variety of products that cover the entire range, starting from fish, pastry, milk-based products, processed meat products, fruit and vegetable tins, wine and spirit drinks.

There is, however, a great number of local products which still are very little known and insufficiently promoted. As a first action, their inventory according to region and main raw material would be useful. Moreover, a greater involvement of the public authorities would be necessary, through awareness activities of the producers and through direct support with counselling and assistance with the bureaucratic process of registering the new products. Lastly, a better briefing of the public about their properties would contribute to a greater consumption and, consequently, to higher earnings for the producers and for the community in general.

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Tourism as a Key in the Well-Being of Citizens: Glimpses from India

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ABSTRACT

Today, in the era of competition and post-COVID challenges, tourism has become an important part of our life for everyone because it gives the necessary break from the monotonous life as a result of lockdown of couple of months during the covid period. Various studies have revealed that tourism influences peoples' quality of life. India's travel and tourism sector ranks 7th in the world in terms of its total contribution to the country's GDP, according to a report by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC).

1. Introduction

Today, in the era of competition and post-COVID challenges, tourism has become an important part of our life for everyone because it gives the necessary break from the monotonous life as a result of lockdown of couple of months during the COVID period. Various studies have revealed that tourism influences peoples' quality of life. India's travel and tourism sector ranks 7th in the world in terms of its total contribution to the country's GDP, according to a report by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC).²

2. Research objectives

The objective of this paper is to understand the following issues:

- 1) What is the importance of sports tourism?
- 2) How does the sports tourism affect the livelihood of the residents?
- 3) What is the role of Government in keeping sports venue safe for the players?
- 4) What are the laws relating to tourism in India?

3. Tourism in India

In nutshell, we can say that direct benefits of tourism are as follows:

- building hotels and restaurants;

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² <https://www.wttc.org/media-centre/press-releases/press-releases/2017/indias-is-the-worlds-7th-largest-tourism-economy-in-terms-of-gdp-says-wttc/>, visited 30.09.2020.

- improving public transportation, keeping in view the better facilities for the travellers;
- improving security standards resulting to generation of employment;
- economic profit development to all those involved in the tourism sector.

Tourism, in fact, creates a bridge of tolerance and acceptance among varied races, ethnicity, nationalities, and faiths, which promotes peace and prosperity.³ Tourism plays a vital role in the economic progress, source of income, development of infrastructure, societal progress and cultural heritage. Let us take the example of sports tourism which helps the players to get acquainted with the culture, customs, language, and way of life of the local people.⁴

The Ministry of Tourism, is the nodal agency for the formulation of national policies and programmes and for the co-ordination of activities of various central government agencies, state governments/ union territories (UTs) and the private sector for the development and promotion of tourism in the country. This Ministry is headed by the Union Minister of State for Tourism (independent charge).

The administrative head of the Ministry is the Secretary, who also acts as the Director General, who has 20 offices within the country and 14 offices abroad and one sub-ordinate office/ project, i.e. Indian Institute of Skiing and Mountaineering (IISM)/ Gulmarg Winter Sports Project. The overseas offices are primarily responsible for tourism promotion and marketing in their respective areas and the field offices in India are responsible for providing information service to tourists and to monitor the progress of field projects. The Ministry of Tourism has under its charge a public sector undertaking, the India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC), the Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management (IITTM), the National Institute of Water Sports (NIWS), the National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology (NCHMCT), and the Institutes of Hotel Management.

4. Sports as a tool to maintain relations among states

Sport can cut across barriers that divide societies, making it a powerful tool to support conflict prevention and peace-building efforts, both symbolically on the global level and very practically within communities. When applied effectively, sport programmes promote social integration and foster tolerance, helping to reduce tension and generate dialogue. The convening power of sport make it additionally compelling as a tool for advocacy and communications.⁵

5. Sports and education

Sport further builds human capabilities by increasing knowledge and contributing to education. Incorporating physical education into the school curriculum and providing opportunities for recreation improves a child's ability to

³ Sitwat Khalid, *Indian Tourism - Bane or Boon?*, Pune Press, Pune, 2005.

⁴ Sunetra Roday, *Tourism: Operations and Management*, Preface, Oxford University Press, 2015.

⁵ https://www.un.org/sport/sites/www.un.org.sport/files/ckfiles/files/Chapter6_SportandPeace.pdf, visited 19.02.2021.

learn, with evidence indicating that it also increases attendance and overall achievement. Sport also educates people about the body, raising awareness and respect for their bodies and those of others, critical for healthy living and the prevention of diseases, like HIV or AIDS. Similarly, participation in outdoor sports raises awareness and respect for the environment, teaching people about the importance of a clean and healthy environment.⁶

Sport is also a key component of social life, directly engaging communities. It brings people together in a fun and participatory way. It helps create social relationships, build connections and improve communication between individuals and groups. Sport also mobilizes volunteers and promotes active community involvement, helping to build social capital and strengthen the social fabric.

6. Sport as a key to economic growth

Some of the positive effects relate to economic benefit or community pride and excitement among residents. This pride in community results in psychic income associated with hosting an event. Tourism has also been shown to open societies to new ideas and even bring about a liberalization of values in more rigid or closed cultures. While sport is essential to human development, it also contributes to economic development. The economic potential of sport is highlighted by its economic weight, resulting from activities such as the manufacture of sporting goods, sports events, sport-related services and the media.⁷

Sport can also be an engine for local economic development and job creation. Sport programmes provide employment opportunities as well as stimulate demand for goods and services. Sport is also an important source of public and private expenditure, such as that spent on infrastructure, during major events and on consumption. Together, these factors result in sport having considerable potential for initiating economic development.⁸

7. Sport leads to peace

The potential links between sport and peace are also powerful. From international events to the grassroots, sport brings people together in a way that can cross boundaries and break down barriers, making the playing field a simple and often apolitical site for initiating contact between antagonistic groups. Consequently, sport can be an ideal forum for resuming social dialogue and bridging divides, highlighting the similarities between people and breaking down prejudice. The popularity of sport and its convening power further contribute to sport being a powerful voice for communicating messages of peace and site for symbolic public acts on the global and local levels. Sport is an effective element in community-based initiatives that aim to create sustainable peace. The skills and values learned through sport are many of the same skills and values taught in peace education to resolve and

⁶ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK201501/>, visited 24.02.2021.

⁷ <https://www.dfat.gov.au/geo/india/ies/chapter-11.html>, visited 28.02.2021.

⁸ <http://www.oas.org/dsd/publications/unit/oea78e/ch10.htm>, visited 04.03.2021.

prevent conflict and create conditions conducive to peace, from the interpersonal to the international. Well-crafted sports activities teach respect, honesty, communication, cooperation, empathy, and how and why to adhere to rules.⁹

8. Sport as a human right

The opportunity to participate in and enjoy sport and play is a human right that must be promoted and supported. Sport and play are therefore not only a means, but also an end. That sport is a human right is explicitly embodied in Article 1 of the Charter of Physical Education and Sport adopted by UNESCO in 1978. The charter states that: “The practice of physical education and sport is a fundamental human right for all.” It provides that every person is entitled to participate in sport, including especially women, young people, the elderly and the disabled.

9. Sport vis-à-vis environment

The relationship between sport and the environment includes both the impact of sport on the environment and the impact of the environment on sport. All sports activities, events and facilities impact on the environment, creating an “ecological footprint”. Although sport is generally not a major cause of pollution, its cumulative impact is significant.¹⁰

The Sydney Olympic Games were also called the Green Games, but some studies revealed that Sydney did not keep all its promises, citing the failure to detoxify Homebush Bay, where the main Olympics complex was located. The 1994 Winter Olympic Games in Lillehammer were called the first Green Games. The Norwegian Parliament mandated Project Environment Friendly Olympics to protect the fragile ecology surrounding the small host city. Chernushenko argued that the Lillehammer Olympic Games provided a good example of event sport tourism and environmentalism.¹¹

10. Urban regeneration

It is a kind of social benefit of hosting sport events leading to the legacy of urban regeneration. Indeed, hosting the America’s Cup in 1987 has been credited as being the catalyst for the renovation of the downtown area in Fremantle, Australia.¹²

11. Improvement in the quality of life

Due to sports tourism creates an improvement in the quality of life in the hosting nation. Infrastructure gets improved; renovated and potential for increased tourism contribute to the increased quality of life in the years after the event.

⁹ <https://testbig.com/ielts-writing-task-ii-ielts-academic-essays/some-people-think-international-competitive-sports-such>, visited 07.03.2021.

¹⁰ https://www.researchgate.net/publication/335665279_sport_and_the_environment, visited 10.03.2021.

¹¹ <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2000/sep/06/sydney.sport>, visited 25.03.2021.

¹² <https://www.economicshelp.org/blog/4909/economics/advantages-of-hosting-a-major-event/>, visited 11.03.2021.

12. Preservation of culture by protecting monuments/ historical buildings and museums

Tourism may provide the funding and the impetus to preserve historic buildings, traditional practices (e.g., dances, crafts), and natural settings. We can make use of the money generated from various sources in protection of these buildings.

13. Familiarization of culture by intermixing the sportspersons from all the nations

Sportsperson learn community leaving style. It leads to learn the culture of the nation's wherever they go for games. This practice leads to maintain relations between those sportspersons and authorities and ultimately leads to peace of the society.¹³

14. Conclusions

Much of the focus has been placed on the environment and the conservation of natural resources. But the environment is only one prong of the three-pronged approach to sustainability, the other two being economics and social and cultural well-being. The phrase "triple bottom line" is frequently used to describe the interrelationship among the three prongs of sustainability. In the tourism realm, the topic of sustainable development has been receiving a lot of attention in recent years. Without paying attention to the long-term sustainability of a tourism destination, the effects of a large number of visitors can quickly destroy the attractiveness of a destination. In the realm of sport, less attention has been paid to sustainability, and we argue that it is time to start thinking about the long-term sustainability of sport, particularly for those sports that rely on certain climate conditions such as skiing or golf or those that can have negative effects on the environment or local communities, both socially and economically. Thus, as sports tourism continues to grow in popularity, we need to be aware of the potential negative and positive effects of this sector on the sport and tourism industries and to work on the sustainable development of this particular niche. We must look at each of the three prongs of sustainable development in turn. It is the duty of each and everyone to be proactive for sustainable development. We must always remember the saying of Mahatma Gandhi, the father of (nation) India: *"Nature can fulfill the need of every human being, but not the greed of anyone."*

Key considerations regarding sport and development

- In order to maximise the economic potential of sport, development strategies should take an integrated, coherent approach, with emphasis placed on the value of stimulating growth at the local level.
- Sport programmes aimed at supporting social development must be well-

¹³ <https://www.coe.int/en/web/compass/culture-and-sport>, visited 15.03.2021.

designed, led by trained personnel, focused on the development of the individual, and inclusive of all groups regardless of age, race, gender or ability.

- Consideration must be given to the potential harm or adverse effects of sport activities on the environment. The positive environmental achievements of sport organizations and the organizers of sports events should be recognized, as this can inspire others to increase their efforts in support of a sustainable environment.

- Volunteers are a strategic resource that should be mobilized when implementing sport for development programmes. Furthermore, sport is a key site and natural draw for volunteer involvement.

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Coronavirus Pandemic and Airline Industry: Between Facts and Prospects

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ABSTRACT

The 2019 coronavirus pandemic has disrupted the business environment from all the sectors. One of the first and worst affected was tourism, in general, and airline industry, in particular. The purpose of this study is to investigate the short-term effects of coronavirus pandemic on the airline industry and the potential recovery pathways. Using an empirical approach based on the secondary data investigation, we found out that, during 2020, both airlines and airports confronted with ratings' downgrades or even bankruptcy due to the severe cash burn generated by travel restrictions. To cope with the crisis, the most common measures taken by the airlines were rationalizing the fleet, reducing staff numbers and reconfiguring their networks and capacity. In the beginning of 2021, there are signs that the industry is recovering, but the process is very slow. Meanwhile, many governments gave a high priority to the air transport industry, to protect not only the aviation itself but also the related sectors.

1. Introduction

The demand for airlines' services is, by its nature, a derived one: it results from the fact that passengers and goods need to move between different places in an efficient manner, from cost and time perspectives. Yet, as the reality has proved over time, the airline industry is very sensitive to the global downturns, such as economic crisis, natural disasters, political instability or pandemics (Sadi & Henderson, 2000). In the beginning of the 20th century, when the first commercial flights were scheduled, the airlines' sector was firstly challenged by the 1929 economic and financial crisis. After that, the oil crisis from 1973, the Iran-Iraq War in the early 80's, the Gulf Crisis in the early 90's, the Asian Financial Crisis from the end of the 1990's and the 9/11 terrorist attacks also impacted the airline industry (International Air Transport Association, 2020). In the beginning of the 21st century, this sector was vulnerable to diseases and pandemics, such as the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) from 2003, the avian influenza H5N1 in 2006 and the swine influenza H1N1 in 2009 (Bowen & Laroe, 2006; Mangili & Gendreau, 2005). Yet, all these were relatively localised in extent and less epidemiologically severe compared

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to the novel Coronavirus that exploded in 2019. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has caused an unprecedented crisis for the world's airlines (Dunn, 2020, June 4). A first response came from governments, in the effort of preventing the spread of the disease and of safeguarding the effectiveness of national healthcare systems. As a consequence, all around the world, lockdowns and travel bans were imposed in order to enforce social distancing measures. A sudden drop in the demand was followed by a drastic decrease in revenues, these being the first consequences of the pandemic on the airlines industry. In the attempt of reducing as many operating costs as possible to minimize the cash burn, airlines' responses varied a lot as the crisis extended. For instance, Air France–KLM retired their A380 fleet prematurely (Dunn, 2020, May 20), while Wizz Air planned to expand into new European markets after the crisis (Reuters, 2020). Meanwhile, others reconfigured and rationalized their networks by withdrawing operations from certain airports and cutting routes. Until the end of 2020, over 60% of the world's commercial aircraft has been grounded (Hollinger, 2020), which led to a revenue drop by US\$314 billion for the whole industry (IATA, March 2020; December 2020). As well as grounding aircraft, many carriers asked national Governments for financial support.

Despite the fact that the decisions taken during this crisis period could have a major impact on airlines' manoeuvring space and performance in a post-COVID-19-crisis world, the research conducted on businesses' responses to health crisis/pandemics is very limited. As mentioned in previous studies, companies' attitudes to unforeseen disruptions such as pandemics or outbreaks remain largely unexplored (Amankwah-Amoah, 2016).

The aim of this research is to investigate the short-term effects of Coronavirus pandemic on the airline industry and the potential recovery pathways. The rest of the paper is structured as follows. Section 2 reviews the literature regarding airlines and governments' responses to COVID-19 pandemic. Section 3 presents the methodological approach and the last two parts illustrate the findings and the conclusions.

The results of this study will also contribute to a better understanding of how governments, companies and international organisations not only attempt to anticipate the global health crisis, but also respond to these challenges' occurrences.

2. Literature review

The complex and interconnected nature of the airlines' networks leads to the fact that any disruptive event, irrespective of the cause, has the potential to propagate at the level of the whole system, threatening the integrity of the network (Sun & Wandelt, 2018). During the last two decades, events such as changing international geopolitical relations, the introduction of new security protocols (BBC News, 2017), volcanic eruptions (Budd, Griggs, Howarth, & Ison, 2011), "natural" disasters (including monsoons, floods and earthquakes) (BBC News, 2019), fuel price rises and insecurity of fuel supplies (IATA, 2019), terrorist attacks (Blalock, Kadiyali, & Simon, 2007), security threats in host tourist nations (BBC News, 2015), IT failures

(BBC News, 2020, February 16), air traffic control delays and the global transmission of infectious disease (Warren, Bell, & Budd, 2010) significantly impacted the global airline network.

The airlines' responses to such vulnerabilities varied from reactive to proactive strategic measures. While the first ones are reactions to a disruptive event, the second type of measures is meant to anticipate, avoid or reduce as much as possible the impacts on flight operations (Wu, 2010).

During downturns, some companies may seek to preserve their key employees, market knowledge and resources, while minimizing the adverse effects of sudden changes in the business conditions (Wenzel et al., 2020). In the airline industry, an example is brought by British Airways (BA) which decided to bring forward its decision to discontinue Boeing 747 fleets, as part of its recovery strategy to COVID-19 pandemic (Flight International, 2020). The same approach of eliminating the 747 fleets was applied by other global airlines, such as Qantas (Specia, 2020). Considering the fact that the 747 fleet involved very high operating costs from both fuel-burn and maintenance perspectives, eliminating it was a decision not only cost-efficient, but also fuel-efficient (Flight International, 2020; Specia, 2020).

In order to diminish the negative consequences of COVID-19, almost all the airlines responded with different cost-reduction measures. Some of them suspended or abandoned certain routes, fired workers or encouraged some employees to work from home. For example, Emirates, one of the world's biggest long-haul airlines, implemented a temporary 25–50% basic salary reduction for employees, to avoid job losses (Cornwell, 2020; Klar, 2020). Among the European carriers, the risk of the rapid spread of the Coronavirus pandemic led to prompt responses. Thus, in the middle of March 2020, some of the biggest flag carriers, such as LOT Polish Airlines, CSA Czech Airlines or Montenegro Airlines, suspended their scheduled international and domestic passenger flying programme. By the end of the month, the number of the European airlines that suspended all their passenger services reached 18. Those airlines that remained operational have largely reduced their capacity, up to 99% compared to the same month from 2019 (Eurocontrol, 2020b). If these responses initially came as companies' strategic decisions, subsequently, they were due to government-imposed measures. Consequently, in Europe, only a few essential routes, which allowed critical travel, cargo and medical supplies, remain functional up to June 2020 (Dunn, 2020, June 4). Following the Australian government's suggestions, Qantas and Jetstar suspended up to 60% of the scheduled domestic flights and up to 90% in the case of the international ones (Cirium, 2020, March 19). In China, these measures were much earlier imposed: the government limited domestic flights for both Chinese and foreign airlines up to just one flight a week which should not to exceeded 75% of its capacity (BBC News, 2020, April 7).

The extent and duration of these restrictions on flights determined many airlines burning through cash reserves, divesting of disposable assets and diminishing their financial positions (Cirium, 2020, March 31). Up to the end of June

2020, the financial problems became very visible. For example, in June 2020, British Airways reported a loss of £20 million a day in cash (Paton, 2020) and faced a £211 million-a-month wage bill (Osborne, 2020). To avoid an even greater collapse and obtain capital, the company was seeking to sell items from its multimillion-pound art collection (Hotten, 2020).

Other airlines, such as Virgin Australia or Air New Zealand, started asking for government financial support (Cirium, 2020, March 31). Aviation is considered a sector that largely contributes to economic development and, consequently, most governments directly or indirectly support this strategic sector (Zhang & Graham, 2020). Therefore, the aviation policies also reflect a balance between the interests of consumers and of the providers of aviation services (Abate, 2016).

This was the reason why IATA, as industry group, cautioned of consequences facing the industry with global revenues from ticket sales falling as much as £215bn and turned to the governments to ask for financial support (BBC News, 2020, March 16; 2020, March 24). As proved in many other situations, the support measures are mainly aimed at ensuring the survival during the crisis period and at protecting the millions of jobs from the industry. The type of support varied from one event to another, ranging from selective subsidies to operators, manufacturers or service providers (Gossling et al., 2017), to interventions that restrict market access to potential competitors (Christidis, 2016) and create monopolistic bottlenecks (Knieps, 2014).

