

MARAMURES RURAL AREA-DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

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Abstract: Maramures is a corner of Europe, very little known, with a strong concentration of cultural values, which favor the movement of creators and of cultural goods and services. The main purpose of this paper is to study and bring in front some aspect about rural area, by: highlighting the rural area of Maramures, in terms of predominant resources, analysis and highlighting of strengths and key issues, identifying and proposal of some main directions of action.

Key words: rural area, Maramures, analysis

INTRODUCTION

Maramures County is located in the North West part of Romania (figure 1), has an area of 630,436 ha of which 449,009 ha mountain area representing 71% from the county's area according to the delimitation made by the Order of the Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development no. 355/2007. The mountainous area belonging to the Eastern Carpathians represents 43%, the hilly area (hills, plateaus and foothills) about 30%, and the low area (depressions, meadows and terraces) the remaining 27% of the county area.

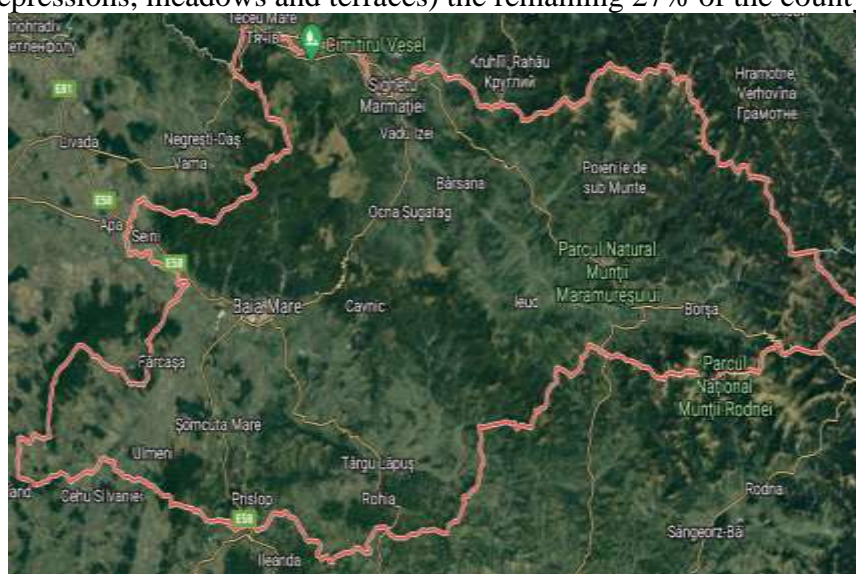


Figure 1. Geographical area Maramures

Source: www.googlemaps.ro

Maramures is a region with a strong concentration of cultural values, in a diverse register as an identity expression and as a structure of the offer.

The region enjoys an advantageous geographical position for transregional flows likely to stimulate the cultural market and inter - community dialogue, as well as extensive transport and communication networks, which favor the movement of creators and of cultural goods and services.

The multiethnic structure of the population in the region generates complex lifestyles that stimulate cultural consumption, intercultural communication and the diversity of cultural goods and services and a greater availability to participate in cultural life [6, 11].

Pietrosu Rodnei Nature Reserve, Izvorul Albastru al Izei spring, Izvorul Izei Cave - 2700 m long, 200 m deep, with active river, Ulita de Piatra, the waterfalls on the Buhaescu valley, Cascada Cailor, considered being the highest in Romania. There is also Piatra Rea - with an impressive cliff, dozens of caves and oaks, and a rare flora full of orchid species and corner flowers, the viewpoints Pietrosu, Puzdrele, Gargalau, Piatra Alba rocks, Piatra Buhaiului, Muncelu Raios, and so on.

Maramures County offers a number of marked trails for tourist routes in the mountains that dominate the Maramures area. From the main ridge there are other marked paths, towards the southern and eastern sectors of the massif. Apart from these routes, the Rodna Mountains are crossed by a lot of unmarked paths, not recommended for connoisseurs.

