

## SUSTAINABLE CAPITALIZATION OF TOURIST POTENTIAL FROM THE NORTH-EAST REGION

ADAMOV TABITA CORNELIA<sup>1</sup>, IANCU TIBERIU\*<sup>1</sup>, IOAN BRAD<sup>1</sup>, PÎRVULESCU LUMINIȚA<sup>1</sup>, PEȚ ELENA<sup>1</sup>, POPESCU GABRIELA<sup>1</sup>, CIOLAC RAMONA<sup>1</sup>, VĂRAN NARCIS<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine "King Michael I of Romania", Faculty of Farm Management, Timisoara, Romania*

<sup>2</sup> *Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine "King Michael I of Romania", Faculty of Animal Science and Biotechnologies, Timișoara, Romania*

\*Corresponding author's e-mail: iancutiberiu10@gmail.com

**Abstract:** *The valences of the rural environment are a strong point with profound connotations, due to the environment in which the current economic and social life, at national and international level, is going on. At present, agrotourism is one of the most dynamic forms of tourism practiced in most European countries, but also in our country, stimulating economic development by capitalizing the local rural resources. This form of tourism offers to local residents the opportunity to supplement their income by capitalizing the traditional household products and compensates the lack of jobs from rural area, contributing also to the development of human resources.*

**Key words:** *rural areas, rural tourism, agrotourism*

### INTRODUCTION

Tourism integrated in rural areas and localities is an alternative to solving at the same time problems concerning the village on the one hand and the city on the other. Through rural tourism it can be solve problems of spatial planning policy, city-village balance, thus creating a social change that gives the possibility for the city population to regain its roots, cultural values, physical relaxation, peace and quiet, lost or forgotten. [3,8]

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

For creating this paper was consulted a comprehensive bibliography in the field, both specialized books, reports, strategic development plans of the region as well as national statistics. The value of the paper is given by the analysis and statistical interpretation of the data from the basis of the economic indicators that characterize the tourist activity of the studied area.

### RESEARCH RESULTS

Rural tourism is based on the attributes of rural area and represents a convergence of the socio-economic interests existing on local plan; the factors of influence on this type of tourism can be structured as bio-psycho-social factors, Figure 1:



**Figure 1. Factors that influence rural tourism**

In Romania agrotourism represents one of the main forms of tourism with the highest potential, and its development represents a means of sustainable development for the rural environment, both economically and socially and culturally. [4,9]

The North-East Region is one of the main tourist areas of Romania, due to its favorable relief conditions, of the beauty of the landscapes, of the purity of the air, the waters, the mountain areas, the traditions and folk customs preserved until our day, the specificity of the Moldovan gastronomy and not least of the well-known hospitality of locals. [1]

Although more and more locals from the tourist areas of the North-East region have understood to capitalize the existing resources from this area and contribute to the development of the accommodation infrastructure by transforming their own homes into tourist boarding houses or by building new boarding houses, the real potential of this area is not intensely capitalized. Most often the main problems are related to the quality and standards of the provided tourist services, the involvement of the hosts in agrotourist activities, the lack of collaboration between the local authorities and the managers of border houses, but of course the infrastructure and sources of financing, as in many other areas of the country, remain the most acute of the problems. [2,8]

Benefiting from a rich historical, cultural and spiritual tradition, the region harmoniously blends the traditional with modern and past with the present, and its potential can be used to develop infrastructure, rural areas, tourism and human resources.

The specific rural tourism of the North-East Region is characterized by the following aspects:



**Figure 2. The characteristics of rural tourism in the North-East Region**

A detailed analysis of the accommodation facilities from Bacau can highlight the level of tourism development and the degree of capitalization of the potential, the directions in which action should be taken in order to achieve a close approximation by the situation of the European countries and a proper capitalization of the natural and anthropic attractions. [1,4]

The distribution of agrotourist guesthouses, by the counties of the region, indicates that most of them, 41.43%, are located on the territory of Neamt County.

In the last period at national level there is a preference of both Romanian and foreign tourists for accommodation in tourist and agrotourist guesthouses.