In the context of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the government support to their aviation sector included in seven ways: government-backed commercial loans and government guarantees, recapitalisation through state equity, flight subsidies or nationalisation, deferral and/or waiver of taxes and charges, grants and private equity. The US government committed to a \$25 billion bailout package (Rushe, 2020), while South Korean state-owned banks offered \$971 million to support Korean Air (Lee & Yang, 2020). In Europe, the Dutch, French, German and Italian governments, supported by the European Commission and justified by the unprecedented magnitude of the SARS CoV-2-induced crisis, were handing out billions of Euros to their national airlines (Patel & Wilkes, 2020).

3. Research methodology and data

As mentioned before, the purpose of the present study is to investigate the short-term effects of coronavirus pandemic on the airline industry and the potential recovery pathways. In order to achieve this objective, we have used an empirical approach, based on the secondary data investigation.

The data sources for our analysis were IATA reports and, especially, Eurocontrol statistics. While the first ones offered a global picture of the airline industry, the second ones presented the evolution of this sector at the European level. We have chosen IATA and Eurocontrol because of the veracity and credibility of these sources. While IATA is a trade association for the world's airlines, Eurocontrol is a network manager for Europe and its statistics are used by a wide range of

international aviation and political stakeholders. However, to ensure that our dataset is complete and accurate, we have also investigated the official airlines' press releases, the national newspaper reports as well as the statistics of the global flight monitoring organization, such as Flightradar24.

We have focused our attention especially on Europe because its aviation market is relatively mature and liberalized, the inter-European network is dense and it includes a wide range of carriers: low cost, charter and legacy, which are usually owned by private-sector investors.

4. Results and discussions

Since 11th of March 2020, when COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO), the number of flights, fleets and workforce involved in the airline industry was considerably affected.

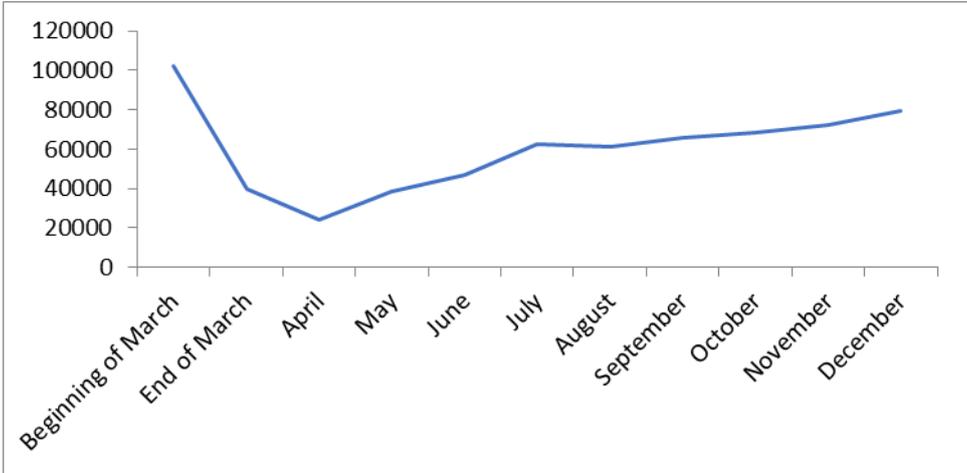


Fig. 1. Monthly average values (except for March) of commercial flights in the world, in 2020
Source: Own calculations based on Flightradar24 (2021), Eurocontrol (2020a, 2020b) and IATA (March 2020; December 2020; 2020, January 31)

As it can be seen in Fig. 1, from 102,116 commercial flights across the world on 11th of March 2020, in December 2020 this number was close to 80,000, in a slight rise from the lowest level reached in April: 24,049. The traffic improvements from the end of 2020 could be attributed to vaccines' approvals in various countries worldwide.

In Europe, the evolution of the commercial flights was similar to the global one (see Fig. 2): in the end of March their number significantly decreased, reaching the lowest value in April and, since June, after the lift of many restrictions, they have started to slightly increase, until September. The increase of the infection rates after the summer season led to new restrictions in many European states. These caused a sharp decline in the air traffic between September and November 2020.

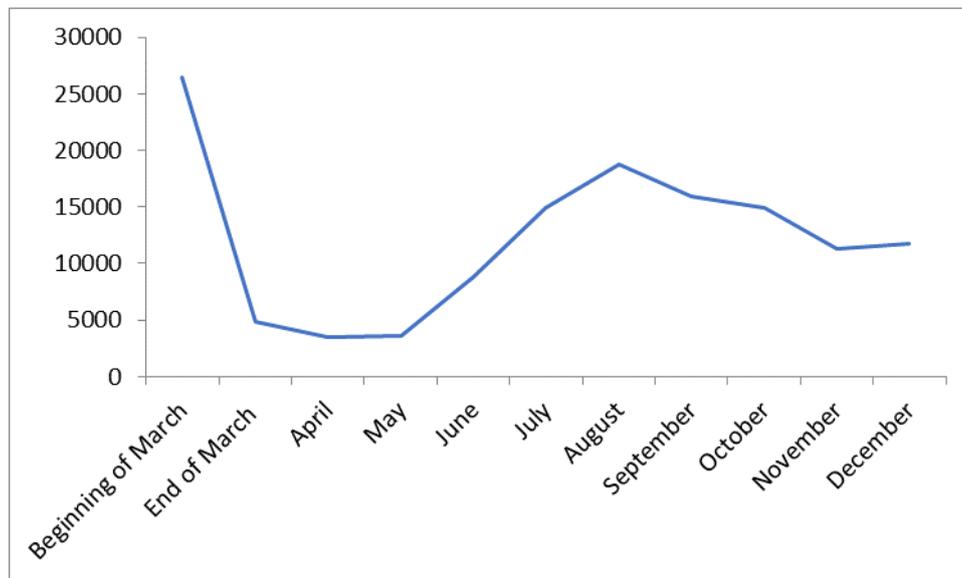


Fig. 2. Monthly average values (except for March) of commercial flights in Europe, in 2020
Source: Own calculations based on Eurocontrol (2020a)

The leading European airlines have also been hit very hard by the pandemic situation. The top 10 companies registered a decline in the number of flights between 45% and 67% (Eurocontrol, 2020a). Moreover, 2020 crisis situation generated some changes in the top 10 airlines, compared to 2019. Eurowings went down from 9th position to 14th, with a 69% loss in the number of flights, its place being taken in 2020 by Wizzair. Norwegian Air Shuttle have also struggled in 2020, despite the bankruptcy protection received in Norway and Ireland, moving from 10th place to 16th place, with a drop of 73% in the number of flights. It was replaced by Pegasus Airlines, which was supported by the strong domestic demand in Turkey.

The reduction in the number of flights was accompanied by the low loading level. The highest percentage was reached in December – 58%, while the lowest was in April – 27%. Despite the fact that the number of flights had a slight increase during the 2020 summer months, the recovery in the number of passengers has been much weaker. All these contributed to a loss of 1.7 billion passengers in Europe, in 2020.

Among the states, the worst affected was Ireland, with a 63% traffic loss in 2020 compared to 2019, and the lowest influence was felt by Norway, with 40% traffic loss. In 2020, domestic flows predominated in almost all the European states. The intra-European traffic dropped by 54%, as well as the flows between Europe and other regions of the world (approximately 57%).

If we look at the airlines' responses to COVID-19 in 2020, we can depict three major categories: responses involving suspension of all their operations or reduction of a large part of their capacity, responses related to reduction or rationalization of their fleet and responses regarding the reductions in the size of their workforce.

When referring to the first type of response, we can see that the major reduction of the capacity was decided by Air France and KLM – 90%. According to Eurocontrol statistics, among the European airlines, the shortest period for which a company suspended all flights was 53 days and the longest 101 days. Those airlines

that benefited from many domestic operations have generally suspended only the international passenger flights. For example, Sunexpress of Turkey and Eurowings of Germany cancelled all their international services but maintained a part of the domestic ones. The least affected capacity was registered in the case of Norwegian regional operator Widerøe, who continued to fly among the airports within Norway. Other airlines drastically reduced both international and national services. For example, between March and May 2020, Finnair flew only 4 domestic and 10 European routes, while TAP Air Portugal operated 4 domestic and two European routes. Yet, this unprecedented disruption to European services started to ameliorate since June 2020.

Apart from reducing the capacity, many airlines decided to ground some or all of their fleet of aircrafts. In this context, some carriers re-evaluated their current and future aircraft requirements. Therefore, in Europe, 13 airlines changed their fleet size and/or composition. For instance, while Virgin Atlantic withdrew only seven of its B747-400 aircrafts, KLM and BA announced the retirement of all their remaining B747-400 fleet. Some companies decided to change the number of the aircrafts not only in the context of COVID-19 pandemic, but also for a longer period. By 2022, Austrian Airlines planned to reduce their total fleet to 60 aircraft, and by 2021 Blue Air wants to halve the number its aircrafts.

Given the fact that labour represents a major component of airlines' costs, it was inevitable for the companies to decrease the size of their workforce. The job losses at British Airways, TUI, SAS and Ryanair, considered together, amounted 28,000. Meanwhile, other companies decided only to make use of technical unemployment for the duration of the carriers' grounding, as it was the case of Brussels Airlines. Decisions with a lower impact on employees included changes in the working hours. For example, Lufthansa reduced the working hours for 77% of its staff until July 2020, while Austrian Airlines decided a shorter time working for 7000 employees until at least 2022.

All these medium term decisions were probably related to the forecasts regarding the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 and its consequences for the airline industry. The worst scenario foreseen by IATA (2021, February 24a) refers to a global airline industry cash burn of 95 billion dollars in 2021. This pessimistic view is related to the fact that governments have tightened the travel restrictions in the end of 2020, in response to new COVID-19 variants. Moreover, in February 2021 the bookings of flight tickets for the summer months were 78% below the levels of the same month, in 2019 (IATA, 2021, February 24b).

Even if these predictions are worrying, they are, unfortunately, supported by the situation from the airlines industry during the first three months of 2021. In Europe, the number of transported passengers in first trimester of 2021 was over 80% lower compared to the same period of 2019 (Eurocontrol, 2021a). The largest decrease was registered in the low-cost segment (85%), while the legacy carriers faced a 70% reduction of the transported passengers in 2021 compared to January-March 2019.

According to Eurocontrol (2021b) statistics, in the first half of March, the air traffic decreased by 66% compared to the same period of 2019. Moreover, it should be considered that a significant proportion of flight operations are actually non-commercial, being related to training flights and circular flights to maintain pilot ratings. The company that registered most of the flights was Turkish Airlines and the busiest airport in terms of arrivals and departures was IGA Istanbul Airport, all these being determined by the increase in the domestic traffic. In March, a strong increase in air traffic was noticed in Austria, Latvia and Slovenia, while Poland, Bulgaria, Italy and Slovakia registered decreases.

After reaching a minimum level in the 2nd week of February, the European traffic has shown a positive steady evolution over the last month (Eurocontrol, 2021a). Yet, despite the signs indicating that the industry is recovering, the process is very slow and it may take a few more years until the industry will regain the profitability from 2019.

5. Conclusions

COVID-19 pandemic caused an unprecedented cash-flow for airlines worldwide. Travel bans led to a drop in the demand, which was followed by a drastic decrease in airlines' revenues.

To minimize the negative consequences of COVID-19, airlines' responses varied a lot: from rationalizing networks, cutting routes, fleet retirements to firing workers or encouraging some employees to work from home. All these measures were meant to reduce the costs. However, since only a few essential routes for critical travel, cargo and medical supplies remained functional in Europe up to June 2020, the financial problems became very visible in the middle of the summer 2020.

In this context, to avoid an even greater collapse and obtain capital, many companies started asking for government financial support. Many governments gave a high priority to the air transport industry, to protect not only the aviation itself but also the related sectors. The aid included government-backed commercial loans and government guarantees, recapitalisation through state equity, flight subsidies or nationalisation, deferral and/or waiver of taxes and charges, grants and private equity. Yet, as proved in other similar situations, the support measures are mainly aimed at ensuring the survival during the crisis period and at protecting the millions of jobs from the industry.

Despite the forecasts regarding the evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021 and its consequences for the airline industry, there are signs that the industry is recovering, but the process is very slow.

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Protection, Preservation, Promoting Vernacular Architecture and Design and the Local Economic Development through Rural Tourism in Sibiu Area

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ABSTRACT

Rural tourism takes place in the rural environment. It is inextricably linked to the vernacular architecture and design, and the cultural lifestyle of villages. Rural tourism is often used as a tool to help develop different regions. Rural tourism could offer a possible solution to some of the problems associated with heritage degradation, lost economic opportunities and population decline. The Sibiu area stands out with a special vernacular architecture and preserves exceptional cultural value, aspects not recognized as a development factor and therefore not properly managed. The purpose of this paper is to try to clarify whether tourism strategies can solve rural regeneration in the Sibiu area.

1. Introduction

The expansion of rural tourism is a common trend for most countries in the world, especially following the health instability created by the spread of COVID-19.

A survey by E. M. Iștoc in 2020 regarding the travel intention and to which 3731 adults from Romania responded showed that both geography and demography have an important role in choosing the tourist destination. The coast, the mountains, and the countryside are more popular as destinations that correspond to the need for, nature, a clean environment, authentic culture (68% of respondents). Also, less populated destinations, such as those in rural areas, offer more confidence.

On the other hand, tourism is considered to be a potentially complementary activity for local communities and especially for farming families. The benefits are generally summarized as a three-way return for the host community (economic and social dimension of rural tourism), for the land itself (environmental maintenance), and for tourism (leisure and tourism in rural areas), which involves a succession of interdependent benefits. All these elements place this type of tourism in a framework

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of sustainable development. Tourism is considered to be one of the tools of rural regeneration.

Through rural tourism, people want to experience the rural way of life. This means that we can not talk about rural tourism without including the architecture and vernacular design that are closely related to activities and rituals, traditions specific to the rural environment.

Located in the center of the country in a picturesque natural setting, Sibiu County has a rich history, dominated by multiculturalism which gives it a competitive advantage in the development of many forms of tourism, including rural tourism.

In this paper, we will try to examine the impact of rural tourism development on vernacular architecture and design from Sibiu County.

2. Conceptual framework

According to the World Tourism Organization, rural tourism is that form of tourism that includes any tourist activity organized and led in rural areas by the local population, capitalizing on local tourism resources (natural, cultural-historical, human) and facilities, tourism structures, including guesthouses and agritourism farms [20].

Rural tourism is characterizing by the fact that it takes place in a natural and cultural rural environment. It is inextricably linked to the vernacular architecture and design and the culture of the village.

Vernacular architecture designates the entire culture built in a certain place and is specific to it. The adjective “vernacular” comes from the Latin word “vernaculus” which means indigenous, i.e. local. Vernacular architecture can be defined as unpretentious, simple, indigenous, traditional structures made of local materials and following well-tried forms and types [3]. Both the secular architecture, e.g. houses, and other utilitarian constructions, as well as religious architecture, can be vernacular. Also, vernacular architecture can be both rural and urban, but in our study, we will refer only to that from rural areas.

Usually, vernacular architecture is made by craftsmen specialized in the construction process (but not architects) who use local techniques and materials. It has the quality of being sustainable. Although construction techniques are passed down from generation to generation, this does not mean that architecture does not evolve. Tradition is not necessarily old-fashioned and is not synonymous with stagnation [5]. On the contrary, the vernacular architecture developed and refined, adapting to the times and needs, and at the same time permanently reflecting the environmental, historical and cultural, technological, and economic conditions of the local context.

Vernacular architecture is the built environment (city, architecture, and interior spaces) created based on the society needs. It is built in accordance with the natural environment (geography, topography, site, climate, local building materials, labor experience, and building techniques) fulfilling people’s physical, economic,

social, and cultural norms. Vernacular architecture is a sign of identity; it is the “mirror” of nations that reflects place, time, and culture. Architecture is built by people to people; it has developed through time and modified itself through trial and error to fulfill society’s needs in harmony with the ambient environment [12].

Therefore, the vernacular architecture is primarily dictated by geo-climatic conditions (climate, relief, etc.), the materials used being those found locally. In hilly and mountainous areas (the case of our study), where forests are predominant, wood is the most used material. The stone is commonly used only for foundations, and brick is used mainly in Saxon villages.

The architecture of rural households, interior design, and objects are related to the way of life, economic conditions, and basic occupations of the inhabitants. At the same time, vernacular architecture and design are influenced by local customs, ethnicity, and other socio-cultural factors.

Preserving vernacular architecture in rural areas must be one of the first steps in the sustainable development of rural communities. Rural habitat is not a museum piece. To protect the heritage, it must be fully integrated into the modern life of the community, in such a way that the local practices and ways of life to be preserved. By capitalizing on vernacular architecture in tourism, they can support each other.

3. Results and discussions

Sibiu County is located in the center of the country, in Southern Transylvania, in a plateau and mountain area (21% of the territory), the architecture of the buildings being specific to the hill-mountain region whose coexistence of different ethnic populations, each with its own cultural elements distinct, they gradually gave it a specific multicultural nature.

Thus, on the territory of Sibiu County, five ethno-folklore areas can be identified, the main feature being, in particular, the intertwining of Saxon and Romanian culture: Mărginimea Sibiului, Țara Oltului, Valea Hârtibaciului, Valea Târnavelor and Podișul Secașelor.



Fig. 1. The ethnic-folkloric areas in Sibiu County
 Source: <https://www.cjsibiu.ro>

Mărginimea Sibiului is a unique ethnographic area in Romania located west of Sibiu, limited south of the Sadului valley and north of the Săliște river valley, which includes 18 localities: Boița, Sadu, Râu Sadului, Tâlmăciu, Tâlmăcel, Rășinari, Poplaca, Gura Râului, Orlat, Fântânele, Sibiul, Vale, Săliște, Galeș, Tilișca, Rod, Poiana Sibiului și Jina. From the ethnic-folkloric point of view, the main potential resource of the Sibiu Border is the rural life (from traditional activities to the vernacular architecture of the houses). Each of the 18 localities traditionally included in *Mărginimea Sibiului* can be considered an ethnic folkloric tourist resort in itself. Situated at the foot of the mountains, *Mărginimea Sibiului* is the cradle of the ancient Romanian customs and the place of practicing crafts and traditional occupations. Although in some areas, modern constructions have replaced the old, traditional ones, there are still houses that keep the vernacular architecture and design. On these lands, in addition to traditional households and farms found old churches, fortresses/fortifications (Salgo, Landskrone, Tilișca, etc.), craftsmen's workshops, painted furniture, household and handicraft objects used for leather, fur, etc., icons, etc. Also, in the Gura Râului commune, it can be seen old hydraulic installations in households. The typical peasant atmosphere, the preservation of traditions and customs, the hospitality of the villagers, increase the attractiveness of these places.

Țara Oltului is the historical territory connecting the Romanian empires and regions, surrounded by the Olt river and the Făgăraș Mountains, it represents, like *Mărginimea Sibiului*, a space of Romanian culture, but with a stronger Saxon

influence. Over time, many crafts have developed in this area, but the best known have remained weaving, weaving, glass making, and glass painting. Cârțișoara boasts the two monumental churches and Cârța with a former Cistercian abbey built in the 13th century with an imposing architecture: capitals, vaulted keys, windows and consoles, and the western portal from the 15th century.

Valea Hârtibaciului presents an established ethnic folkloric/historical area, with potential in the tourist exploration of multiculturalism (communities of Romanians, Roma, Hungarians, and Saxons). Along the Hârtibaciului Valley, a series of Saxon villages developed, most of them including fortified evangelical churches (considered exponents of Saxon culture in the southern part of Transylvania), as well as architectural ensembles and traditional villages of special value (Alțâna, Brădeni, Dealu Frumos, Hosman, Iacobenii, Merghindeal, Movile, Silmnic, Stejărișu, Șura Mare, Veseud). Among the valuable components of ethnography are the occupations of the Roma and Saxon customs.