The hydrographic network is represented by the main rivers: Tisa, Viseu, Iza, Lapus and Somes. Two river systems - the Tisza and the Somes - cross the land. To the north, the Tisza drains the rivers that flow down the valley, surrounding the mountains and meandering near the Maramures basin: Visaul, with its main tributaries Ruscova and Vaser, and Iza, with its main tributaries Mara and Cosau. Sapanta is another tributary of the Tisa, located on the western border of Maramures, but it is worth mentioning for its two waterfalls more than 12 meters high.



Romania and therefore the "Land of Maramures" was until recently a country of peasants. "Country" comes from the Latin terra, and the land is our holy land, so the peasants are the people of the land. Archeology and history attest to Maramures agro-pastoral economies, from which developed crafts and peasant industries that satisfied, in terms of tools, the needs of working the land and processing products. Along with agriculture and animal husbandry, the main occupations of the inhabitants of the area over the centuries have been other occupations and crafts, either practiced by the whole population or by the population of certain villages or groups of people. We can say that, until the pre-modern period, the economy of the villages had an autarchic character that imposed their development.

The land of Maramures, this area so beautiful in landscape, so rich in ethnographic and folkloric traditions, the land that gave the first lords of Moldova and the wooden churches, had to live in poverty and isolation over the centuries. Today's road network is modernized; the roads to Maramures are paved, being accessible for cars. The roads generally follow the main and secondary valleys on which the human settlements are arranged with all their beauty and picturesqueness.

The Maramures industry is dominated by the manufacturing industry in proportion of 94.6%, of which the wood and furniture industry owns over 35%, followed by metallurgy, with 9.5%, and the food, clothing, electricity, thermal, gas and hot water. On the other hand, the extractive industry still occupies only 3.7% of the county's industry. Out of 2,000 known minerals in the world, 150 are found in the Maramures basin, 15 being identified for the first time here.

Today, in the field of rural development, [12, 13, 14, 15] it is considered as a strategic priority to promote a set of measures for the renewal of the Maramures village, in the conditions of preserving and capitalizing on its unique traditions and culture. Starting from the current problems of agriculture and rural areas, and taking into account the

interdependence between them, the county strategy is based on the application of a multifunctional model of agricultural and rural development. The basic principle in applying this model is to promote the development of agricultural functions of rural areas accompanied by the promotion of equal non-agricultural functions of these areas. This model is compatible with the economic and social policy of the European Union, whose main objective is to reduce development disparities between EU regions and, implicitly, to reduce development gaps between rural and urban areas. The county development strategy is one in development poles that will ensure the transformation of the centers of influence into engines of polycentric development. By approaching in this way it is considered that the rural environment can benefit from the effects of development through investments in road infrastructure, construction and expansion of technical and municipal networks - water, sewerage, and methane gas. The objectives of the county strategy for agriculture and rural development are based on the new orientation of the European rural development policy. Thus, the strategic areas aim at [1, 2, 3]:

- Improving the quality of life in rural areas by diversifying the rural economy
- Sustainable economic development of farms and agricultural holdings
- Increasing the competitiveness of the agricultural and forestry sectors and adapting the offer to the market requirements.

2. Analysis and highlighting of strengths and key issues

The beneficial elements that constitute advantages for the studied area can be summarized as follows:

- Enormous tourist potential of the region due to both the geographical position and the cultural heritage of the cross-border region of Maramures.
- Particularly rich cultural traditions, valued by events with international resonance and which constitute the premise of intercultural dialogue and transnational relations (Winter Festival of Customs and Habits "Marmatia", Maramures County, national camp of wooden icons Rohia, Maramures County etc.).
 - Development of spa tourism due to salt mines in the region.
 - The population in the targeted areas is mostly of Romanian nationality, which favors mutual understanding and the desire to establish common goals
 - Extremely rich and internationally recognized real estate cultural heritage, representative for all historical periods (wooden churches in Maramures, of which 8 are inscribed in the UNESCO World Heritage List, "Merry Cemetery" in Sapanta, Maramures County).
 - Strong cores for preserving the cultural traditions of minorities and the majority population (architecture, woodworking, fabrics, traditional painting and others).
 - Public cultural institutions that polarize the main values and events in the region, distinguishing themselves by modernity in the construction of the cultural act and in communication with users (Maramures Museum from Sighetu Marmatiei, Art Museum from Baia Mare).
 - Important cores of contemporary creators, including from the minority, in the field of literature, plastic arts, musical creation, theater, performing arts.
 - The existence of a significant number of cultural foundations and associations, which actively and sustainably participate in the diversification of the offer and which stimulate access to and participation in cultural life.
 - Systematic development of cultural industries, such as audiovisual services and the written press, the book industry, the phonogram industry, especially in certain areas of the region (Maramures).

- Revitalization of crafts, through initiatives for the development of SMEs profiled on "peasant" industries (fabrics, ceramics, wood processing, etc.).
- Wide access of minorities to cultural products and services in their own language and of the other minorities they live with.
- Effective partnerships of cultural actors with economic agents in the hospitality and cultural tourism industry for the enhancement of the movable and immovable cultural heritage, as well as of the popular traditions.

It is very important to highlight the main problems existing in the studied area, knowing them facilitating their solution.

- Aged infrastructure in most localities, which needs urgent repairs and consolidations, in order not to endanger the owned heritage and not to prejudice the implementation of the activity programs of public cultural institutions.
 - Insufficiently developed cross-border and transport infrastructure.
 - Insufficient accommodation for tourists.
 - Visible discrepancies in terms of cultural spaces and facilities between urban localities and rural settlements.
 - Uneven level of endowment and use of new communication services, which negatively affects institutional performance and user relations.
- Poor intersectorial communication, which is felt negatively in the absence of strategies for urban rehabilitation of cultural institutions, between cultural industries and support structures for SMEs, etc.
 - Low attractiveness of target areas for investors.
 - Aging population.
 - Unfavorable perception of investors regarding the socio-economic potential of the region and investment opportunities in the area.
- Competition in the socio-economic field of other areas in Romania.

3. Main directions of action

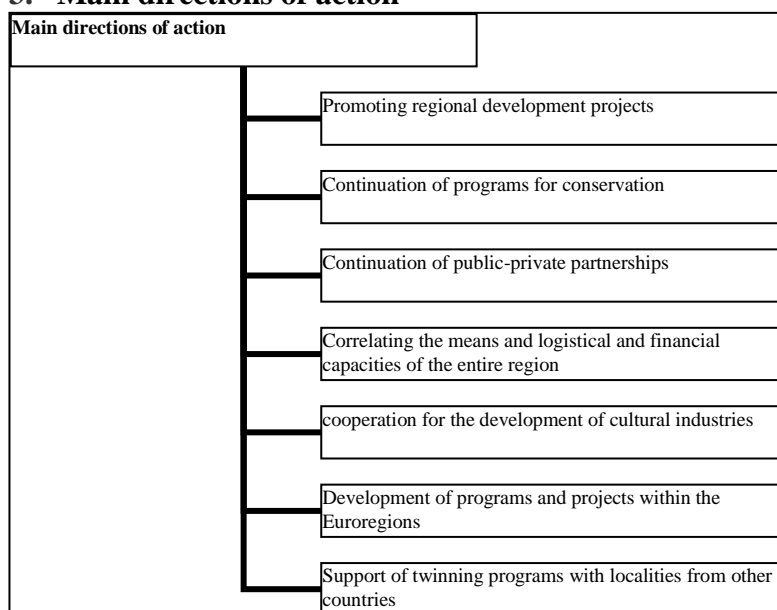


Figure 3. Directions of action

Based on the previous highlighting of the main positive aspects that can be capitalized and the negative aspects that need to be removed, it is necessary to establish

priority action objectives, achieving them being a necessary goal for the future development of the area:

- Promoting regional development projects that include, as an important component, the cultural offer.
- Continuation of programs for conservation, restoration and enhancement of the movable and immovable cultural heritage, by allocating more important local budgetary resources.
- Continuation of public-private partnerships for the rehabilitation and revitalization of historical monuments, as well as for training in traditional and specific trades in the field of restoration and conservation.
- Supporting contemporary creation by correlating the means and logistical and financial capacities of the entire region, using all available levers (meaning acquisitions of works of art and public monuments from local budgets, granting scholarships and residencies for creators, organizing creative camps for literature, visual arts, musical creation, performing arts, folk creation and traditional crafts).
- Expanding intersectoral cooperation for the development of cultural industries and stimulating the creative potential of the region.
- Development of the tourist network for the extension of the access to the historical monuments and to the areas with high density of traditions, crafts and nuclei of creators.
- Development of programs and projects within the Euroregions to facilitate the mobility of creators and the circulation of works.
- Continuation and support of twinning programs with localities from other countries, which provide a favorable context for cultural exchanges, for the circulation of creators and their works, for stimulating creators and for direct contact with other models of cultural life (exhibitions of exhibitions fine and photographic art, concerts, theatrical and dance performances, folk ensembles, new forms of artistic expression, experiments, library activity, lifelong learning programs) [4].

CONCLUSIONS

Rural area, like any other economic space, can undergo growth and development processes. In everyday speech, especially of non-specialists, the notion of growth is often confused with that of development. There is no need to overlap these two notions, as they differ fundamentally, in a similar way to that of biology. Growth means the extension of all economic activity in a territory; it is measurable by the increasing number of jobs, by increasing the income of the population. The programs that generate these increases focus on the immediate creation of jobs, generally with state support. As a result, even if it is based on a privileged field and type of action, local development cannot be the subject of an isolated policy. In other words, local interventions in favor of development can only be defined in a broad sense, encompassing interventions that traditionally target different areas:

- Thus, local development can be at the same time economic, social and cultural.
- It considers territories that may or may not correspond to those resulting from the administrative division.
- It does not constitute the prerogative of small territorial communities, being able to manifest at the same time both at the level of a county and of a region between which there is a certain cohesion.
- In its realization it is necessary to intervene all the agents of economic and social life, which raises the question of how to associate them.

Starting from the above, a spatial development policy is recommended, favoring the sustainable development of traditional activities, with a balance between human activities and ecological requirements, having as objectives [5, 7, 8, 9, 10]:

- preserving the populations in the area and combating the exodus of the youth;
- preserving the identity and disseminating cultural values;
- creation or modernization of infrastructures, development of public services, necessary to improve the quality of life;
- promoting energy resources for the priority benefit of rural communities;
- preservation of agricultural lands, natural meadows, maintenance and modernization of agricultural activities - in specific forms of agriculture in the rural area;
- preservation of existing industries and crafts, establishment of activities based on new technologies;
- development of the tertiary sector, especially of tourism;
- development of a policy of financial and economic aid and fiscal incentives in rural areas - to remunerate the ecological services provided by the rural population, to facilitate the establishment of young families in rural areas, with involvement especially in agriculture, tourism, crafts, public services;
- decisions to be taken by the authorities closest to the citizens, respecting the principle of subsidiarity.

Agriculture will remain the "engine" of mountain life and there is no need to separate traditions and in the new CAP reform financial compensation and assistance for high quality products and appropriate legislation are required to be included, amplified.

The basic requirement is that of good management, careful "gardening" through the selective capitalization of the traditional experience, through modernization adapted to the geo-climatic specificity at the level of households and through development at the level of rural communities Maramures.

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