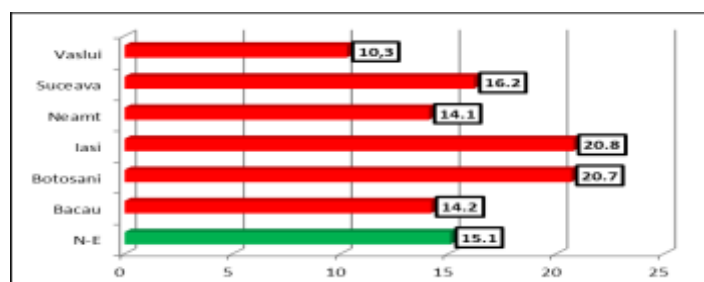
The agrotourist guesthouses are the most suitable form of the hospitality industry for the Moldavian lands, although often in the "guesthouse" system, we still find some rudimentary forms. [2,6]

The importance of tourist guesthouses has increased as, more and more tourists have oriented towards lower-priced hospitality units, located in rural areas or near towns.

Significant increases of accommodation capacity in operation are recorded for agrotourist guesthouses. At regional level, increases are almost 10 times (9.26 times).

The analysis of the number of tourists arriving in the agrotourist guesthouses, on the Counties of the region, shows increases in all Counties, with the exception of Botosani County where there is a decrease of 52.43%. In Bacau County, the number of tourists' arrivals increased by 6,090 (7.05 times). As far as the Romanian tourists are concerned, the

growth is 7.23 times in 2015 compared to 2000 and 2.37 times in the case of foreign tourists. [1,5]

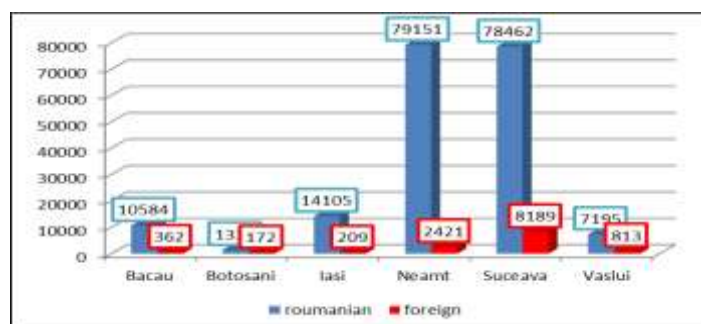


**Figure 3. Index of net use of accommodation capacity in agritourist guesthouses, Region N-E, 2015 [10]**

In the period 2000-2015, the North-East Region is considered to be one of the main tourist regions of Romania, statement supported by the increase of the number of tourists accommodated here over 15 times. Also, the growing number of foreign tourists, which over the 2000-2015 period has increase with 14.18%, should be appreciated.

Another important indicator of tourist demand is the number of overnight stays. In the year 2015, the value of this indicator, at the level of the region, was 202,993 thousand tourist days, representing 18.77% from the total number of overnight stays registered at national level. [5,7]

On the entire region, over the period 2000-2015, are recorded increases in overnight stays in agrotourist guesthouses. The upward trend is maintained in all counties of the North-East Region. It is also worth mentioning the increase in the number of overnight stays of foreign tourists who visited the region.



**Figure 4. The situation of overnight stays, from agrotourist guesthouses, by categories of tourist, North East Region, 2015, [10]**

The Neamt and Suceava Counties register 82.59% from the total number of overnight stays at the level of the North-East region in 2015.



**Figure 6. The average length of stay, in agrotourist guesthouses, for Romanian tourists, by mounts, 2015, [10]**

The tourism activity analysis, at the level of the North-East Region, in the year 2015, by mounts, indicates a concentration of tourist activity, for foreign tourists during the summer months (June, July and August) and for Romanian tourists during the summer period (May, June, July, August) and winter (December). February is the month with the lowest level of tourist activity in this region.

### CONCLUSSIONS

- The development of rural tourism, and especially of agrotourism, has great potential for development, because the rural areas of the region have, besides a picturesque natural landscape, unpolluted and with many recreational options also a valuable cultural and historical potential.
- Even if the modernization of the private accommodation capacities was achieved in excess of 90%, the capitalization of the tourist potential areas, and of the bases of treatment through adequate promotional activity as well as the services offered to the tourists were at a low level, which led to the existence of both a lower average length of stay in other regions and an index of low use of accommodation capacity.
- Through its cultural, historical, ethnographic, natural and socio-economic values, the Moldavian village can become a tourist product of great originality and brand for tourism from the North-East Region.

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