Valea Târnavelor is an area with important tourist attractions in the category of fortified churches and Saxon architecture with potential in the tourist exploitation of multiculturalism (from fortified evangelical churches to Roma trades). Many of the Saxon fortified churches have been preserved in a context similar to the original one, being an important component of the cultural identity of Sibiu County. Valea Târnavelor was a prosperous area in the Middle Ages, as evidenced by the founding of numerous guilds. Some of the guild crafts are still practiced today: carpentry, carpentry, pottery, etc. Among the villages with great ethnic folkloric value can be mentioned Mălâncrav, Moșna, Laslea, Alma Vii, Biertan, or Florești. Alma Vii is one of the few villages with an active population and a well-preserved built heritage. The continuation of traditional agricultural practices has determined the preservation of the authentic cultural and natural landscape. Biertan and Valea Viilor are UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

Podișul Sacașelor is a traditional wine-growing area, a hilly area that offers various facets of a multicultural ensemble specific to southern Transylvania, from Dacian and Roman remains, medieval fortresses, and fortified ensembles, to picturesque wooden churches.

Therefore, the vernacular architectural heritage existing on the territory of Sibiu County is rich and diverse. Wood (oak) is the main building material used in vernacular architecture. The stone is used for the foundations. Especially in the case of Saxon constructions, along with the stone, brick is also used for the foundation, as well as for walls, columns, and arches. The roof is generally made of tile and rarely of shingles.



Fig. 2. House – Dealu Frumos
Source: Ionel Iștoc



Fig. 3. Houses in Alma Vii



Fig. 4. Gura Râului
Source: ro.wikipedia.org



Fig. 5. House in Fântânele

Source: Daniel Secărescu

Unfortunately, in many villages, there is sometimes a higher degree of building degradation or non-compliant renovations. Over time, many of the villages in southern Transylvania remained deserted with the emigration of the Saxons. What followed was a rapid process of degradation of the fund built in these villages. Unfortunately, the process of depopulating the villages continued even steeper at the beginning of the post-communist period, when rural life in Romania suffered anyway due to the collapse of the agricultural system. The primary value of these villages with houses and peasant barns built around fortified churches is that they have remained almost unchanged since the Middle Ages, preserving a way of life in communion with nature. This heritage value is complemented by a culture of construction, a science of traditional materials and techniques that is an equally important resource. Both the community and the competent authorities must act to prevent the irrevocable loss of the memory of the rural past.

Rural tourism is often used as a tool to help develop, and redevelop rural region. This can also be the case of villages in Sibiu County. Over the last years there has been a boom in the level of interest in cultural heritage and now the countryside can provide the security that visitors need.

Moreover, authenticity is an increasingly appreciated quality. In a world of internet domination, virtual entertainment, and mass-produced products the authenticity of rural vernacular design and the traditional way of life is extremely valuable.

Therefore, the development of responsible tourism in the rural area of Sibiu would have a win-win result. Vernacular architecture and design are valuable tourist resources without which rural tourism would not exist. It is the interest of the tourism industry to protect and promote its own resources and to use them sustainably. On the other hand, the preservation of vernacular architecture is an expensive activity/task. There are needed special knowledge and techniques, not

only for the restoration of old buildings but also for the creation of new ones according to local tradition and history. Although not the only one, the cost is usually the main obstacle when it comes to protecting and restoring vernacular rural households, which is even more complicated in the current economic crisis. The development of tourism in these villages would provide some of the necessary income. And those redundant buildings that have lost their original purpose as a result of technological progress can be adapted to be included in the tourist circuit.

(Re)use of vernacular architecture and design for tourism purposes responsibly can be one of the ways of sustainable development of the rural area of Sibiu, as follows:

1) Economy:

- there have been many examples of projects in areas of rich cultural heritage that have stimulated jobs, apprenticeships, growth and innovation;
- recovery of old buildings that are often in a state of ruin and their restoration and integration in the tourist offer;
- involvement and responsibility of the local community, both in the restoration of old buildings and in the construction of new ones which also leads to the creation of new jobs;
- job creation by developing the hospitality industry;
- Revitalization of traditional construction techniques, crafts, and crafts specific to the place;
- encouraging and supporting locals to start small rural businesses based on traditional crafts and activities.

2) Society:

- promoting the innovative use of cultural heritage to encourage integration, inclusion, cohesion and participation;
- creating and maintaining a valuable source of documentation about the local culture, recovering local construction techniques, and improving the rural landscape making it more attractive to visit;
- raising awareness, both among visitors and locals, about the heritage value and the need to protect it;
- strengthening the identity and cohesion of the local community and pride;
- improving external support for minority groups and preserving their culture;
- promoting intercultural understanding;
- improving the quality of life.

3) Environment:

- promoting the innovative and sustainable use of vernacular architecture and design to enable them to realize their full potential to contribute to the sustainable development of rural landscapes and environments;
- use of local building materials and traditional building techniques.

But the development of rural tourism must be done responsibly because often conceived as a powerful means of attracting income and an easy way to stimulate the economy, sometimes tourism development is taken to the extreme, reducing the

vernacular architectural heritage to a mere commodity, minimizing or completely ignoring its social, cultural, historical, and environmental character. Many times, the false portrait of the culture of the host community, to entertain tourists, leads to the loss of cultural values, identity, and authenticity of the place.

Moreover, the supply of rural tourism must be balanced with other uses of the rural environment so that harmony is achieved and avoiding the conflict between uses and the dependence of an area on a single economic activity.

But there have been many examples of projects in Sibiu rural area that have stimulated jobs, apprenticeships, growth and innovation through preserving vernacular architecture and develop tourism activities.

Some examples of good practice should be mentioned. It is about several organizations involved in the restoration and promotion of vernacular architecture and design in the Sibiu area and its integration into the tourist circulation.

The project of Mihai Eminescu Trust: Alma Vii, the first training center in traditional trades in Romania. The old school from Alma Vii village, Sibiu County, was saved from demolition and rebuilt. Here the locals can follow professional training programs in traditional trades: masonry, carpentry, blacksmithing, wood joints, restoration of traditional gates and windows. In addition, English language courses, primary accounting, agrotourism are available, just to make it easier for the villagers to interact with visitors. The old school also has a Heritage Information Center that offers free advice to locals. The center is also open to the citizens for the organization of seminars, courses, summer schools, accommodation and meals being provided in the guest houses of the locals [18].

“The Lasting Village”, a project of Mihai Eminescu Trust: The Lasting Village is a rural sustainable development program. The village becomes durable after three types of actions are encouraged and developed in an integrated way: restoration of cultural heritage: buildings, landscape, crafts and traditional agricultural practices; development of local entrepreneurial capacity, by supporting small rural enterprises, professional qualification of locals, job creation; and development of sustainable cultural tourism, by promoting rural heritage, hiking trails, traditional guest houses, organic products and the unique experience of country life. The lasting village is being implemented in the villages: Mălâncrav, Floresti, Alma Vii, and Richiș [18].

The Daia Project of the Monumentum Association. The project aims to restore a considerable number of facades so that the traditional village with buildings dating from the late 18th and early 19th centuries regains its former image. A number of 60 facades have been identified and are in the process of being restored with the support of the community and local authorities. The houses are both privately owned and owned by the council. In general, the association has borne the costs of materials and labor, but the owner must work voluntarily at home and cook for workers in some cases [14].

Traditional Tile Project of the Monumentum Association. Noticing the danger of extinction to which the historical roofs of Transylvania are subjected, under the threat of industrial products, the Monumentum Association starts at the beginning of

2013 the construction of a traditional tile at Apos in Sibiu County. By reintroducing traditional roofs in the landscape of Transylvanian villages, it is desired to revive an endangered craft that can only be transmitted from generation to generation; the secret of the production of the manual tile being extremely difficult to understand otherwise [14].

Center for Architectural Studies Vernacular from Dealu Frumos is an initiative of "Ion Mincu" University of Architecture and Urbanism in Bucharest. The activation of the Evangelical Fortress at Dealu Frumos-Schönberg to become a research center is in itself a model for transposing the principles of restoration and conservation of the Venice Charter (1966). Here can be held various workshops, exhibitions, live-studios, participatory projects for the local community, through national and international collaborations [13].

4. Conclusions

The rural world as a whole is an invaluable part of the heritage of Sibiu County, and the vernacular architecture of the Sibiu villages reflects and supports their identity. Beyond its aesthetic value, it offers a unique and irreplaceable record of certain aspects of intangible heritage: local responses to the conditions of everyday life, such as techniques and skills and ways of organizing social life. Despite its immense value, the rural popular heritage is threatened on several fronts. The economic, cultural, and architectural homogenization of the agricultural sector worldwide is largely responsible for the evolution of rural habitat. Rural depopulation, itself partly the result of the homogeneous industrialization of agriculture, can leave buildings disused and abandoned to people who do not see or care about their inherent value.

Vernacular rural architecture is a direct testimony to human activity in a certain place and, if left to be destroyed, part of our past will be lost forever. The landscape, the environment, the people, and the cultural lifestyle are a unitary whole and the cultural heritage should be preserved not only as a memory of the past but also as a resource for the future.

Responsible tourism and the preservation of vernacular architecture and design are strongly interdependent. Environmental quality is a strong factor for tourism attraction while tourist development could provide the necessary income for restoration and preservation of vernacular buildings.

The improvement of vernacular architecture should be an intrinsic element in a boarder and complex strategy of tourist development, as the conservation and promotion of vernacular architecture may became essential for a long-term sustainability of tourist activity in Sibiu rural area.

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Gorj Village in Danger of Extinction, in the Conditions of Decarbonization of the Mining Areas

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ABSTRACT

One of the biggest risks faced by the Romanian rural demography is the aging and depopulation of villages. With an often-precarious infrastructure, with a low level of education and health insurance, the rural population of Gorj County is faced with a new risk, that of dismissal of miners by reducing the activity of the Oltenia Energy Complex and the closure of the Motru-Rovinari coal mining operations. The lack of job offers, the insecurity of retraining and professional reconversion can generate a demographic exodus to the Romanian urban area or to other European countries. In these conditions, we propose some solutions to revive the economic activity in the area, offering the chance to preserve traditional agricultural activities, to develop rural tourism and to ensure good living conditions for the inhabitants of Gorj villages.

1. Introduction

One of the biggest risks faced by the Romanian rural demography is the aging and depopulation of villages. With an often-precarious infrastructure, with a low level of education and health insurance, the rural population of Gorj County is faced with a new risk, that of dismissal of miners by reducing the activity of the Oltenia Energy Complex and the closure of the Motru-Rovinari coal mining operations. The lack of job offers, the insecurity of retraining and professional reconversion can generate a demographic exodus to the Romanian urban area or to other European countries. In these conditions, we propose some solutions to revive the economic activity in the area, offering the chance to preserve traditional agricultural activities, to develop rural tourism and to ensure good living conditions for the inhabitants of Gorj villages.

2. Demographic radiography of the rural area in Gorj County

The population of Gorj County had, on January 1, 2020, 311918 inhabitants, which represents 16.3% of the population of the region and 1.6% of the country's population. The urban population represents 45.5% of the county's population, and the rural population 54.5%. Gorj County is facing a decrease in the number of

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inhabitants, a trend manifested in recent years. In addition, Gorj County also experienced a decrease in the active population, registering in 2019 the lowest value in the last 5 years (61.7 thousand people).

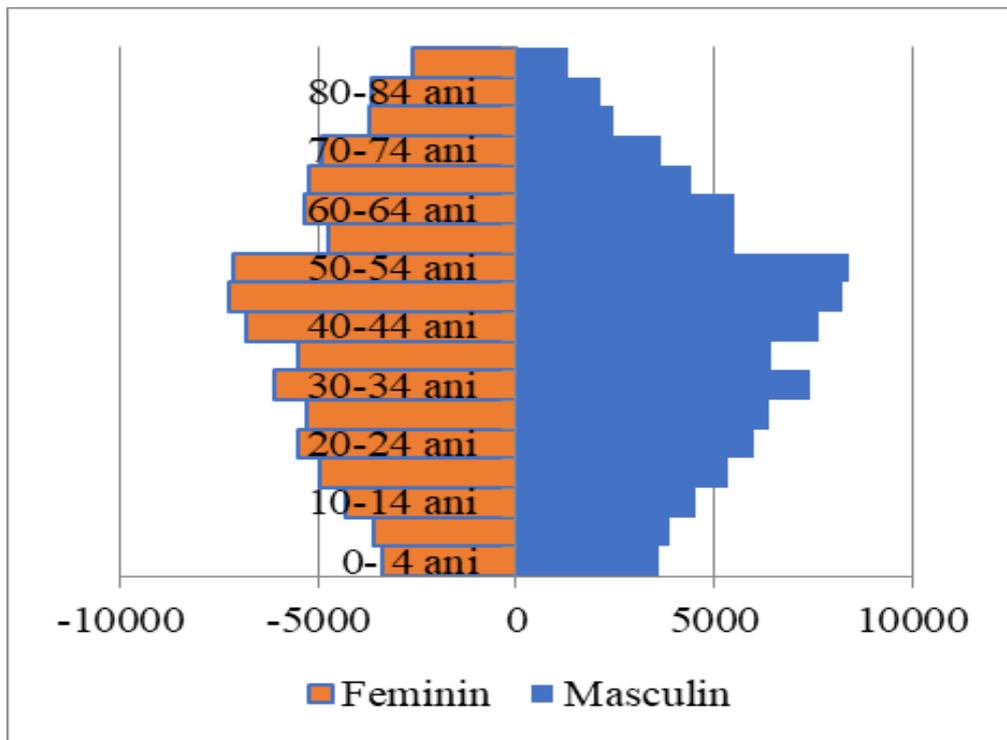


Fig. 1. The age pyramid in rural areas in Gorj County in 2020

Source: www.insse.ro, TEMPO Online

The rural environment in Gorj County has 61 communes and 411 villages, of which 35 villages belong to municipalities and cities, not being eligible for rural development funds. Compared to the number of inhabitants, the communes in the county are small. Thus, a number of 22 communes have between 2001-3000 inhabitants, 13 communes have between 3001-4000 inhabitants, 11 communes have between 1501-2000 inhabitants, 7 communes have between 4001-5000 inhabitants, and 3 localities have less than 1500 inhabitants (Arcani, Ciuperceni, Săcelu). The largest commune, according to the number of inhabitants, is Bâlteni with 7,560 inhabitants, followed by Bălești with 7,491 inhabitants.

The analysis of the evolution of the rural population in the period 2014-2020 shows that in 2020, compared to 2019, in 6 communes out of 61, the number of inhabitants increased, and in the rest, it had a decreasing evolution. In Gorj County, 11 communes were declared areas without cities within a radius of about 25-30 km, which require priority actions for the development of localities with the role of inter-municipal service (Berlești, Bustuchin, Căpreni, Crușeț, Dănciulești, Hurezani, Logrești, Stejari, Stoina, Turburea, Țânțăreni).

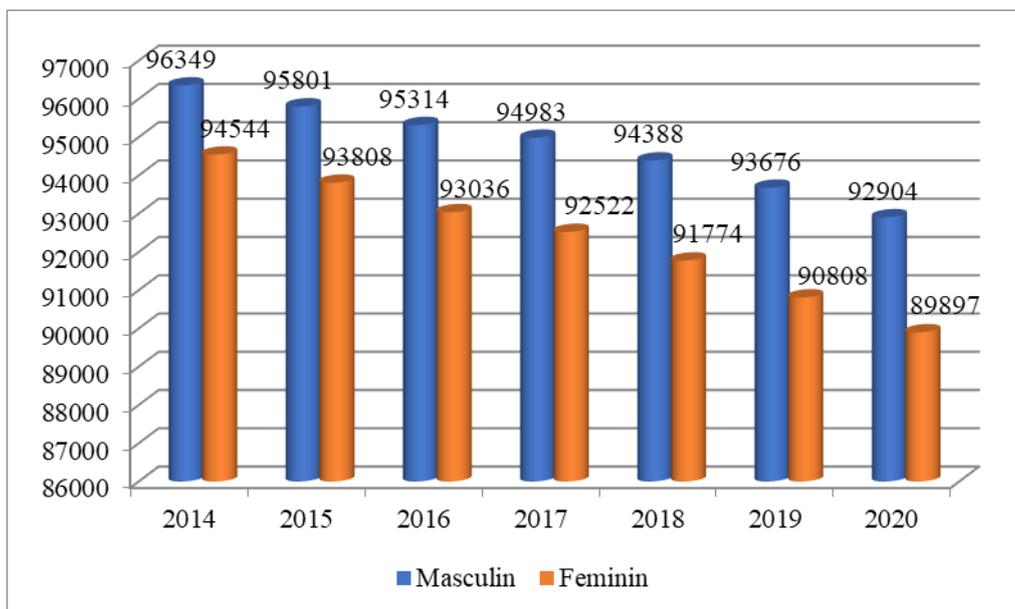


Fig. 2. Dynamics of the rural population in Gorj County during 2014-2020
Source: www.insse.ro, TEMPO Online

A detailed radiography of the rural population in Gorj County reveals the continuous decrease in the number of inhabitants for the period 2014-2020 in almost all rural areas (Annex 2.2.2.2.), With the exception of Bălțești communes (increase by 1.01% in 2020 compared to 2014), Câlnic (increase of 1.03%), Dănești (of 1.01% more), Lelești (of 1.01%).

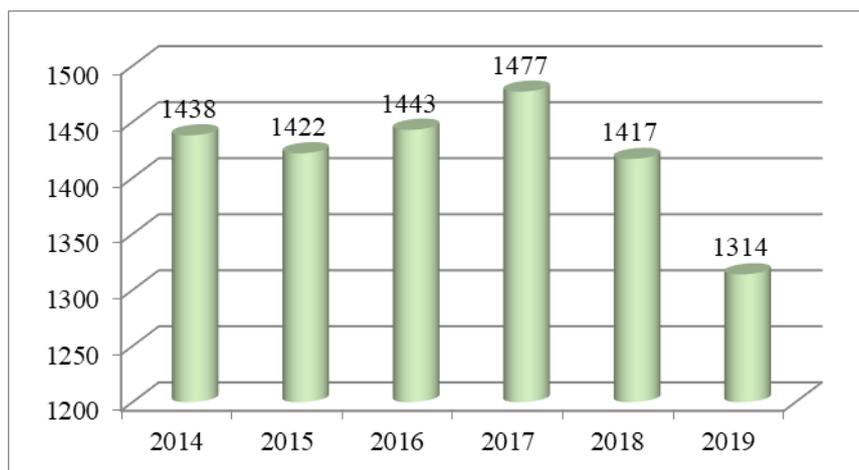


Fig. 3. Dynamics of newborns in rural areas in Gorj County during 2014-2019
Source: www.insse.ro, TEMPO Online

The largest decrease in the number of inhabitants for the analyzed period (2014-2020) is found in Dănciulești commune (12.65%), followed by Săcelu commune (10.6%), Slivilești and Urdari (each with 9.9%). By gender, in most communes there is a slightly higher share of the male population than the female one, with the exception of the communes of Crasna, Crușet, Dănciulești, Drăguțești, Polovragi, Schela, Turburea, Turcinești.

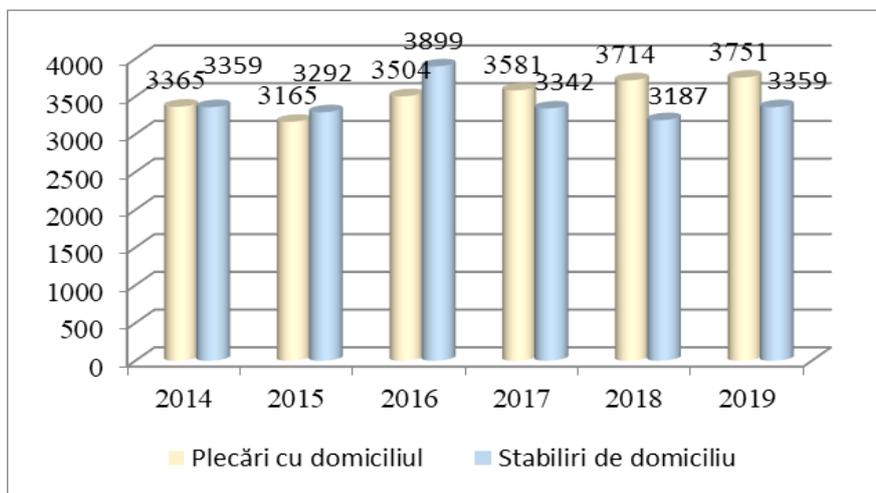


Fig. 4. The evolution of the departures and domicile establishments of the people from the rural area of Gorj county in the period 2014-2019

Source: www.insse.ro, TEMPO Online

The migratory balance in Gorj county has remained constant negative in the last 5 years (-2790 people in 2019), as a result of a similar trend followed by both departures and arrivals from urban (-1272 people in 2019) and rural areas (-1518 people in 2019).

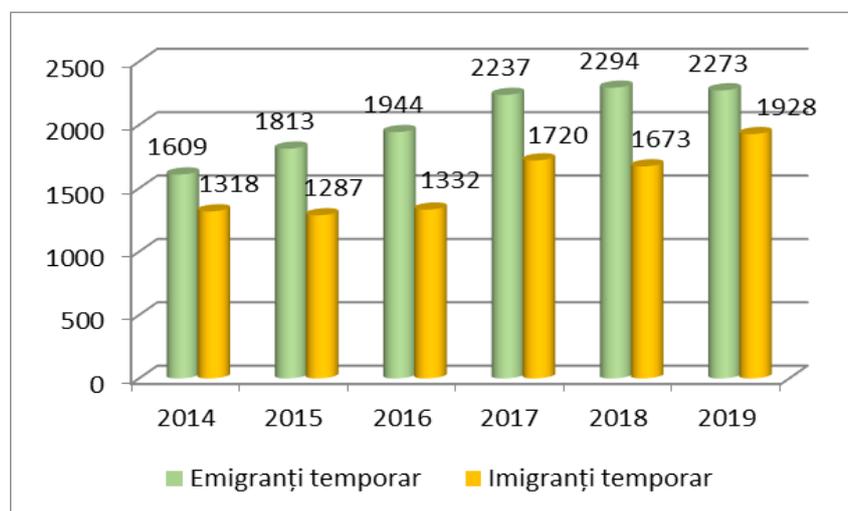


Fig. 5. The evolution of emigrations and temporary immigrations of people from the rural area of Gorj county in the period 2014-2019

Source: www.insse.ro, TEMPO Online

The economic activities in the rural area of Gorj County concentrated a number of 8,850 economic agents, representing 37.85% of the total economic agents in the county and a turnover of 1.2 billion lei, representing 13.19% of the total turnover from the county.

By categories of activities of the national economy, in the rural area of Gorj county predominates, depending on the number of employees, trade, construction works, forestry and forestry, road transport of goods, bakery manufacturing and

activities in rural tourism, - there is a low level of diversification of economic activities (Alexe Iris et al, 2012).

3. Solutions to revive economic activity in the rural area of Gorj

In several communes of the county there were traditional craft centers that have lost their importance in the last 20 years and can be revived by involving the nuclei of folk craftsmen who still produce traditional items: Tismana - fabrics, Pocruia - fabrics, Călnic - Găleșoia - pottery, Padeș, Polovragi, Baia de Fier - braids, Telești wooden household objects.

The peasant household specific to certain localities has individualized over time, depending on the historical and socio-economic conditions (Tchotchua Giorgi, 2017). There are many examples of peasant houses made with artistic mastery, true architectural monuments in wood and masonry. Oak wood was the main building material, and the high pedestal, columns and arches are made of stone and brick.

The competitive advantage of *rural tourism, agrotourism and ecotourism* is related to authenticity / originality (Glăvan V., 2003). In Gorj county these forms of tourism are practiced especially in the area at the base of the mountain range in the northern part of the county, being closely related to the detachment from the accelerated life of the present, by accessing the slow and relaxing time of the Romanian Gorjean village and by reconnecting with the healthy roots of humanity (Șumovschi, D. C., Moraru R. A., 2015). The existence of the forests of edible chestnut and wild bat from Pocruia, Tismana, Peștișani, Lelești gives this sector a special specificity of the landscapes. The development of ecotourism is carried out along forest roads that provide access to several points of interest in the mountain area along the valleys and gorges of Oltet, Galben, Gilort, Sohodol, Motrului, the upper basin of the Cerna valley, or in mixed reservations - Piatra Cloșanilor, with a landscape and forestry role - Gorganu forest. The rich forest and landscape fund is completed by Dumbrava Tismana, Cioclovina Reservation, Cotul cu Aluni, Cornetu Pocruiei, Izvoarele Izvernei and Răchitea forest, beech and spruce forests from Măcăria-Novaci and Bărcului-Cernădia, Gornatel and Chitu-Brăele declared nature reserves). Some of these roads have special landscapes along them, as well as numerous tourist paths. In the defined tourist areas, we meet two types of beneficial bioclimate: one tonic and stimulating in the mountain area, the other sparing, sedative specific to hilly and delve units.

Representatives are also the museums or ethnographic collections of villages - Bărbătești, Borăscu, Vladimir, Lelești, Arcani, Călugăreni, Tismana (center of folk art, folk costume and especially woven Gorj carpets), Dobrița etc., the small nuclei where it is practiced old crafts of folk art and creation: Tismana - fabrics, Găleșoia and Glogova - pottery, Telești - processing of wooden household objects. The localities near the mountain, such as Polovragi, Gureni, Boroșteni, Runcu-village (shepherds and fruit growers), the Novaci delve with pastoral specificity and wood processing; Baia de Fier delve with pastoral and fruit specificity; Arcani - viticultural locality, Lelești - fruit and viticulture, Suseni, Bâlta, Valea Mare - have a high potential for the

development of rural tourism and agrotourism, some of which are important centers for animal husbandry. The locality of Novaci became known in the country through a popular holiday of old tradition: Catching the mountain (Climbing the sheep in the mountains / Shepherds' Day), organized in the Hirișești forest, where shepherds from both sides of the Carpathians gather here. In Polovragi, every year, on the 20th of July, there is a big event, where people from Gorj, Vâlcea and Transylvania gather. The commune has a famous artistic formation of whistlers, popular rhapsodists, vocal soloists, a female vocal group, singers from old folk instruments. In Dobrița and Arcani localities, you can visit exhibitions about the past and present of the area. In many localities are preserved elements of traditional life and crafts related to wood processing (Buduhala-Telești), vegetable fibers, wool, animal husbandry. At Curpen, Rugi, Vaidei, choirs are still held according to old customs, and people still dress in the old port, made up of woven and sewn clothes in houses. The villages of Găvănești, Seuca, Pârâu de Vale, Boboești, Vârtopu are settlements where you can still see houses from the last century, built entirely of sessile wood, covered with shingles, floored with planks or glued with earth, with wooden beds with barks. or mats, dowry box, icons, brick stoves and Oltenian test. Pottery is an ancient craft, which is preserved as a true art, in localities such as Glogova, Găleșoia, Vârtop and Ștefănești. In the field of decorative art on glass, the works made by the sculptor Mihai Topescu are well known, including internationally recognition in countries such as Germany, Greece, the United States, Japan, Denmark and the Netherlands. Rural architecture ensembles are also found in Alimpești, Săcelu, Bengești and folk crafts and events in Albeni, Bălcești and Alimpești.

The Jiu Gorge is one of the most spectacular and wild gorges in the Carpathians. The road and the railway that cross deep valley sectors, passing through several sectors with viaducts and tunnels are themselves a tourist attraction, as are the two natural monuments: the Rafaila Rocks and the Sphinx of the Plains.

The practice of *gastronomic and oenological tourism* in Gorj County is ensured by the existence of numerous locations and points of tourist attraction that offer interested visitors the opportunity to taste the traditional cuisine developed in the South-West Oltenia Region (Tudoroiu, 2017). Traditional dishes are offered in the tourist pensions built in the areas where agro-tourism and ecotourism are practiced: Baia de Fier, Novaci, Rânca, Polovragi etc.

4. Analysis of tourist indicators for the rural area of Gorj

The share of foreign tourists in the total number of tourist arrivals in Gorj County in 2019 was only 3.7% (in the South-West Oltenia Region it was 5.4%), down from 4.2% in 2014 (in the South-West Oltenia Region it was 8.4%).

Table 1. Number of reception structures with accommodation function in the rural area of Gorj county (number of units)

Reception structures with accommodation function	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total county, of which:	87	85	87	102	144	160
Arcani	2	2	3	4	5	6
Baia de Fier	18	14	17	21	27	27
Bumbești - Pitic	:	:	:	:	:	1
Câlnic	1	1	1	1	1	1
Cătunele	1	1	1	1	1	2
Crasna	1	1	2	2	2	4
Drăguțești	:	:	:	:	:	1
Glogova	:	:	:	:	1	1
Godinești	:	:	:	:	1	1
Mușetești	1	2	2	3	5	5
Negomir	:	:	:	:	1	1
Padeș	3	3	:	:	1	1
Peștișani	3	3	4	3	4	3
Plopșoru	:	:	:	1	1	1
Polovragi	2	2	2	2	4	7
Runcu	3	3	3	6	12	12
Săcelu	3	3	3	2	2	2
Scoarța	:	:	:	:	1	2
Stănești	:	:	:	:	1	4
Stejari	:	:	:	:	1	1
Telești	:	:	:	:	:	1
Turcinești	:	:	:	:	1	1

Source: insse.ro, processed data TEMPO Online, 2020

The largest increases in tourist arrivals took place in the localities of Novaci, Baia de Fier, Arcani, Cătunele, Motru, Peștișani and Runcu, while significant decreases were registered in the localities of Țicleni, Tismana and Săcelu.

Thus, in 2019 the number of tourist arrivals increased compared to 2014 in the following types of reception structures: in hotels by 11.7%, especially in Baia de Fier by 63%, in Novaci a substantial increase by 546, 5%; in motels with 29.7%; in tourist villas it increased substantially by 381.1%; in tourist chalets with 38.7%; in tourist pensions increased by 94.3%; in agritourism pensions it increased substantially by 271.4%, especially in the localities of Baia de Fier, Novaci and Polovragi.

The largest increases in the number of tourists were registered in tourist villas, tourist pensions and agritourism.

Table 2. Number of tourist arrivals in the rural localities of Gorj County

Arrivals of tourists in tourist reception structures	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Arcani	58	91	832	1633	1986	2107
Baia de Fier	8338	10129	12526	22076	22929	20797
Bumbești - Pitic	:	:	:	:	:	82
Câlnic	73	53	37	131	149	122
Cătunele	38	90	130	103	146	204
Crasna	12	41	173	96	131	188
Drăguțești	:	:	:	:	:	198
Glogova	:	:	:	:	19	422
Godinești	:	:	:	:	152	40
Mușetești	190	165	39	170	433	515
Negomir	:	:	:	:	100	22
Padeș	:	:	:	58	36	37
Peștișani	101	134	527	503	399	357
Ploșoru	:	:	:	604	502	238
Polovragi	1859	1208	2020	2310	1983	1922
Runcu	431	511	293	4192	5681	3256
Săcelu	3505	1455	1906	475	:	:
Scoarța	:	:	:	126	100	113
Stănești	:	:	:	:	21	595
Stejari	:	:	:	:	237	233
Telești	:	:	:	:	:	80
Turcinești	:	:	:	:	2158	2652

Source: insse.ro, processed data TEMPO Online, 2020

Regarding the share of the number of tourist's overnight stays at county level in the total number of tourist's overnight stays in the South-West Oltenia Region, Gorj County had a share of 9.1% (compared to 14.2% in the case of the number of arrivals) in 2019, compared to 11% in 2014 (16.1% for the number of tourist arrivals) in 2014. Thus, in 2019 the number of tourist's overnight stays in the county increased by 21.4% compared to 2014. The lower share of the number of overnight stays, compared to the number of tourist arrivals, shows that during the reference period, tourists spent more nights in other counties in the region than in Gorj County, registering a decrease in both indicators of tourist traffic.

The number of tourist overnight stays in rural localities in Gorj County evolved between 2014 and 2019 as follows: at the level of Arcani locality increased substantially from 77 to 3471, as the number of arrivals in Baia de Fier increased by 109.8 %, in Câlnic increased by 88.6%, in Cătunele increased substantially, by 647.9%, in Crasna increased substantially from 36 to 712 tourists, in Mușetești increased by 130.2%, in Peștișani increased by 268.1%, in accordance with the number of arrivals, at the level of Polovragi locality it increased by 30.2%, and in Runcu it increased substantially, by 434.3%.

From the data analysis, it is observed that the total number of overnight stays in accommodation units has experienced an upward trend, starting with 2017 and

2018, after a decrease in 2015 and 2016. Thus, in 2019 the number of overnight stays increased compared to 2014 within the following types of reception structures: in motels with 90.3%; in tourist villas it increased substantially by 378.8%; in tourist chalets with 52.3%; in tourist pensions increased by 121.8%; in agritourism pensions with 150%.

Table 3. Number of tourist's overnight stays in the reception structures with accommodation function at the level of rural localities in Gorj county

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total county	168737	147156	149869	185057	203786	204872
Arcani	77	156	1489	2581	4029	3471
Baia de Fier	20753	21272	23262	37711	46974	43547
Bumbești - Pitic	:	:	:	:	:	164
Câlnic	132	99	82	139	177	249
Cătunele	48	128	212	115	155	359
Crasna	36	67	331	229	325	712
Drăguțești	:	:	:	:	:	475
Glogova	:	:	:	:	38	569
Godinești	:	:	:	:	304	40
Mușetești	497	428	94	277	1145	1144
Negomir	:	:	:	:	542	154
Padeș	:	:	:	78	108	126
Peștișani	285	459	1475	968	1217	1049
Plopșoru	:	:	:	6007	3570	1092
Polovragi	3359	1915	3769	4087	4127	4375
Runcu	1194	1039	618	9118	11218	6380
Săcelu	14077	7823	11683	2156	:	:
Scoarța	:	:	:	262	277	240
Stănești	:	:	:	:	42	1299
Stejari	:	:	:	:	597	591
Telești	:	:	:	:	:	380
Turcinești	:	:	:	:	3070	4092

Source: insse.ro, processed data TEMPO Online, 2020

A breakdown of the index of net capacity utilization highlights the poor results recorded in Gorj County. According to available statistics, almost three quarters of the operating capacity has not been used in recent years.

The analyzed data show that in 2017 the highest average degree of use of accommodation capacity was registered (15.93%). In some calendar months, the index of net use of tourist accommodation in operation registered higher values, for example, in February 2018 it was 20.1%, being higher by 0.5 percentage points than the index of use registered in January 2018 and by 0.3 percentage points higher than in February 2017. Higher indices of net use of accommodation in rural areas were registered in agritourism pensions (24.3%) and tourist chalets (22.8%).

The index of net use of tourist accommodation places in operation on total tourist accommodation structures in Gorj County, in March 2018 was 16.0%, being

4.1 percentage points lower than the index of net use registered in March 2018 and higher by 2.6 percentage points compared to March 2017. Indices of net use of higher accommodation were registered in agritourism pensions (24.3%) and tourist chalets (22.8%).

The index of net use of tourist accommodation in operation on total tourist accommodation structures in Gorj County, in April 2020 was 18.6% (registering an increase of 4.1 percentage points compared to April 2019), May high by 6.2 percentage points compared to March 2020.

The average length of stay is an indicator of tourist traffic, which means the average number of days tourists stay in a given tourist area. From the analyzed data it was found that in the reference period (2014-2019) the average length of stay decreased. In 2015, 2018 and 2019 the average length of stay was over 1.8 days. The highest value in the analyzed period was registered in 2015 (1.88 days), due to the large number of overnight stays in accommodation units.

The average length of stay decreased from 1.88 days in 2015 to 1.82 days in 2019. The average length of stay was higher in certain calendar months, for example, in February 2018 it was 1, 9 days (1.9 days for Romanian tourists and 2.8 days for foreign tourists). The average length of stay in April 2020 was 3.08 days (2.95 days for Romanian tourists and 8.84 days for foreign tourists).

5. Conclusions

Tourism represents for the rural area of Gorj county an economic sector that has a valuable development potential, not yet sufficiently exploited and which can become a source of attractiveness for both investors and tourists (Romanians and foreigners).

Contributing to the well-being of local communities, by preserving and promoting cultural authenticity can be achieved by reconverting the workforce in natural areas where the aggressive exploitation of the natural environment (mining, gravel pits) took place, by directing the workforce to the tourist area (Săvoiu, G., Tudoroiu, L., 2016). Another initiative aims to contribute to the creation of a platform dedicated to farmers interested in tourism entrepreneurship (to be integrated into the common online platform on sustainable tourism in the Carpathians, according to the Carpathian Convention).

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Tourism and the Importance of Honey Consumption in Healthy Diet

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ABSTRACT

The opinion that in Romania the diseases and the deficiencies caused by alimentation no longer exist has almost become a common place. But the reality is different. On one hand, the Roumanians eat too much, too fat, too sweet and far too much meat; on the other hand, they eat too few vitamins, minerals and fibrous foods. The question is how did this wrong alimentation become so popular? One reason would be the industrial processing of many aliments. Over 60% of the aliments offered are industrially finite products. The daily necessary of energy is ensured – at present – in a percentage of 75-80%, by overprocessed foods, such as the meats, the margarine, the extraction flour, etc. While, in the private households, the aliments are usually only washed, cut and boiled, the alimentary industry often makes use of solvents and chemical acids, in order to decompose the natural raw materials into their components and thus to make new products. The more complicated was the processing of an aliment, the lower is its vitamins and natural minerals content and the higher is the danger of the formation of certain harmful substances during the elaboration of the respective aliment. Very often, the quantity of supplementary substances which are added to, aliments is also large enough. Such manipulations serve health only in very rare cases.

1. Introduction

An example of how harmful a nutritive substance may be, when it is taken out of its natural context of aliment, is the sugar.

At present, the sugar is mainly obtained from the sugar cane. During the production, all the nonsacchariferous components of the plant are removed, thus resulting the disaccharide saccharose. Practically, the vitamins and the mineral substances no longer exist, and, besides the calories, the table sugar actually does not contain anything. Hence, the name of “empty calories bearer” which is given to common sugar.

From the chemical point of view, there are mono-, di- and polysaccharides. The glucose and fructose are monosaccharides. Both are made up of one single unit. Besides the consumption sugar (the saccharose), the maltose is also a disaccharide. As their names also prove, these carbohydrates are made up of two sugar units. A

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polysaccharide is, for example, the glycogen, which is made up of approximately 1000 molecules of glucose and which exists in all the plants as an accumulated carbohydrate. Also, the cellulose, an important component of the vegetal cells walls, is a polysaccharide with approximately 8000-12000 glucose molecules. Inside the human body these various types of sugar behave differently.

Because of their small size, the monosaccharides are the most rapidly undertaken by the blood, from the intestine. 10% of the glucose already pass from the stomach into the blood. The most part of it is reabsorbed by the small intestine and thus almost nothing reaches the large intestine.

In the intestine, the disaccharides are decomposed into monosaccharides, process which also takes place very fast. And they also are at the disposal of the organism after a very short while.

As the mono- and the disaccharides get so fast in the blood, the sugar level in the blood increases abruptly right after the consumption of these carbohydrates. As a consequence, the pancreas releases the insulin hormone, which decomposes the sugar and, thus, the level of the sugar in the blood decreases again. But thus, at approximately 60-90 minutes after an abrupt decrease of the sugar in the blood, the danger of a sublevel of sugar appears. Because, the higher the sugar level in the blood is, the more insulin is released.

A high level of insulin produces an increased transformation of the sugar into fat and strengthens the sensation of hunger. If larger quantities of isolated sugar are consumed more often, the metabolism is marked and the overponderability may install itself, as well as the manifestation of a saccharous diabetes) of the type II) [3, 5, 6].

In order to decompose the carbohydrates, the human organism needs vitamin B₁. As this vitamin is no longer contained by the isolated sugar, the organism's resources are used. If the alimentation is unilateral for a long period of time, a deficiency of vitamin B₁ appears.

In the organism, the polysaccharides, such as the glycogen and the cellulose are decomposed into monosaccharides, and this process takes place even before they enter the blood circulation. As this process requires a longer time, the level of sugar in the blood increases more slowly and more uniformly than after the consumption of sugars with short catenae. The metabolism is not overworked and, therefore, there is no danger of a sublevel of the sugar in the blood. The energy obtained from the decomposition of the polysaccharides remains longer at the disposal of the organism.

2. The components of honey and their importance for the physiology of alimentation

Very often, honey and sugar are "put in the same pot" and it is stated that honey is as harmful as the sugar is. As honey is not an isolated aliment and it differs very much from the table sugar by its chemical composition, it would have different effects on the human organism.

2.1. Sugar compounds

Honey may contain up to thirty different sugar compounds. This is possible because, by means of certain substances – the ferments – the bees transform the sugar in the nectar or in the honeydew into other sugar components. Partially, these components are still active after encapsulation.

The fructose content of honey differs from one type of honey to the other and oscillates between 34% and 41%. In the organism, the fructose goes through different processes, in comparison to glucose. It is decomposed independently of the insulin and is transformed – mainly by the liver – into glycogen, an accumulated carbohydrate.

Contrary to the cane sugar, honey contains not only saccharose, but also multiple sugar components.

Until nowadays, besides the carbohydrates, 180 secondary substances were proved chemically; but this does not mean that even more substances could not exist. This complex composition of honey, as well as its content of various sorts of sugars, do not allow the sugar level in the blood to increase too fast and the metabolism to be overworked, after the consumption of a quantity of honey equivalent to one of sugar.

According to the most recent American researches, the fear which exists in Europe regarding the administration of honey in the case of the saccharous diabetes type II (“the adults’ diabetes”) is groundless. But the person who consumes honey and suffers from diabetes must try this thing carefully and under medical supervision. It is too risky to advise a diabetic patient to consume honey in unlimited quantities.

2.2. Ferments

In the past, new substances, which even in small quantities fulfill important tasks in the human organism, were discovered all the time. Many times, people only heard of them when they became ill because they lacked certain substances. The ferments may also be included in these so-called “secondary vegetal substances”.

Up to the present, twelve different ferments – among which the invertase, the diastase and the glucoxydase – were found in honey. Each ferment may induce only a certain chemical reaction. Thus, the invertase decomposes the saccharose into fructose and glucose, the diastase decomposes the glycogen into more reduced sugar components, and the glucoxydase decomposes the glucose.

The glucoxydase transforms a small part of the glucose into gluconic acid, which makes honey slightly sour and thus prevents the appearance and the spreading of many bacteria. Also, many yeasts are sensitive to sourness. Even the *Clostridium botulinum* bacteria, which may cause the most dangerous alimentary intoxications, cannot reproduce in the acidulated environment of honey.

After the decomposition of glucose, the hydrogen peroxide, which is a substance with an extremely high capacity of destroying bacteria, is formed, as a secondary product. If to a nutritive medium we add a 17% concentration of unheated honey, then, a series of dangerous bacteria can no longer grow. Even such an

aggressive representative as the *Staphylococcus aureus*, which mainly attacks the aliments which are rich in carbohydrates and albumines and which causes serious states of vomiting, can no longer spread if a “nutritive honey medium” is inoculated seven times. The honeydew honeys may partially destroy or stop the germs from developing even in dilutions of 1:64. The substances contained by honey and which do not allow the growth of bacteria or which destroy them are also called “inhibines” [4]. In the 50s, the glucoxidase under the form of “penicillin B” was isolated from mildew fungi. The antibacterial action of honey was demonstrated without problems. Therefore, the old home remedy: “hot milk with honey”, which was recommended for the so-called “colds” is, indeed, useful. Of course, the milk may very well be replaced by the hot tea.

The inhibines are not only the explanation for the good preservation of honey and for its beneficent action in the case of infections of the superior respiratory tracts, but also the reason of the great success of the wounds treatment by means of honey, which has been practised for centuries.

Of course, honey maintains this action of destroying bacteria only if it is treated carefully. Most of its ferments are photosensitive, as well as sensitive to heat. The invertase is very sensitive to heat. At a temperature of 45 °C, it has a more reduced action after a short time of heating, while after a short heating, at 70 °C, it is completely destroyed. The action of light also has negative effects on many ferments.

Also, the time after which only half of the ferments still exist is indicated. It is clearly reflected that there is not such a temperature up to which honey could be heated as many times or as long as one would want, without being degraded.

But, there are also active substances which are stable to heat, such as the “pinocembrine flavonoid”, which is also capable of destroying the germs. A part of the important components still remain after the honey was utilized in foods or was baked. But, the premise would be that the honey be kept in a dry, cool and dark place up to the moment of processing.

2.3. Minerals and trace elements

The content of minerals differs greatly from one kind of honey to the other. While the floral honeys may contain from 0.1 to 0.3% minerals; the plain honey and the honeydew honey contain up to 1% minerals.

The various sorts of honey contain: sodium, potassium, magnesium, calcium and phosphor, as well as trace elements of iron, copper, manganese and chromium.

The minerals and the trace elements direct the biological processes and are indispensable to the perfect functioning of the human metabolism. Thus, sodium, for example, regulates the water content in the organism and it is necessary for the formation of chlorhydric acid in the stomach.

Potassium is responsible for the normal irritation of the muscles and the nerves, but also for the activity of the intestinal muscles. In case of a potassium deficiency, which is usually the case of diarrhea and of greater losses of liquids, the

movements of the intestine decrease and there appears the danger of an intestinal paralysis and of functional derangements of the heart.

Together with potassium, magnesium is the one that directs the functions of the muscles and of the heart, both these elements being responsible for the regulation of the arterial pressure. There are indices for the fact that, in case of a magnesium deficiency, the sensitivity of man to noise increases. Also, arrhythmias of the cardiac rhythm and an extremely severe irritability were noticed in the case of the magnesium deficiency.

The trace elements exist in the human organism only in small quantities, but this does not mean that they are not important. Iron has a special importance. Iron is necessary for the production of the red colorant of the blood, the haemoglobin, which quantity needs to be replaced daily, up to a certain extent. Many times, the iron supply, by means of food, is not satisfactory, because iron exists in aliments under a form which would rarely be used by the organism. In honey, because of the simultaneous existence of vitamin C, the iron will take a well utilizable form. Honeys generally contain 1.3 to 2 mg iron/100 g. In comparison to other aliments, the iron content in honey is quite high. Thus, for example, the veal muscle supplies approximately 1.9 mg/100 g, and the pork – 1 mg/100 g. Of course, it is much easier for one to eat large quantities of meat, instead of honey, but honey, as a supplementary source of iron must not be minimized.

But, copper is also necessary for the formation of haemoglobin. And it is also contained by honey. Copper helps the formation of haemoglobin and plays a special part in controlling the infections.

As a component of the active substances, the manganese also regulates the development of many metabolic processes. Essential for honey is the fact that manganese improves the utilization of vitamin B₁.

Another example of the great importance of even the smallest quantities of trace elements is chromium, which was discovered in honey and which is called “the glucose tolerance factor”. It is necessary for the utilization of the glucose in the organism, as it helps the insulin to fully develop its action on the cell. According to more recent data, it seems that chromium has an action of reducing the sugar level in the blood. In the case of certain adult diabetic patients, the disease could be meliorated by supplementary doses of chromium. In the Western developed countries, many times, the chromium supply is insufficient, because, in the production of certain aliments, such as the extraction flour and the isolated sugar, the natural content of chromium of the respective aliments is almost entirely destroyed. Probably, besides other factors, the relatively high content of chromium in honey is the one that determines a more favourable metabolism of honey, in comparison to the sugar extracted from the sugar cane [5].

2.4. Vitamins

The various sorts of honey contain small quantities of vitamins. In minimal quantities, there are: vitamin C, vitamin B, vitamin B₂ and vitamin B₆. But all the

liposoluble vitamins do not exist. Therefore, honey is not a source of vitamins. But vitamin C contained in honey has a substantial contribution to the improvement of turning iron to a good account.

As we have already mentioned, in paragraph 2.2, the human organism needs vitamin B₁, in order to turn sugar to a good account. While the table sugar does not contain vitamin B₁ at all, honey contains it in very small quantities. The action of this vitamin is improved by the simultaneous presence of manganese.

In comparison to the isolated sugar, honey does not supply only carbohydrates, but, at the same time, it also provides the substances which are necessary for the utilization of sugar by the organism. Honey is an example for the fact that the nutritive substances are best utilized and turned to a good account when they are in a natural association of aliments and when they are consumed in this form.

2.5. Aminoacids

The bases of the proteins are the aminoacids. The protein content of honey is similar to that of vitamins: with a protein content of 0.3-0.8%, therefore, honey – as a daily food – is not an adequate source of proteins. But honey contains nitrogen components which may be important even in small quantities. Thus, acetylcholine was found in the sweet liquid.

This substance is used in medicine, under an isolated form, and is intravenously injected in the heart. It reduces the heart beats and, therefore, diminishes the blood pressure, enlarges the coronary vessels of the heart and has a favourable influence in the case of cardiac arrhythmias. It was experimentally demonstrated that acetylcholine reaches the heart after the honey consumption and that it has favourable actions in the case of the deficitary coronary irrigation, arrhythmias, heart inflammation, heart damages after an infarct and high blood pressure. Honey cannot replace any drug for the heart, but it may be an adjuvant of the therapy applied. In these cases, it is recommended that one consumes a (table) spoon of honey at least twice a day.

Honey also has an extraordinarily good action in the hepatic affections. This action is determined, on one hand, by the large quantities of fructose, and on the other hand, by the existence of another component: the choline. In the case of certain hepatic affections or of overworking of the liver due to certain severe diseases, the glycogen provisions of the liver are diminished so that a glycogen penury will be formed. Glycogen is not only an energy resource for the organism, but is also strengthens the resistance of the hepatic cell. Choline increases the capacity of utilization of the sugar and favours the incorporation of fructose in the glycogen of the liver. After the consumption of honey, 68% more hepatic glycogen is formed than after the consumption of the same quantity of saccharose. As choline regulates not only the metabolism of the carbohydrates, but also that of the lipids in the liver, at the same time, it prevents an adiposity of the liver.

Choline must be taken from aliments, as the organism cannot produce this substance by itself. Two to three grams of choline per day are necessary for this.

2.6. Acids

Honey contains a multitude of organic acids, which, to a small extent, come from plants and, to a large extent, from the thoracic gland of the bee. Acids are formed during the fermentative transformation of sugar and they are: the formic acid, the succinic acid, the butyric acid, the acetic acid, the glucuronic acid, the citric acid, and so on. These acids have a determining influence on the aroma and the flavour of the various sorts of honey and they act positively on the appetite and the digestion. But, it seems that not only acids are responsible for the beneficent action of honey, but also other components of honey, as well. Thus, the acetylcholine is known to improve the activity of the intestinal muscles. Also, potassium is responsible for a good intestinal peristalsis. A tea spoon of honey, taken in the evening before the sleep, may solve certain problems of defecation, which do not have an anatomical origin. As there are great differences as regards the acids content, it is recommended that many sorts of honey be tried.

2.7. Pollen

The unfiltered honey contains tiny quantities of pollen. The often-present argument that the active substances exist in honey in much too small quantities to be capable of determining a physiological action may easily be opposed by using the example of pollen. In the persons who allergically react to pollen, many times, the quantities contained by honey are sufficient to cause the feared reactions, such as the hay disease or the asthma. But these tiny quantities of pollen do not cause only undesired reactions, but also physiological ones. Thus, it was noticed that the hay pollen acts brilliantly in the case of prostate diseases and is very successfully used in medicine.

The researches in the Witten University discovered that the floral pollen helps the irrigation with blood of the mucous membrane in the small intestine. Twenty minutes after pollen reaches the intestine, substances which, in their turn, activate the immunity system of the intestinal wall, are released. At the same time, the degree of blood irrigation of the intestine increases. These reactions also explain the good action of honey on the digestion.

The American allergologists recommended the patients who were allergic to pollen to consume – daily – at least a tea spoon of honey, in order to gradually get used to the allergies-causing substance. But these recommendations are successful only when the honey comes from the neighborhood (a diameter of approximately 16 km around the city of residence) and if it has not been heated and filtered.

2.8. The flavour and aroma substances

By means of gaseous chromatography, over fifty aromatic substances were discovered in honey and many of them have already been chemically identified.

Depending on the origin of honey, these substances exist in various quantities and compositions and this is why we speak of honeys and not of honey, like in the case of wine. Nowadays, the existence of natural aromatic substances in aliments is very rare. There are over 3000 synthetical aromatic substances which are added to aliments.

Since the most ancient of times, the volatile oils, such as the menthol or the eucalyptus oil, were used for colds of the respiratory tracts, in order to liquefy the mucosity and to weaken the bronchial spasm. The volatile oils in honey also act in this respect, fact which explains the good action of honey in the case of certain maladies of the respiratory tracts, action which is emphasized by the inhibines in honey.

It was demonstrated that the volatile oils in honey dilate the blood vessels of the kidneys and favour the diuresis.

3. The acceptability of honey

Honey is easy to be digested and, therefore, easily accepted. It is accepted even in the cases when anything else is vomited, such as in the case of the vomiting states in pregnant women and of infections. When because of the vomiting and the diarrhea a lot of liquid is lost, the potassium content in honey is very important.

According to some reports of the pediatric departments in the various university clinics, honey may also be used for feeding the newborn children. The rape honey is the most accepted and the best for the stomach, as it contains few acids.

4. The honey content of harmful substances

Honey is one of the aliments which have the lowest content of harmful substances. This thing is owed to the filtration systems in the bee and the plants, which retain many toxic substances from the environment. Only a small part of the toxic substances passes through the roots into the plants, and even this part will reach the nectar in tiny quantities. An even smaller quantity of toxic substances will be found in honey, as the bees are very sensitive to pollution and very easily die because of it.

A honey which has been extracted according to the standards will not contain chemical additions.

5. The utilization of honey for cooking

Its naturalness, the tiny amounts of toxic substances and its rich content of natural active substances, make honey an ideal aliment for the daily healthy alimentation and a valuable component of the alimentation in general. As the concentrated cane sugar juice, the maple-tree syrup and the apples and pears juice contain over 90% saccharose, in the process of concentration, they will lose many valuable components. And then, honey is the only alternative for sugar. In the daily alimentation of the people who have a healthy metabolism, sweet substances must

not exist, as a cancerigenous action of these substances might not be excluded from discussion.

There is a multitude of possibilities for the utilization of honey for cooking. If honey is used for the preparation of the sauces for salads, for the sweetening of cakes and cold drinks, then, the meals will not only be very tasty, but they will also contain active substances. As honey also contains components which are not sensitive to heat, this beehive product may also be used for baking and cooking. Very tasty are the steaks which have previously been oiled with oil and honey and spiced with salt and pepper. If we want to spice warm dishes, such as soups, sauces, puddings, then, it is recommended that honey be added only after boiling. If it is possible, the respective meal should not be boiled after the honey is added, as many active substances may be lost.

Honey is used not only for the famous ginger bread, but also for almost all the cakes. But it must not be forgotten that honey contains much more water than the sugar. If, in a recipe, we will replace sugar with honey, then we will reduce the liquid which is added to the pastry by 2-3 table spoons. It is also recommended to add half a tea spoon of baking powder to the pastry.

Many housewives believe that the amount of sugar in their jams is too large. The sugar in jelly may be replaced with honey, if some agar-agar or a liquid gelatinous substance is supplementary used. In correspondence with the acidity content of the fruits, for 1 kg of fruits, 300-500 g of honey and 15 g of agaragar are necessary.

6. Conclusions

For the maintainance in good health of the human organism, not only the consumption of some nutritive substances, in sufficient amounts is important, but also their quantitative ratio, as well as the form under which they are offered to the organism. If these nutritive substances still belong to a natural association of aliments, then, the chance of a complete utilization of all the components is greater. It is possible that the recoveries noticed after the consumption of honey – cases which have been transmitted along the centuries from one generation to another – found their explantation in the composition of nutritive substances of honey, which is an optimal composition for the human organism. Even though many mechanisms of action of honey have been insufficiently or not at all made clear, from the medical point of view, it is certain that honey has a positive action on the various organs.

In the next years, the purchase of natural aliments processed as little as possible, as well as their recognition from among the multitude of aliments offered, will be very difficult. This is why, beginning from today, such a natural product as honey is has to be given the proper attention.

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Psychosocial Aspects of Mountain Residents in the Context of the COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

While physical distance, relative isolation and lower population density play in favor for rural areas in terms of the direct impact of COVID-19, as the contagion spreads rural areas are increasingly hard hit. Rural inhabitants have dramatically less access to adequate health services, education, internet and communications technology, social protection and public infrastructure. People with health conditions are more likely to be infected and affected by the virus, and poor populations often have higher rates of chronic diseases, as well as poorer diets that undermine the body's immunities to illness. As rural areas tend to be less densely populated, social support can be more difficult to obtain during acute suicidal crises. Predictable social assistance, in the form of cash or in-kind transfers, as well as health insurance and specific workforce guarantees, is the key to mitigating the health and economic impacts of the pandemic. Moreover, social protection enables compliance with confinement measures. For many rural small-scale producers and workers, the generation of income depends on their physical access to markets, and on-farm jobs.

1. The current situation of rural communities

COVID-19 affects all aspects of rural society, both directly, when people in rural communities become ill, but also through restrictions on social distance that exist to limit the progression of the disease. It affects household incomes and rural business in every sector of Europe's various rural economy, as well as charities and community organizations. Some of these effects will also be medium to long term. Some of the structural features of rural areas, in particular their more dispersed population base and the already established tradition of working from home, can act as a source of resistance during this crisis. However, stricter restrictions on non-essential personal travelers may have a greater impact on rural areas, due to the greater dispersion of jobs, consumer and business services and the importance of larger economies in many rural areas.

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We can divide the sectors where the effects of the pandemic are felt into: goods and services consumed at home (meals cooked at home, TV subscription packages, home heating, etc.), goods and services consumed outside the home (cafes, restaurants, hotels and places of use, accommodation, bars, leisure centers, gyms, playgrounds for children, museums, rural attractions, public transport, educational facilities, theaters and art galleries, etc.) and commercial goods and services between companies. The immediate economic impact during the disease transmission phase will be greatest for those firms (and their supply chains) that cannot provide products or services to everyday consumers or business partners, except in their own business premises. Currently, non-related consumption is the most affected. Businesses in this market face acute problems of cash flow and staff availability, either directly (when they serve end consumers) or indirect (when they are supplied with other out-of-home consumption-oriented businesses). The immediate impact on local rural economies will therefore depend on the mix of goods and services geared to domestic and foreign consumption and the extent to which businesses can reorient their operations from the latter to the former (e.g. a restaurant that delivers) (Phillipson et al., 2020). Pandemics and associated quarantine predominantly affect labor availability and productivity, rather than land and capital as factors of production. Businesses that require a lot of work or those that rely heavily on occupations and skills that governments consider to be non-essential are most at risk and are a major source of a wider supply chain disruption, all others being equal. Rural areas usually have a large population distribution of old people, compared to urban areas. Elderly people are more likely to need special care and / or die from a coronavirus infection.

The impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on farms, forestry and fisheries will be variable. Some will be less affected if operations are considered “essential” and product contracts are already negotiated for medium or long-term delivery. The same is true for those who eat essential foods and fish and for those in the wood industry, payments being made directly on the farm. Moreover, most EU farms are family farms, where labor and capital come from those areas or neighboring rural localities, with a good social distance. Many of them provide mostly products for home consumption. However, some animal sales, transport and auctioning operations can be severely disrupted. Moreover, those who supply the food supply sector outside the home. Those who sell directly to consumers through farm outlets will be directly affected. They will have to adapt to a reconfigured food supply chain (Phillipson et al., 2020).

The impact on young people is less visible when it comes to current aspects of mental and social well-being, but it brings as many challenges in many communities. Many students and young people are isolated from friends and support structures because of the schools closing, means of transport and meeting places. Some areas will have weak signal for internet and mobile connection, which can make them feel frustrated. Some will be limited to small, dispersed communities, with few or no

young people their age, while others will be less able to share concerns with colleagues about imminent exams or transfers to schools and colleges.

2. Rural space and resilience

Rural resilience and responses to adaptation to past crises indicate that the impact on households, community, business and adaptation responses are closely interlinked. How to deal with them depends on the availability and prior use of goods (financial, physical, social, human, etc.) from business households and their community support networks. It is extremely important that the answers also depend on the size of any business or household reserve before the external shock. Business income is just one of the financial packages that support many households and rural firms in times of crisis - paid work (occasional, part-time or full-time), occupational pensions, investment income and state benefits, such as savings, reserves and credit are also part of this mix.

Resolution and resilience processes often generate secondary social and economic consequences for household members and employees. In contrast, COVID-19 virus is also likely to stimulate many examples of innovative community, business and adaptation responses in rural areas, from which should generate learning. Necessity is an important force for improving rural business. For example, some creative and digital companies take advantage of the opportunities offered by people who work from home. Some companies are also likely to face additional demand or identify complementary or alternative products and markets, and for that they will require innovation in their processes, goods and services (Phillipson et al., 2020).

Interpersonal factors are strong risk factors for suicide, including social isolation, loneliness, lack of belonging, and the feeling of being a burden to others. It is more likely for residents of rural communities to experience social isolation, compared to those living in urban communities. As rural areas tend to be less populated, social support may be more difficult to obtain during acute suicide crises. These interpersonal risk factors that can lead to suicide are likely to be exacerbated in the current pandemic, especially among the vulnerable (e.g. the elderly or those with a weakened immune system), who may have greater physical isolation due to concerns related to infection. Life-saving social distancing policies aimed at "flattening the curve" can also inadvertently exacerbate social isolation, frustration with belonging, and the perceived feeling of not being a burden to others. For example, quarantine, mandatory computer requirements, and community restrictions can lead to social isolation, as well as decreased feelings of belonging and increased feelings of burden to others. In addition, major stressors, such as housing instability, unemployment, and health concerns, characteristic of this pandemic, can increase the feeling of being a burden to others and the risk of suicide.

Another important interpersonal risk factor that may also be exacerbated during the COVID-19 pandemic is violence (i.e., physical or sexual violence, such as childhood abuse or intimate partner violence), which is associated with a high risk of suicide. This is particularly worrying for those living in rural communities, where

intimate partner violence tends to be more severe, chronic and associated with weaker psychological and health consequences compared to urban environments. Unfortunately, resources for addressing interpersonal violence in rural communities are more limited, with more barriers when it comes to seeking help (e.g., privacy issues, local politics, distance), greater need for specific services and rules, which may discourage disclosure and seeking assistance.

Helping people achieve a purpose in life is also a key element in compensating for the perceived weight that can accompany major financial stressors and health concerns. “Moving forward together” in times of crisis, through collective involvement in meaningful, value-based activities, can mitigate the impact of perceived weight, while increasing the sense of belonging. It can also promote endurance and an individual and collective sense of control. Moreover, as people experience a greater sense of purpose in life, meaning and connectivity, they are more likely to have a lower risk of suicidal thoughts and self-inflicted violence. Thus, it is essential to provide the necessary resources to rural communities to unite and increase the sense of purpose, while protecting members who are most vulnerable to infection (Monteith et al., 2020).

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Relevant Differences between Urban and Rural from the Perspective of Young People's Lifestyle

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ABSTRACT

The central theme of this study is how young people and young adults experience obstacles and opportunities in relation to their past, present and potential future in a rural area. There are certainly differences in the lifestyle of young people in rural and urban areas, observable for most of them. In this article we will focus on the following perspectives: living conditions, access to transportation, access to digitalization, to health and social services. Although social services seem to be a particularly relevant issue for the social groups of older people, it also targets the impact on children. Moving is an important element of difficulty in rural areas, involving relevant aspects of life. Although the desire to repopulate the mountainous rural environment is very high, there are aspects that the elderly have not thought about and on which the success of choosing the rural area really depends. Young people are less and less concerned with the management of farms, most of the actions that are chosen by them and successfully completed are those aimed at choosing a healthy lifestyle, like eating healthy food and being away from urban stress. In other words, the lifestyle that young people have in mind when moving to rural mountains is completely different from what older people expect.

1. Difficulties of the rural area

There is often a continuous link between “city” and “rural area” and thus the geographical distinction between urban and rural is less clear than in other areas such as the USA or Canada. It is necessary to talk about some specific issues that characterize rural areas and determine the risk of poverty and social exclusion for the rural population. This set of problems includes several difficulties related to demography, isolation, education and special features of the labor market. The main concern for young people in rural areas is exclusion from the labor market: this has effects on young people's ability to access services and take full part in social life. A second key point is the interaction between transport, jobs and housing. All the

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typical barriers to finding a job that appear among young people can be observed in both rural and urban areas. However, the experience of unemployment in rural areas is intensified by: a) the effects of adjustments in the agricultural sector (a traditional employer); b) the fact that many regions are located in peripheral areas; c) costs associated with spatial exclusion, such as access to education and training facilities; d) problems related to seasonality (Bertolini et al., 2008).

An important element that characterizes rural areas is accessibility, in terms of ease of access to all those services and activities that are common facilities for people living in urban centers (such as schools, hospitals, sports and cultural facilities). There are two subcategories: "remote regions" and "regions close to a city". They depend on their distance from a large urban center, expressed by the time required on the road to reach such a city - this seems to be significant for some eastern countries (Bulgaria, Hungary and Romania), southern countries (Greece and Portugal) and Ireland (Bertolini et al., 2008). There are rural areas that rely heavily on agriculture or rural areas with a more service-oriented economy - such as tourism - and industry - here we have the food industry as an example. The link between agriculture and rural areas seems to be weakening due to the development of industry and services in rural areas. On the contrary, even if the economic destination of rural areas seems to be only partially linked to agricultural performance, agriculture remains one of the distinguishing features of the rural environment. The problem of farmers and agricultural workers is more serious due to the fact that state agriculture has turned into private farms. The problems of farm fragmentation and the small size of economic activities are important determinants of poverty and exclusion for farmers and their families. However, in countries such as Bulgaria, most very small-scale farmers are retired or have other livelihoods, which can reduce their risk of poverty.

The four categories of problems in rural areas described above (demography, isolation, education and the labor market) can interact and generate "vicious circles", which can reproduce and amplify the phenomenon of poverty in rural areas.

The "demographic circle" begins with the unfavorable demographic situation of many rural areas: a large share of the elderly, few young people and low density negatively affect the economic performance of the area. As a result, low birth rates and the departure of young people make the demographic situation even worse. The "isolation circle" is generated by poor infrastructure, which negatively affects the economic performance of the area, thus encouraging external displacement. This has a negative impact on the demographic situation, representing another obstacle to infrastructure development. The "educational circle" is generated by the low level of education of the majority of the rural population. This causes a low level of employment and, as a result, can increase the poverty rate, which affects negatively the chance of receiving high quality education. Finally, the "labor market circle" begins with low labor market opportunities in many rural areas, forcing many skilled people to leave the area and thus diminishing the quality of the local labor force; a low-skilled workforce is a deterrent to investment by domestic or foreign businesses

in the area; the consequence is a further deterioration of the labor market situation. The difference between rural and urban poverty rates is more obvious in eastern countries than in western countries. Moreover, in eastern countries, poverty is generally associated with difficulties in the agricultural sector. In western countries with rural areas, poverty is concentrated in remote regions and, in general, in hard-to-reach regions. In addition, in western countries the trend, where available (for example, in France), shows that poverty is increasing mainly in urban areas, even though rural districts still have the highest proportion of poor people.

Agricultural productivity is often low because it is influenced by an unfavorable investment environment, a limited agricultural land market, poor technology and the environmental status of water management systems (canals, drainage systems, hydraulic structures). Demographic indicators show a trend of emigration among young people in rural areas of Europe, in search of employment opportunities and a more promising lifestyle in large cities. The migration of skilled people makes it difficult for those left behind. Migration and loss of young people, also related to housing and labor market processes, disrupt informal support networks and also leave the elderly socially isolated (Bertolini et al., 2008).

Regarding labor policy, some specific barriers to employment in Romania have been identified:

- the structure of the local labor market: mismatches between jobs and skills;
- behavior and attitude of employers to recruit workers through informal social networks;
- accessibility between home and work and, in particular;
- opportunity cost to participate in the labor market: childcare, care for the elderly;
- inadequate labor market intermediaries: for example, employment centers may be less accessible to people living in rural areas, especially in regions with a dispersed population.

Differences between rural and urban areas are beginning to emerge in terms of pre-school education, but they also involve other school rules. Students living in rural areas have more difficulties when it comes to education, because they have to commute every day. Schools in rural areas are now less accessible in terms of distance and costs for students and their families. Access to education is relatively developed, but educational attainment is significantly lower in rural areas than in urban areas. Countries with a high share of low-educated people also tend to have low employment rates or a high poverty rate. Addressing early school leaving and strengthening the skills and qualifications of young people reduce the risk of social exclusion and improve labor market prospects. Successful interventions in this regard include the introduction of preventive measures, such as pre-school education, guidance and counseling, meditations, scholarships and compensatory actions, such as schools offering a second chance. Providing education in the early years of individual life is one of the most effective means of reducing the intergenerational transmission of poverty and exclusion. Concentrating basic services

in urban areas can have an impact on the quality of life of groups already at risk of social exclusion. We include here: health services for the elderly or people with disabilities, facilities for families to take care of children, etc. In addition, in some remote rural areas, there is a continuing decline in existing public and private services (e.g. retail, post offices, banks, childcare, libraries, kindergartens).

Lack of access to good infrastructure can have many negative consequences. First, it hinders efforts to improve the performance of the rural economy. In many cases, the Internet is an important tool for improving tourism or other activities that can revitalize rural areas. Also, from the healthcare point of view, internet services can have a positive impact on the quality of life of the population: today the internet is increasingly used for diagnostic purposes and for the distribution of the results of the specialized examination. However, many rural communities are still poorly connected to the internet.

Improving transport services, by meeting the transport needs of smaller communities, by simplifying and facilitating faster travel to urban areas, where residents can find all the services they need, is a crucial part of a policy strategy to improve the quality of life in rural areas.

2. Rural opportunities

In reality, rural areas reveal other types of opportunities, actions have different constraints and the entrepreneurial process is different. According to Stathopoulou et al. (2004), the rural environment has some characteristics that directly affect the entrepreneurial environment in these areas. The physical environment (location, natural resources and landscape) is mentioned. Distance and proximity to large markets influence transaction costs and many rural companies are not competitive and do not have access to a mobile workforce. The second factor is the social environment. Traditionally, rural areas have a high social capital and people tend to imitate the behavior of their neighbors more than in societies with low social capital. The rich cultural heritage offers opportunities for capitalization, highlighting the local potential, adding value by using products of local origin or emphasizing the regional identity of the products. The last important factor is the economic environment. Elements that influence rural entrepreneurship are infrastructure and the existence of business networks. A less developed infrastructure can reduce the attractiveness of an area, market access or the logistics process. The use of internet access influences the exchange of knowledge and the updating of information (Dan & Popescu, 2017). Most people have decided to invest in small-scale infrastructure, which does not involve big costs.

The active involvement of young people in agriculture is necessary for systems with sustainable agriculture, but is currently a challenge in many areas. Before expressing their aspirations for rural life and career, young people first raised the issue of unmet primary needs: access to education, drinking water, medical care and infrastructure. The issue of rural emigration is controversial and not so widespread. The dream village of young people is designed as a rural area where

people have a more comfortable life with their families, cultivate the land better, in a more sustainable way, instead of looking for a job in urban areas. In order to support the aspirations of young people and the desire to stay in the field of agriculture, there is a need for infrastructural and regulatory interventions and specific training in agricultural practices that target and involve young people (Giuliani et al., 2017).

3. Being young in rural areas – life scenarios

For the most part, migration takes place during the transition to adulthood; namely in the period between youth and anchoring in adulthood. The transition to adulthood has increased in duration and complexity in recent decades, which has strengthened the emigration of young adults to rural areas. More young adults are now pursuing higher education (Olofsson & Panican, 2012), often in cities, and traditional rural industries have been declining while urban economies have been growing. Rural decline has often been most dramatic in peripheral areas (Hall et al., 2009). This is also a cultural change, in which the norm has been transformed into urban lifestyles associated with creativity and vitality. By contrast, the image of the “rural” has been increasingly linked to delay and stagnation (Forsberg, 2001).

The concept of young adult does not have an unambiguous definition and has been used with various meanings depending on the context and purpose. Young adults are defined as those people who are over 18 years old, but who cannot yet be considered fully adults, which usually happened between the ages of 20 and the beginning of the age of 30. Young adults are not fully independent of their parents or social support, but they have gained civil rights and are entitled, by law, to full responsibility. They are expected to make their own critical choices for their adult lives.

However, in some rural areas, tourism manages to reduce the gap and revitalize rural labor markets and lifestyles. The growth of tourism in recent decades has been exceptional globally and tourism is seen as one of the few options available in some areas (Sharpley, 2002, p. 12). Although tourism has made an important contribution to employment and business opportunities (Deery et al., 2012), the problem has arisen those jobs in tourism are insecure, low-paid and low-status, raising livelihood problems from a long-term perspective (Mihalič, 2002).

The adult transition describes a phase of life when an individual breaks away from youth and enters the stage of maturity. Previous research on the transition to adult life has focused on maturity indices, such as completed education, permanent employment, leaving home, marriage, and entering parenthood for the first time (Furstenberg, 2010). As in other stages of life, young adults need to relate to rules about what is acceptable during the transition to adulthood. In a longitudinal study of 20 young people on their way to adulthood, Kåks (2007) used the concept of “life-scenario” to describe the rules associated with the transition to adulthood. This concept is defined as a standardized sequence of events related to different experiences. Kåks identified two dominant life scenarios, one positively charged and one negatively charged.

A positively charged life scenario includes graduating a school, traveling, having a stable job and creating a home before having a family. According to this life scenario, a person should be able to “move freely and form his identity regardless of spatial conditions” (Kåks, 2007, p. 304). Expectations of becoming a stable adult over an extended period of time are in line with recent increases in educational requirements, which offer an infinite number of challenges and options. Young adults generally do not perceive the notion of mobility as an ideal of success, as something that forces them to migrate (Nordloud et al., 2002). However, young adults who responded to the study believed that this ideal affected the decisions of other young people but not their own.

The negatively charged life scenario includes the following aspects: having children before entering adulthood and getting a stable job, instead of having education and the time to travel. This life scenario is strongly associated with less ambition and, geographically, with small towns and rural areas, while the positively charged life scenario is associated with greater ambition and larger cities. Equal relationships are associated with a positively charged life scenario (Kåks, 2007). However, respondents did not discuss gender differences to a large extent, which Kåks interprets as an expression of the rule of individualization. Although the transition to adulthood has become more individualized in recent decades, the actions and thoughts associated with the transition are subject to constant re-evaluation of dominant rules of time and place. This means that greater responsibility is placed on the individual, which can be difficult, not least because of dependence on available resources, such as financial support from parents (Kåks, 2007).

Closely related to the decision to stay or leave the countryside is the process of transition to adulthood, which describes the path from youth to adulthood. The maximum age for migration varies from country to country, but occurs mainly between 20 and 29 years (Bell & Muhidin, 2009). While the age of peak migration has increased over the years, the fact that much of the migration takes place during the transition from youth to adulthood is an aspect that has remained since pre-industrial times. The flows of young adults moving away from rural areas are higher than those flowing to rural areas. In addition, the transition itself to adulthood has changed in recent decades in developed countries. This is part of a general economic and social change that has proven to be a specific challenge for rural areas and small towns. Young adults in rural areas live in different conditions and have other experiences than their urban counterparts. Specific conditions for young people and young adults in rural areas are presented here to identify those aspects that may be affected by tourism. Employment and education are often reported as reasons why young adults choose to leave rural areas. In any case, decisions about whether to stay or move away from rural areas are also rooted in the way these places are perceived by young adults and in their relationships with them. The stereotypical notions of rural areas will be discussed and associated with the urban norm according to which rural areas are inferior to urban areas, especially for young adults (Moller, 2016).

Implicit notions of rural areas traditional influence our perception of them, which is why modern / urban versus traditional / rural is a key distinction that will be examined further in this chapter. A specific focus on rural areas is based on the notion that these areas differ from urban areas. Increased mobility has led to a much greater resemblance of urban and rural cultures and lifestyles to just a few decades ago. However, rural areas share certain characteristics that differentiate them from urban areas, justifying the use of rurality as an empirical category in policy, planning and research. Both social change (for example, in terms of employment and education) and the norms and notions of society affect young people's relationship with the rural area in which they grew up. Decreased employment in traditional rural activities, such as agriculture, forestry and fishing, and higher education requirements in an extended education system in recent decades are among the changes in society that have had the greatest influence on young people in rural areas.

Kirkpatrick et al. (2005) examined the residential preferences of rural adolescents in relation to their future plans. Perceived job opportunities at the local level proved to be important for how these adolescents appreciated the opportunity to live close to their home community and families, while adolescents with future plans for higher education proved to be less attached to their families and community. Residential attachments were stronger in high school than in the 12th grade, indicating the adaptation to the educational environment and the economic reality of the fact that many of these students will have to migrate for a better education and a better job. There is also a temporal dimension in the relations of young residents with rural areas. Childhood in rural areas is often described in positive terms, as opposed to the life stages of adolescents and young adults, which are often described in more negative terms, sometimes using the concept of "rural boredom" (Glendinning et al., 2003; Rye, 2006; Möller, 2012). The urban norm is strong, especially in the life stage of the transition to adult status. This rule is based in part on notions of urban areas as being more suitable for young adults, to some extent due to the material or disadvantages perceived in rural areas. The previous notion may involve a lack of jobs or education and may be related to experienced isolation or a feeling that there is not much to do. Both types of disadvantages can be affected by tourism, employment and the increasing number of people in that area, at least temporarily.

4. Conclusions

Tourism in rural communities significantly affects young adults. The transition of adults is facilitated by tourism, especially at the beginning of the process, two of the most important effects being the entry into the labor market and a good supply of jobs during the peak season. Furthermore, the large number of people passing through the area creates flows of opportunities to make friends, get a job or meet various people. All this contributes to the high mobility in these places and to their perception as places where various things happen. However, this does

not mean that these places are no longer perceived as rural. Residents still describe their local communities as rural, but tourism has added various characteristics to these communities, which is a modern rural area with a flavor of volatile urbanity (defined as a large number of people, entertainment and services). In rural areas, tourism is considered to contribute with social and economic dynamism, which is also associated with urban areas.

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Strategii de marketing pentru turismul religios în zona Neamț / Marketing Strategies for Religious Tourism in Neamț Area

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ABSTRACT

Religious tourism has an important socio-cultural component, being a practice that positions man within a sacred and spiritual space. Thus, religious tourism has the ability to influence the motivational state of a person seeking cultural and religious objects and places that support his spiritual existence. This article analyzes some possible marketing strategies to help the sustainable development of the economy of our country and especially of the North East area. In the first part I made an analysis of the tourist potential in the Neamț area and I came in the second part of the article with a proposal and strategies following an on-site research, through an interview based on an interview.

1. Introducere

Turismul mobilizează nenumărate rezerve și disponibilități materiale și de timp ale oamenilor, lărgindu-le și îmbogățindu-le orizontul cultural. Astfel, devine un important factor de educare, apropiere și de înțelegere între oameni. Iată, deci, o nouă dimensiune a turismului, cu profunde semnificații umane, cu valențe ce înnobilează o activitate ce constituie deja o componentă de bază a vieții sociale, naționale și internaționale. Un asemenea scop impune o diversitate de acțiuni, ce se multiplică în permanență, în raport cu dezvoltarea neîntreruptă a preocupărilor de valorificare a patrimoniului natural, cultural al fiecărei țări, a tradițiilor istorice etc.

2. Turismul în economia românească

La începutul acestui secol și mileniu, industria turismului și a călătoriilor reprezintă, pe plan mondial, cel mai dinamic sector de activitate și, în același timp, cel mai important generator de locuri de muncă. Din punct de vedere economic turismul se constituie, în același timp, în sursă principală de redresare a economiilor naționale ale acelor țări care dispun de resurse turistice și le exploatează corespunzător.

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3. Particularități ale turismului religios

În opinia autoarei Maria da Graça Mouga Poças Santos (2003), turismul religios prezintă următoarele trăsături:

- deplasarea este ieftină, voluntară și de scurtă durată;
- motivație religioasă a deplasării este secundară;
- sejurul este completat cu alte motivații, de relaxare sau culturale;
- ținta călătoriei este, în principal, obiectivul religios;
- călătoria spre destinație nu coincide cu o practică religioasă.

Afirmarea turismului religios se produce în funcție de diferitele aspecte ale turismului în general: distanța, durata, originea turiștilor, forma de organizare, clientela, sezonalitatea.

- turism de distanță mică – deplasări scurte în zona periurbană (de pildă, vizita la Mănăstirea Agapia a unui nemțean);

- turism de distanță mare – desfășurarea unor activități în afara zonei periurbane, prin deplasarea cu mijloace de transport (de pildă, vizita la Mănăstirea Voroneț a unui constănțean);

- turism de scurtă durată (1-3 zile), ce are și valențe de turism de weekend sau de tranzit;

- turism de durată medie – circuitul unor biserici și mănăstiri dintr-o anumită zonă;

- turism intern sau internațional – definit de locul de proveniență a turiștilor;

- turism independent – vizita întreprinsă de turist pe cont propriu;

- turism organizat – agențiile de turism sau centrele de pelerinaj se ocupă de organizare;

- clientelă – de la tineri la persoane mature sau vârstnice;

- sezonalitate – mai ales vara, când au loc și majoritatea hramurilor bisericești; iarna activitatea turistică este mai redusă, din pricina condițiilor climatice mai puțin prielnice.

Vizitele în scop religios, care atrag credincioși către anumite situri religioase au, fără îndoială, o importanță economică. Turiștii consumă bunuri și servicii. Aceste încasări aduc profit destinației și se consideră a fi un efect multiplicator al cheltuielilor inițiale.

Autoritățile locale au obligația de a asigura spații de parcare, de a fluidiza drumurile de acces, de a stabili reguli pentru vânzarea la standuri, de a coordona serviciile medicale și de securitate.

Această formă de turism deține un potențial imens pentru promovarea interconfesională și interculturală și conservarea diversității culturale.

Intensificarea circulației turistice duce inevitabil și la degradarea mediului ambiant, sub toate aspectele sale, ca de exemplu deteriorarea unor obiective religioase prin supraaglomerarea zonei și comportamentul intruziv al turiștilor. În acest context, pentru a rămâne sustenabile, monumentele trebuie protejate și restaurate, pentru a preveni congestionarea și a nu depăși capacitatea de susținere a sitului.

Gestionarea acestor destinații ar trebui să asigure o dezvoltare durabilă a economiilor locale și respect pentru religia, tradițiile și obiceiurile populațiilor gazdă.

La Congresul Internațional al Turismului Religios și Pelerinajului, Fatima, Portugalia, 2017, având drept tematică „Potențialul locurilor sacre ca instrument al dezvoltării turistice sustenabile”, s-a pus în discuție componenta durabilă a turismului religios, delimitându-se patru condiționări favorabile, care fac din turismul de factură religioasă o activitate întru totul sustenabilă:

- afirmarea continuă a conștiinței religioase;
- patrimoniul material și spiritual de factură religioasă bogat și variat;
- nevoia constantă de culturalizare, de extindere a sferei cunoașterii;
- diversificarea continuă a formelor de practicare a turismului religios și creșterea eficienței lui economice.

Politica de marketing înglobează politica produsului și politica de preț, care definesc elementele ce se oferă în activitatea economică, iar politica de distribuție și politica de promovare sunt instrumentele prin care înțelegem cum se plasează pe piață chestiunea supusă aplicării mixului de marketing.

3.1. Politica de produs

Noțiunile de marketing privind caracteristicile produsului turistic se pliază extrem de bine pe particularitățile produsului turistic religios. Astfel, aceasta din urmă este de neatins, este legat de personalul clerical care îl ghidează, nu are un standard predefinit, fiecare având o trăire subiectivă a experienței religioase, depinde în mare măsură de resursa umană, iar cererea este dependentă de calendarul sărbătorilor, de manifestările religioase și de timpul liber dedicat activităților de turism.

În cadrul turismului religios avem de a face cu un proces de consolidare a unui produs turistic (sub raportul marketingului), acel ansamblu de bunuri și servicii care va satisface cererea turistică, implementarea lui pe piața turistică națională și internațională și mai ales realizarea conexiunii între consumator și produsul respectiv pe seama atributului unic al spiritualității și apropierii de Dumnezeu.

În acest sens, este nevoie de o colaborare a tuturor actorilor turistici din regiune pentru a propune produse - programe turistice care vor fi promovate, în cazul nostru, sub marca Neamțului. Comunitatea locală se mândrește cu peisajele și resursele naturale, istoria locurilor, personalitățile, puterea credinței din zona mănăstirilor, avantaje competitive sustenabile ce pot fi valorificate în produsele sau serviciile turistice ale zonei, generând recunoaștere și satisfacție în rândul consumatorilor de turism.

Există o cerere reală pe piață pentru patrimoniul religios din Ținutul Neamțului, prin urmare, pe baza analizei pieței, se pot întreprinde pași în vederea alcătuirii corespunzătoare a produsului turistic.



Fig. 1. Mănăstirea Neamț

Sursa: Internet

4. Analiza pieței turistice din regiunea Neamț

4.1. Fluxurile turistice din județul Neamț

Gradul de dezvoltare atins de turismul religios din zona Neamțului este dat de intensitatea circulației turistice care are ca țintă obiective bisericesti.

În evaluarea fluxurilor turistice apar câteva obstacole. Primul ține de lipsa unei matrici riguroase care să cuantifice fluxul eminamente religios. În baza statistică a turismului din România, datele turistice generate de vizitele motivate de componenta religioasă sunt încadrate la un loc cu călătoriile din motive medicale și altele. Apoi, fluxurile de vizitatori generate de turismul religios sunt dificil de evaluat din cauza interferenței cu turismul cultural, în care vizitarea obiectivelor religioase este o componentă a ofertei turistice culturale. De asemenea, vizitele la obiective turistice religioase pot fi de scurtă durată, de doar câteva ore, iar acest turism de tranzit nu prezintă date de sejur care pot fi cuantificate.

În cazul turismului monahal, informațiile fluxului turistic provin de la mănăstiri, unde consemnările se bazează pe numărul biletelor de la intrare și de la muzeu. În Ținutul Neamțului, complexele mănăstirești Neamț, Văratec, Agapia, Secu, Sihăstria, Sihla, Horaița, Petru-Vodă sunt considerate și centre cu orientare artistică și culturală, fapt ce determină includerea lor în fluxul turistic generat de turismul cultural.

O altă problemă majoră a turismului religios din județul Neamț o reprezintă sezonalitatea. Deși afluența de practicanți este în strânsă legătură cu hramurile edificiilor de cult, hramuri repartizate pe durata întregului an, și cu sărbătorile religioase de peste an, constatăm că frecvența turistică are un vârf de creștere la începutul primăverii, în contextul sărbătorilor pascale și în perioada caldă a anului. Mănăstirile Văratec, Agapia, Neamț, Secu, Sihăstria, Petru Vodă atrag, la sfârșit de săptămână și în sezonul cald, un număr mare de turiști, cazați în localitățile rurale învecinate. În schimb, concurența turistică din regiunile învecinate (Suceava, Iași)

înfliuențează circulația turistică, ce are de suferit în perioada sărbătorilor pascale sau de iarnă, când bazinul receptor al turismului religios devine cu precădere Bucovina.

5. Politici de marketing pentru dezvoltarea și promovarea turismului religios în zona Neamț

5.1. Perspective și direcții de dezvoltare ale turismului religios din Ținutul Neamțului

Câteva direcții pot fi trasate pentru valorificarea potențialului religios al zonei studiate, și anume: lărgirea și diversificarea ofertei, elaborarea unor trasee turistice, îmbunătățirea infrastructurii de acces, repartiția eficientă a structurilor de cazare și restaurante în preajma obiectivelor turistice religioase.

Gradul de unicitate al unui obiectiv turistic contribuie în mod semnificativ la decizia unui turist de a-l vizita. Atributele unui lăcaș de cult îl impun atenției turistice: arhitectura, patrimoniul mobil și imobil, unicitatea peisajului, faima ctitorului și a personalităților care și-au legat numele de acest loc, evenimente de natură istorico-culturală și religioasă care sunt găzduite aici, atracțiile religioase/culturale complementare.

Accesibilitatea devine un criteriu de alegere, demonstrând calitatea și diversitatea infrastructurii de acces și de cazare și restaurante, proprii și învecinate.

5.2. Lărgirea și diversificarea ofertei

Potențialul atractiv al obiectivelor religioase analizate anterior poate fi valorificat prin înființarea unor muzee sau expoziții în incinta edificiilor religioase care nu dispun acum de astfel de facilități. Este o modalitate utilă prin care se pot oferi informații suplimentare atractive despre particularitățile edificiului, despre figurile istorice care i-au marcat existența. Un abordare turistică eficientă și profesionistă își va propune dotarea acestor muzee cu ghiduri audio în limbi de circulație internațională, dar și asigurarea de ghizi specializați, cu competențe și cunoștințe în domeniu, care să vină în întâmpinarea dorinței de informare a vizitatorilor.

Icoanele făcătoare de minuni, așa cum se regăsesc la o serie de mănăstiri din zonă, sunt de mare interes pentru turiști și pelerini. Pentru acele lăcașuri care nu beneficiază de asemenea valori, se pot stabili anumite colaborări între parohii, pentru a fi aduse din alte părți icoane făcătoare de minuni, care să atragă un număr crescut de credincioși.

De asemenea, trebuie asigurată participarea la evenimentele cultural-creștine cum ar fi expoziții de artă bisericească, evocări ale diferitelor personalități ce au marcat zona, concerte de muzică etc.

6. Concluzii

1) În zona Neamț există oportunități și un potențial remarcabil pentru dezvoltarea turismului religios competitiv.

2) Repartiția spațială a obiectivelor turistice religioase din județul Neamț vădește concentrarea acestora în arealul Parcului Național Vânători-Neamț.

3) Infrastructura din această zonă necesită o serie de măsuri de modernizare și adaptare, care să satisfacă mișcarea turistică actuală.

4) Necesitatea identificării cerințelor vizitatorilor, pentru îndeplinirea standardului serviciilor turistice (motivații turistice, infrastructură, cazare, masă).

Turiștii vin în zona Neamțului pe de o parte pentru a relaționa cu divinitatea, pentru a-și manifesta credința, iar pe de altă parte, pentru cunoașterea istoriei locului și contactul cultural. Îmbinarea celor două dimensiuni - religioasă și culturală - trebuie valorificată în direcțiile de dezvoltare turistică a zonei.

Analizând nevoile consumatorilor, este de încurajat practicarea turismului cultural-religios prin vizitarea muzeelor din cadrul ansamblurilor monastice, vizitarea caselor memoriale de lângă Sihăstria și Agapia, dar și completarea cu trasee turistice de-a lungul obiectivelor cultural-istorice din orașele nemțene.

Se urmărește ca Ținutul Neamțului să se consolideze ca o destinație turistică prin diversificarea politicii de produs turistic. Pachetele și trasee turistice competitive, țargetate pe segmentele de vârstă ale turiștilor și accesibile pe toată durata anului, trebuie gândite astfel încât să crească fluxul turistic și să se extindă durata medie de ședere a turiștilor la destinație.

În organizarea activității de promovare este utilă aplicarea strategiei de produs – comercializarea obiectelor bisericești, vizitarea unor muzee și expoziții bisericești, conceperea unor pachete și trasee turistice, organizarea variantelor de cazare și masă în incinta ansamblurilor monahale –, cu un preț adecvat și distribuit pe o piață care să prezinte interes.

Turismul religios va fi în continuă ascensiune și diversificare dacă se urmăresc câteva aspecte esențiale: venirea în întâmpinarea motivațiilor diverselor segmente de turiști; valorificarea dorinței de cunoaștere, a componentei culturale, a dorinței de interacțiune socială sau spirituală; manifestarea unui turism durabil, care să protejeze integritatea spațiilor religioase și care să aducă beneficii comunității locale și bisericești.

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Costinești – istorie și practică balneară / Costinești: History and Balneotherapy

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ABSTRACT

Costinești resort is the symbol of the seaside for young people, which is why it has attracted a significant number of high school or student tourists. But the therapeutic importance of these resorts was not and should not be neglected by the presence of valuable spa resources, especially for diseases of the musculoskeletal system. The present paper aims to identify the importance of these resorts for medical tourism, to make a brief description of its evolution over time and to identify current tourist activity. In this sense, the natural and anthropic tourist objectives are mentioned, the spa resources at its disposal, as well as the treatment and leisure base. The natural resources of these resorts bring it to the forefront, as a resort for leisure but also for spa tourism.

1. Introducere

Binecunoscută în rândul tinerilor români drept „capitala vacanțelor estivale ale tineretului” [1], stațiunea Costinești s-a dezvoltat din anul 1949, o dată cu înființarea unei tabere pentru copii.

Din punct de vedere istoric, teritoriul a fost locuit cu mult timp înainte de apariția stațiunii Costinești, izvoarele istorice datând încă din perioada Evului Mediu. Numeroase popoare au fost atrase de bogăția locului. În anul 2019, au fost descoperite fragmente de ceramică elenistică cu o vechime considerabilă, evaluate ca aparținând secolului III î.Hr. [2].

Practica balneară din această zonă este axată pe afecțiunile reumatismale.

2. Clima și geografia stațiunii

Condițiile climatice sunt specifice litoralului românesc, adică continental-temperate, bioclimă excitantă, solicitantă. Stațiunea este situată la o altitudine de 10 m față de nivelul mării, astfel încât verile sunt călduroase, iar iernile reci. Caracteristic climatului, umiditatea este crescută, însă, în comparație cu alte țarmuri, este mai scăzută. Viteza vântului este semnificativă, având următoarea particularitate: vara dinspre mare, în rest invers [3]. Calitatea aerului are ca trăsătură

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dominantă puritatea, alături de concentrația de iod și sare. De asemenea, nebulozitatea este diminuată vara, ceea ce contribuie la faptul că litoralul românesc prezintă cele mai multe avantaje terapeutice în perioada mai-octombrie.

Stațiunea Costinești aparține comunei Costinești, care este alcătuită din satele Costinești și Schitu. Comuna se află în județul Constanța, la 31 km, spre sud, de reședința județului.

În Costinești se află singurul lac de pe țărmul Mării Negre care nu este alimentat din subteran. Acesta are o suprafață de 7 hectare și o adâncime relativ redusă, întrucât este despărțit de mare printr-un perisip [4]. Lacul are o salinitate crescută, care a determinat formarea unui strat semnificativ de nămol, utilizat cu predilecție în tratarea afecțiunilor reumatismale (Fig. 1).

Plaja are o lungime de circa 2 km și o lățime de aproximativ 100-200 m, orientare spre est, care determină în medie, în sezonul estival, între 10 și 12 ore de soare pe zi [6].

Prezența reliefului stâncos argilos, care se află între Tuzla și Costinești, precum și între 2 Mai și Vama Veche, reprezintă o particularitate a locului, deoarece aici se găsesc o floră și o faună deosebită, neafectate de activitatea oamenilor: *Falco tinnunculus*, *Coracias garrulus*, *Merops apiaster*, *Sturnus vulgaris*, *Passer montanus* [7] (Fig. 2). Un relief stâncos similar a fost descoperit în nordul Bulgariei, la Durankulak.

3. Istorie

Săpăturile arheologice, au scos la lumină un aspect istoric deosebit, faptul că în regiunea în care se află în zilele noastre comuna Costinești au fost descoperite obiecte din ceramică (Fig. 3) care datează din secolul II î.Hr. Obiectele descoperite pot fi văzute la Muzeul Național Brukenthal din Sibiu. În ceea ce privește proveniența obiectelor, acestea aparțin atât civilizației elene, majoritar, cât și celei romane.

Din punct de vedere istoric, actuala așezare a Costineștiului se află pe vechiul teritoriu al unei civilizații elene, care purta denumirea de Parthenopolis, menționată de Plinius cel Bătrân și Eutropius [11].

De-a lungul timpului, localitatea a cunoscut diferite denumiri, în funcție de popoarele care au tranzitat și ocupat zona, dintre acestea amintim:

- *Stratoni*, în timpul Imperiului Bizantin;
- *Mangeapunar*, pe vremea Imperiului Otoman, până în 1840;
- *Büffelbrunen*, pe timpul germanilor dobrogeni, în limba română traducându-se „Fântâna bivolilor”, până în 1940;
- *Dezrobirea*, în anul 1960, denumire consacrată datorită tinerilor studenți care frecventau zona pe timpul verii.

Denumirea *Costinești* provine de la numele generalului Emil Costinescu, care a achiziționat de la Vasile Kogălniceanu o suprafață de teren foarte aproape de țărmul Mării Negre, pe care, ulterior, a colonizat-o cu germani [12], de aceea, în perioada 1890-1940, Costineștiul a purtat denumirea de Büffelbrunen. Germanii dobrogeni care au colonizat zona veneau din Basarabia și din Rusia de Sud. Aceștia

au primit peste 7000 de ha de teren arendat pe 20 de ani, cu clauza că, după această perioadă cu chirie fixă, pământul caselor și curților le rămânea în proprietate, chiar dacă contractul de arendare nu se mai prelungea. [12]. Contractele nu au fost însă onorate, din cauza faptului că Emil Costinescu, după aproximativ 10 ani, a lăsat pământurile ginerilor lui, care au impus schimbarea datelor contractuale, motiv pentru care, după primul război mondial, o parte din colonia germană a părăsit satul. Familiile rămase se ocupau de creșterea animalelor și de cultivarea pământului. Infrastructura existentă facilita schimbul de mărfuri. Locul a devenit renumit pentru sursele naturale de hrană, care atrăgeau turiști, punându-se astfel bazele agroturismului (Fig. 4). După anul 1940, coloniștii germani au plecat în număr mare, astfel încât locul acestora a fost luat de români proveniți din din Cadrilater, astăzi zonă importantă a Bulgariei [6].

În anul 1949 a apărut prima tabără pentru copii, care a pus bazele apariției stațiunii Costinești, iar în anul 1959 a devenit „tabăra internațională a studenților” [4]. Printre primii studenți din străinătate s-au aflat cei din Cehia și din Polonia.

În anii '60 are loc o dezvoltare turistică importantă a zonei, deschizându-se cantine, campinguri și unități de cazare. În această perioadă, vasul grecesc „Evanghelia” (Fig. 5), care transporta portocale la Constanța, eșuează în Costinești, epava vasului devenind, în zilele noastre, unul dintre simbolurile Costineștiului.

Avântul economic face ca în anul 1971 să se construiască Teatrul de Vară și Clubul Central. În anul 1976 apare primul hotel, Forum. Dezvoltarea continuă, astfel încât la începutul anilor '90 stațiunea putea găzdui peste 60.000 de tineri [4].

Legea nr. 72 din 3 mai 1999 atestă înființarea „comunei Costinești, județul Constanța, având în componență localitățile Costinești și Schitu”.

Obeliscul, simbol de seamă al Costineștiului, a fost inaugurat în iunie 2006 [4], după ce a fost distrus de inundațiile din 2005. Acesta fusese construit în anul 1969, de arhitectul dobrogean Wilhelm Demeter [14] (Fig. 6). Construcția a reprezentat o atracție turistică și un loc de întâlnire pentru tineri. „În literatura ocultă, Obeliscul are forma unui iadeș, reprezentând un simbol masonic, din cauza formei sale - despicată și excentrică. Inițial, a fost folosită emblema celor trei cercuri concentrice, aceasta jucând un rol foarte important în credințele oculte. Iadeșul simbolizează «Cele Trei Lumi» ale creației divine, fiecare dintre cele trei cercuri având același centru.” [14]

Trebuie subliniat faptul că, după căderea regimului comunist, în stațiune au început să apară numeroase facilități de cazare, dar și de agrement, care se află într-o continuă dezvoltare.

4. Infrastructură

Accesul către Costinești este facilitat de o bună infrastructură, existând multiple variante:

- cale aeriană: Aeroportul „Mihail Kogălniceanu”;
- cale feroviară: stația Costinești-Tabără și stația Costinești-Sat;
- cale rutieră: Drumul Național DN39 (E87), cu mențiunea că până la Constanța, venind dinspre București, se poate merge pe Autostrada Soarelui A2.

5. Petrecerea timpului liber

Costineștiul dispune de o multitudine de posibilități de petrecere a timpului liber, capabile să satisfacă nevoile turiștilor indiferent de vârstă. În acest sens, putem aminti agrementul nautic, care se poate desfășura atât pe lac, cât și în Marea Neagră, de tipul:

- schi nautic;
- plimbări cu hidrobicicleta;
- zbor cu parapanta și cu avion de agrement;
- scufundări.

Plaja din Costinești este renumită pentru nisipul fin (Fig. 7), reprezentând un loc prielnic pentru relaxare.

În ceea ce privește patrimoniul turistic antropoc, stațiunea dispune de următoarele atracții [6]:

- Mănăstirea de măicuțe „Sfânta Elena de la Mare”, situată la 3 km de satul Schitu, datând din anul 1929;
- Obeliscul;
- epava „Evanghelia”;
- Teatrul de Vară.

În zona Obeliscului, vara au loc numeroase concerte și petreceri în aer liber.

Pentru pasionații de scufundări, există posibilitatea explorării lumii subacvatice de lângă epava „Evanghelia”.

În ultima perioadă, Teatrul de Vară și-a pierdut din popularitate, aici având loc spectacole de muzică ușoară și popular [6].

Capitala vacanțelor estivale ale tineretului oferă petreceri în aer liber în sezonul estival, care reprezintă atracția specifică zonei, în cluburi precum Ring, Mega Discoteca Tineretului.

În proximitatea stațiunii sunt numeroase terenuri de sport.

6. Tratament balnear

Factorii naturali de cură specifici stațiunii Costinești sunt următorii:

- psmatoterapia, favorizată de nisipul fin al plajei;
- helioterapie, în special în sezonul estival, când se estimează în medie între 10 și 12 ore de soare pe zi, în atmosferă bogată în aerosoli de Na, Cl, Mg, Br, Ca, I [3];
- peloidoterapie, grație proprietăților lacului din Costinești;
- talazoterapie;
- climatoterapie.

Tradițional, stațiunea este recunoscută pentru beneficiul terapeutic asupra afecțiunilor reumatismale, însă sfera afecțiunilor este mult mai vastă:

- afecțiuni ale sistemului nervos: nevrite, polinevrite; sechele după diferite tipuri de infecții ale sistemului nervos central;
- afecțiuni ginecologice: metrite; cervicite; amenoree, oligomenoree, dismenoree;

- afecțiuni dermatologice: dermatoze scuamoase (psoriazis; keratodermie); sindrom seboreic (dermatită seboreică; acnee polimorfă); alergodermii (eczeme și urticarii);

- afecțiuni psihice: anxietate; depresie.

Copiii cu vârsta de peste 12 luni pot beneficia de cura helio-marină, pentru afecțiuni de tipul [16]:

- rinită alergică;
- rinosinuzită;
- vegetații adenoide;
- hipertrofie amigdaliană;
- infecții respiratorii recurente: bronșiolite; traheobronșite.

Cu toate acestea, cura helio-marină este contraindicată în următoarele situații [16]:

- tuberculoză;
- faza acută a infecțiilor din sfera ORL, bolilor imunologice, bolilor reumatismale, hepatitei, gastritei, colecistitei;
- hipertensiune arterială;
- neoplazii pulmonare.

Salinitatea Mării Negre este în medie 17%, ceea ce permite utilizarea sa în cură externă sub formă de băi, inhalații ori pulverizații, precum și sub formă de irigații [3]. Aceasta determină:

- hiperemie ușoară cutanată;
- în imbibitia pielii și a țesuturilor, o modificare în repartizarea lichidelor interstițiale, cu consecințe benefice asupra funcțiilor celulare [3];
- stimularea țesutului conjunctiv, cu creșterea capacității de rezistență a organismului;
- stimularea funcției gonadelor și a proceselor metabolice.

Contraindicațiile generale ale curei balneare specifice litoralului românesc, incluzând și stațiunea Costinești, sunt următoarele [17]:

- boli infecțioase în stare contagioasă;
- boli cardiovasculare în stadiu avansat;
- procese maligne sau procese benigne cu risc crescut de malignizare;
- fibromatoză uterină sângerândă;
- patologii digestive cu risc de decompensare: boala ulceroasă.

Unitățile hoteliere din zonă cu specific balnear oferă turiștilor (Fig. 8) [18]:

- kinetoterapie;
- gimnastică în bazin;
- băi de nămol de Techirghiol;
- băi galvanice;
- masaj;
- ozonoterapie;
- laseroterapie;
- electroterapie.

Peloidoterapia cu nămoluri sapropielice de liman folosește ca principiu terapeutic faptul că unele substanțe chimice și biostimuline pot trece bariera cutanată și au acțiune favorabilă asupra organismului, de exemplu unele auxine, ce sunt factori de creștere a celulelor tinere, sau foliculina conținută de nămol, ce face să crească foliculinemia [3].

Nămolul terapeutic, negru și alifios, este, în ceea ce privește compoziția globală, puternic hidratat (71 % apă), bogat în substanțe minerale (23%) și substanță organică (6%). În nămolul uscat, raportul dintre substanța minerală și cea organică este de 3,8 la 1. [17]

Toate serviciile oferite în scop terapeutic sunt adaptate turiștilor, în funcție de necesități, de către cadre medicale specializate.

7. Concluzii

Stațiunea Costinești rămâne un simbol în rândul tinerilor, datorită numeroaselor facilități de agrement. În contrast, având în vedere calitatea factorilor de cură balneară, aceasta reprezintă o destinație cu specific balnear, cunoscută îndeosebi pentru beneficiile asupra afecțiunilor reumatismale.

Istoria îndelungată a locului aduce Costineștiului valoare antropologică, dar și arheologică.

În concluzie, stațiunea Costinești prezintă un veritabil potențial, care nu a fost exploatat corespunzător până în prezent, destinația putând deveni un adevărat sanctuar terapeutic, în următoarele condiții:

- atragerea fondurilor și a investitorilor pentru crearea unor complexe terapeutice moderne;
- promovarea laturii balneare a zonei, atât la nivel național, cât și internațional;
- angajarea statului pentru pregătirea cadrelor medicale specializate.



Fig. 1. Lacul de la Costinești
Sursa: [5]



Fig. 3. Obiecte din ceramică descoperite în Costinești
Sursa: [2]



Fig. 2. Specii caracteristice reliefului stâncos argilos
Sursa: [8][9][10]



Fig. 4. Aspect local din Costinești, 1890-1940
Sursa: [13]



Fig. 5. Epava „Evanghelia” din Costinești
Sursa: Arhivă personală



Fig. 7. Plaja din Costinești
Sursa: [15]



Fig. 8. Practică balneară în Complexul Balnear „Sf. Elena de la Mare”, Costinești
Sursa: [18]



Fig. 6. Obeliscul din Costinești
Sursa: Arhivă personală

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Soveja – istorie și practică balneară / Soveja: History and Balneotherapy

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ABSTRACT

This paper tries to highlight the most important historical and medical aspects, which have marked the existence of Soveja resort over time. Starting from a simple Daco-Roman settlement, Soveja represents a symbol of the Romanian nation, considering the numerous transitions of the peoples in this area. Long-established locality, Soveja was on the Mărăști-Mărășești-Oituz front line in World War I. After 1870, people began to be attracted to the therapeutic benefits of the area, especially for respiratory diseases. In the communist era, Soveja enjoyed a real economic boom, building hotels and even a children's camp. Unfortunately, after 1990, the hotel units were closed and the therapeutic options were eliminated.

1. Introducere

Stațiunea Soveja, cândva considerată „perlă a Vrancei”, datorită renumelui internațional de „cea mai ozonată zonă din Europa” [1], a fost uitată în zilele noastre. Simion Mehedinți subliniază importanța istorică a locului:

Soveja – duios și adânc cuvânt!

Întorceți-vă, oriunde veți fi, cu ochii spre acest pământ, pe care de mai bine de două mii de ani au trăit, au muncit, au luptat și au murit părinții noștri. [2]

Metafora mioritică „pe-un picior de plai / pe-o gură de rai” surprinde frumusețea locului, unde natura este reprezentată de „brazi și pălținași [...] munții mari”, care asigură specificitatea (Fig. 1).

2. Clima și geografia stațiunii

Comuna Soveja se află în județul Vrancea, în zona Subcarpaților de Curbură, reprezentând cel mai vestic punct al Vrancei. Aceasta este formată din satele Dragosloveni și Rucăreni, fiind singura localitate din România „care nu are un sat component cu numele Soveja” [1]. Relieful este colinar (Fig. 2): dealurile Moșului, Dogăriei, Runcul, Cocoșilă etc., străbătut de numeroase izvoare și râuri de munte:

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Șușița, Dumicuș, Cârligata etc., care se varsă în Siret. Altitudinea medie este de aproximativ 700 m, iar precipitațiile anuale ajung la 650 mm/mp [2]. Vânturile specifice Vrancei, de tipul Crivățului, Austrului, sunt absente, însă toamna și primăvara este prezent un vânt local, puternic. Acest vânt are un istoric dramatic, din cauza faptului că, în anul 1943, a favorizat extinderea unui incendiu, care s-a soldat cu numeroase victime.

Bioclimatul Sovejei este de depresiune, cu ierni reci și veri răcoroase, temperatura medie anuală nedepășind 8°C.

Flora stațiunii este reprezentată în special de pădurile de conifere, alături de codrii de foioase. În acest sens, una dintre atracțiile turistice este prezența arborilor de zadă, care sunt renumiți ca singurul conifer din România ale cărui ace cad toamna.

Fauna este specifică zonelor de munte, cuprinzând urși, mistreți, cerbi etc.

Localitatea este sediul uneia dintre cele mai pitorești așezări din județul Vrancea. Scriitorul Simion Mehedinți afirma:

Satul Soveja este așezat tocmai în creierii munților. Când ajungi în culmea Răchitașului, îl vezi tot, dintr-odată, ca un cuib în mijlocul codrului de brazi. Mai departe, până la hotare, nu se află țipenie de om, doar cerbi prin poiene, urși prin tihării și vulturi pe seninul cerului. [5]

3. Istorie

Situată la granița Moldovei, Ardealului și Țării Românești, Soveja are o istorie îndelungată. Stațiunea a existat ca așezare omenească încă din perioada daco-romană, dovadă fiind piesele expuse la Muzeul Satului local. Literatura de specialitate menționează chiar descoperirea unor rămășițe care datează din perioada neoliticului târziu, „cultura Cucuteni” [2].

Denumirile locale sunt de origine daco-romano-slavă, ținând cont de contextul istoric care a determinat poporul slav să migreze, atestând vechimea și continuitatea populației.

Etimologia cuvântului *Soveja* este una controversată, deoarece unii autori consideră că provine din limba sârbă, „de la Sova, care înseamnă noapte și bufniță, deci așezare cu păduri întunecoase” [2], în timp ce alți autori afirmă originea maghiară a locului, „însemnând loc cu ape sărate, *so-viz*, *so* = sărat și *viz* = apă” [2]. Pentru originea maghiară a cuvântului pledează și numele localității vecine, Vizantea, care atestă venirea păstorilor ardeleni, cu ocazia transhumanței, dincolo de Carpați. De asemenea, armatele maghiare care au luptat pe acest teritoriu cu tătarii, în secolele XII-XV, sunt aduse aminte de Nicolae Iorga: „Unele nume ungurești înseamnă încercarea nereușită a unei permanențe maghiare” [2].

Denumirea arhaică *Sohoveja* apare pentru prima dată într-un document din anul 1616, semnat de Radu, voievodul Moldovei.

Profesorul Grigore Găneț, arhivist la Arhivele Naționale Vrancea, afirmă faptul că *Sohoveja* este de origine slavă, *soho* = gol, sec și *veja* = turn de apărare [2],

astfel încât s-ar putea traduce drept „Turnul gol sau Turnul părăsit” [2].

După anul 1645, numeroase grupuri de localnici din Rucăr și Dragoslavele, din ținutul Muscelului, județul Argeș, au fugit de șerbie și s-au adăpostit în Soveja. Astfel au luat naștere satele Rucăreni, format din cei din Rucăr, respectiv Dragosloveni, format din cei din Dragoslavele.

O dată cu trecerea anilor, au existat numeroase mișcări ale populației dintre Transilvania, Muntenia și Moldova, care stau la baza unității naționale a românilor.

În primul război mondial, Soveja a fost un adevărat câmp de luptă, dovadă, astăzi, Mausoleul Eroilor, monument memorial (Fig. 3, 4).

Povestea stațiunii Soveja a început în jurul anului 1870, atunci când unui negustor din Focșani i s-a recomandat efectuarea unei cure de aer pentru vindecarea unei afecțiuni pulmonare. Treptat, terapia cu ozon a câștigat popularitate, atrăgând pe timpul verii numeroși turiști, care erau găzduiți de săteni. În timpul perioadei comuniste, zona a beneficiat de un adevărat avânt economic, în zonă construindu-se hoteluri (Fig. 5), care au făcut din Soveja o adevărată stațiune montană. Hotelurile atrăgeau atât minerii, pentru cure balneoclimaterice, cât și numeroși sportivi în cantonamente. Unul dintre cele mai faimoase hoteluri din Soveja era Zboina, care oferea turiștilor tratamente balneoclimaterice prin izvoarele de apă minerală prezente în stațiune.

Frumusețea locului a determinat și construirea unei tabere pentru elevi. În zilele noastre, hotelurile au fost închise, iar stațiunea a suferit un declin economic major. Majoritatea tinerilor au părăsit localitatea natală, iar astăzi populația este formată din vârstnici.

Frumusețea de altădată a Sovejei a apus, însă politicienii fac eforturi pentru atragerea fondurilor necesare renașterii „perlei Vrancei”.

4. Infrastructură

Stațiunea Soveja se află la 81 km de reședința județului Vrancea, Focșani.

Pe cale rutieră, dinspre București se poate ajunge prin DN2L, cu abatere de pe DN2 în apropiere de localitatea Mărășești, iar dinspre Brașov, prin DN11, apoi DN2D de la Târgu Secuiesc, iar în final DN2L de la Lepșa [8].

Pe cale feroviară nu există legătură directă, posibilitățile incluzând fie stația Mărășești, fie stația Focșani, iar apoi continuarea drumului cu mijloace auto.

5. Petrecerea timpului liber

Patrimoniul turistic antropic al stațiunii Soveja cuprinde următoarele:

- Mausoleul Eroilor (Fig. 6), în memoria eroilor primului război mondial, întrucât Soveja era situată pe frontul Mărăști-Mărășești-Oituz;
- Muzeul Militar, aflat lângă Mausoleul Eroilor;
- Cimitirul German;
- Mănăstirea lui Matei Basarab, construită în anul 1645 (Fig. 8);
- Schitul Soveja;
- Mormântul lui Simion Mehedinți, cel care a fost întemeietorul școlii românești

de geografie [9].

Turiștii își pot petrece timpul liber făcând plimbări prin natură și bucurându-se de spectacolul naturii (Fig. 7).

6. Tratament balnear

Factori naturali de cură:

- apă minerală sulfuroasă, clorurată, sodică;
- bioclimat puternic ozonat.

În județul Vrancea, existența apelor minerale a fost semnalată în urmă cu mult timp, dovadă fiind însemnarea lui Ion Ionescu de la Brad că pe Putna în sus, sub Tisaru cel Mic, precum și în alte locuri, se află multe ape minerale [12]. În anul 1974 s-a confirmat prezența, în împrejurimile Sovejei, a apelor sulfuroase, bicarbonate și cloro-sodice [2]. O parte dintre acestea sunt iodurate-bromurate, precum izvorul Puturoasa.

Indicații de tratament:

- surmenaj fizic și intelectual;
- nevroze;
- reumatism;
- dermatoze;
- tromboflebite;
- afecțiuni ginecologice;
- afecțiuni respiratorii: silicoză; fibroză pulmonară;
- afecțiuni ale aparatului locomotor.

Se pot efectua proceduri de tipul:

- hidroterapie;
- masoterapie;
- electroterapie;
- băi cu ape termale.

7. Concluzii

Stațiunea Soveja, cândva numită „perla Vrancei”, a fost abandonată după era comunistă și s-a degradat marcat. Capitalul terapeutic al acesteia nu poate fi exploatat din cauza lipsei investițiilor pentru dezvoltarea zonei.

Edilii locali au demarat proiecte de readucere la viață a stațiunii.



Fig. 1. Soveja
Sursa: Arhivă personală



Fig. 2. Relieful colinar din Soveja
Sursa: [4]



Fig. 3. Mausoleul Eroilor din Soveja în timpul construcției
Sursa: [2]



Fig. 4. Mausoleul Eroilor din Soveja
Sursa: [6]



Fig. 5. Hotelul Zboina, Soveja
Sursa: [7]



Fig. 6. Mausoleul Eroilor, Soveja
Sursa: [10]



Fig. 7. Cadrul natural din Soveja
Sursa: Arhivă personală



Fig. 8. Mănăstirea lui Matei Basarab, Soveja
Sursa: [11]

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