

## TOURISM AND RURAL TOURISM-ASPECTS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

DOBRA CĂLIN\*<sup>1</sup>, CSOSZ CRISTIAN<sup>1</sup>, ORODAN ELENA<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>"Aurel Vlaicu" University, Arad, Romania

<sup>2</sup> Banat's University of Agricultural Sciences and Veterinary Medicine "King Michael I of Romania" from Timisoara, Faculty of Management and Rural Tourism

\*Corresponding author's e-mail: calindobra06@yahoo.com

*Abstract.* Statistics show that tourism in rural areas, year after year, has gained more and more followers. The explanation of this evolution: could be found in: the influence of ecological ideas, the desire to evade from the classic tourist structures, the search for a better quality/price ratio. Its appearance and development involved several stages, but also a series of motivating aspects that supported the development of this form of tourism at the national level, aspects that we follow during this paper.

**Key words:** rural tourism, trends, awareness, development

### INTRODUCTION

The European Commission defines rural tourism as being "tourism activity carried out in rural areas, consisting of an integrated offer of relaxation, aimed at a demand whose motivation is the contact with the local environment and interrelationship with local society". In view of all these considerations, Bernard Lane considers rural tourism in its pure form as tourism: [3,11,12,13,16]

1. Located in rural areas;
2. Rural from a functional point of view, meaning built on the special characteristics of small rural enterprises, spatial openness, contact with nature, tradition, practices and traditional society;
3. Rural in terms of size and therefore small in size;
4. Traditional in character, working in close connection with local families;
5. Complex reference of the environment, economy, rural history. Elements underlying this definition are:

According to specialists, the main reasons for the emergence of rural tourism are:

1. Rural tourism is a particular complex form of tourism, which corresponds to the need of citizens to find their roots. The tourist richness of the rural environment, its landscapes and the effort made by the whole sector to offer accommodation conditions, quality and various animations, together with the hospitality of the peasants, make from the natural environment an attractive destination.

2. The danger of desertification of some national areas, which face problems such as: aging population, disappearance of skilled labor, declining number of farmers, economic decline. If these problems continue, the rural landscape will lose its values, while these regions are most appreciated by tourists.

3. The existence of an agriculture in difficulty. This particular field is going through a period of extremely restrictive adaptation. The gains in productivity and efficiency brought by modern techniques have led to an overproduction in most of the classical activities. The surpluses had to be sold, as world prices were very low. In this context, the diversification of productions is required and there are many who engage in new activities, rural tourism being one of them.

4. The new logic of competition. Unlike classical agriculture, in which the capitalization of production was ensured, commercial activities related to tourism are directly subject to the demand-supply relationship. The competition is felt in this field, for a real success it is necessary to study the potential demand. Only a serious study of the

clientele and of the evolution of the demand with the help of the techniques of measurement and analysis allows preserving the quality and the competitiveness.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

The authors of the paper have as main purpose some aspects about tourism and its future development. In order to fulfill the main purpose we will discuss about: Awareness of the need of tourism and rural tourism; Issues necessary to be corrected in order to develop tourism; The tourist market trends; Essential condition for the development of the rural tourism.

The methods of research used in this paper refers to: collection the main data, analysis of this information, and then presentations of the main directions and conclusions.

### RESEARCH RESULTS

In an increasingly urbanized society, the appeal to the rural environment and the rural lifestyle is becoming stronger. The inhabitants of the cities return to their places of origin and to the simple way of life of the "old days". These are some of the motivations that have led to an increase in rural tourism both in Romania and in many other parts of the globe. These categories of tourists cover a wide range of interests, from:

- the ecotourist who is interested in involvement in environmental protection and conservation;
- the agrotourist, interested in experiencing the lifestyle of rural households;
- the active tourist who is attracted to outdoor activities;
- to the more general interests of the geotourist who appreciates the beauty of landscapes, culture and rural traditions.

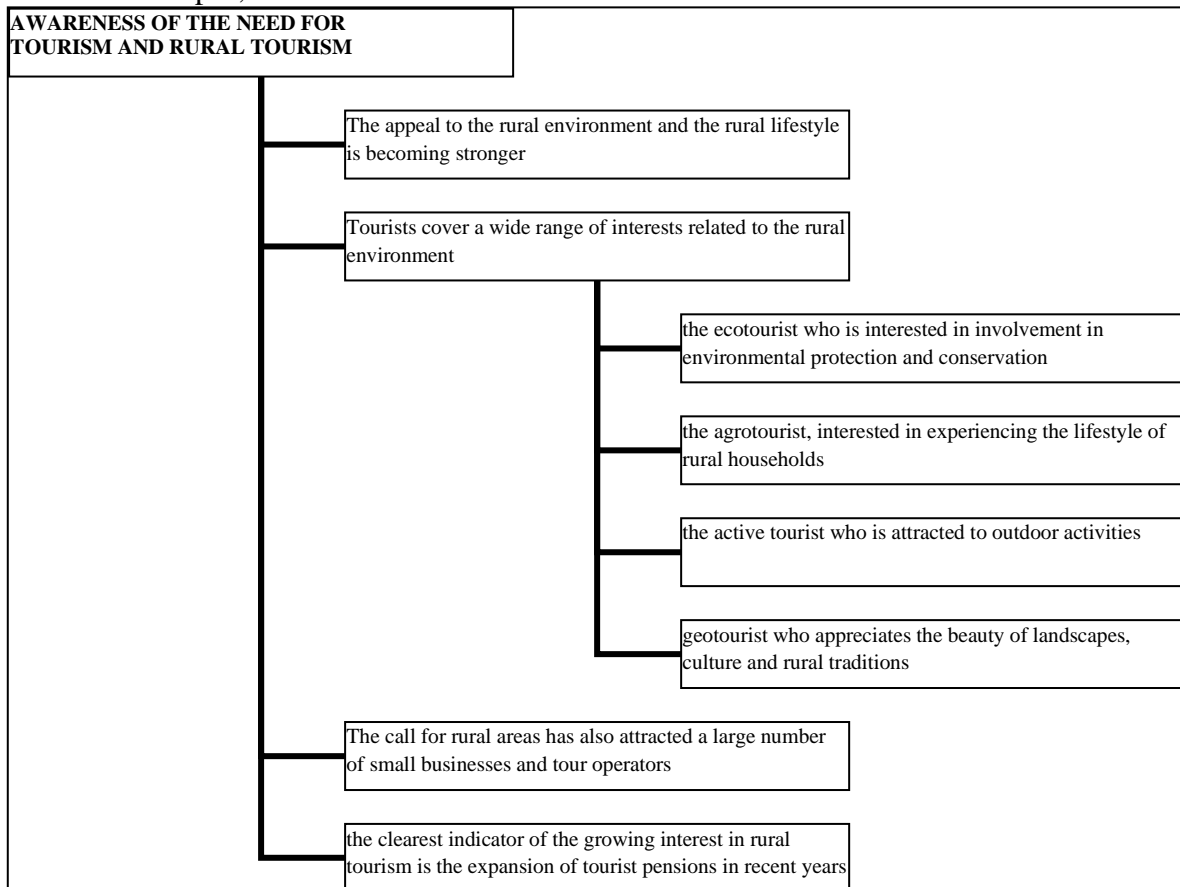


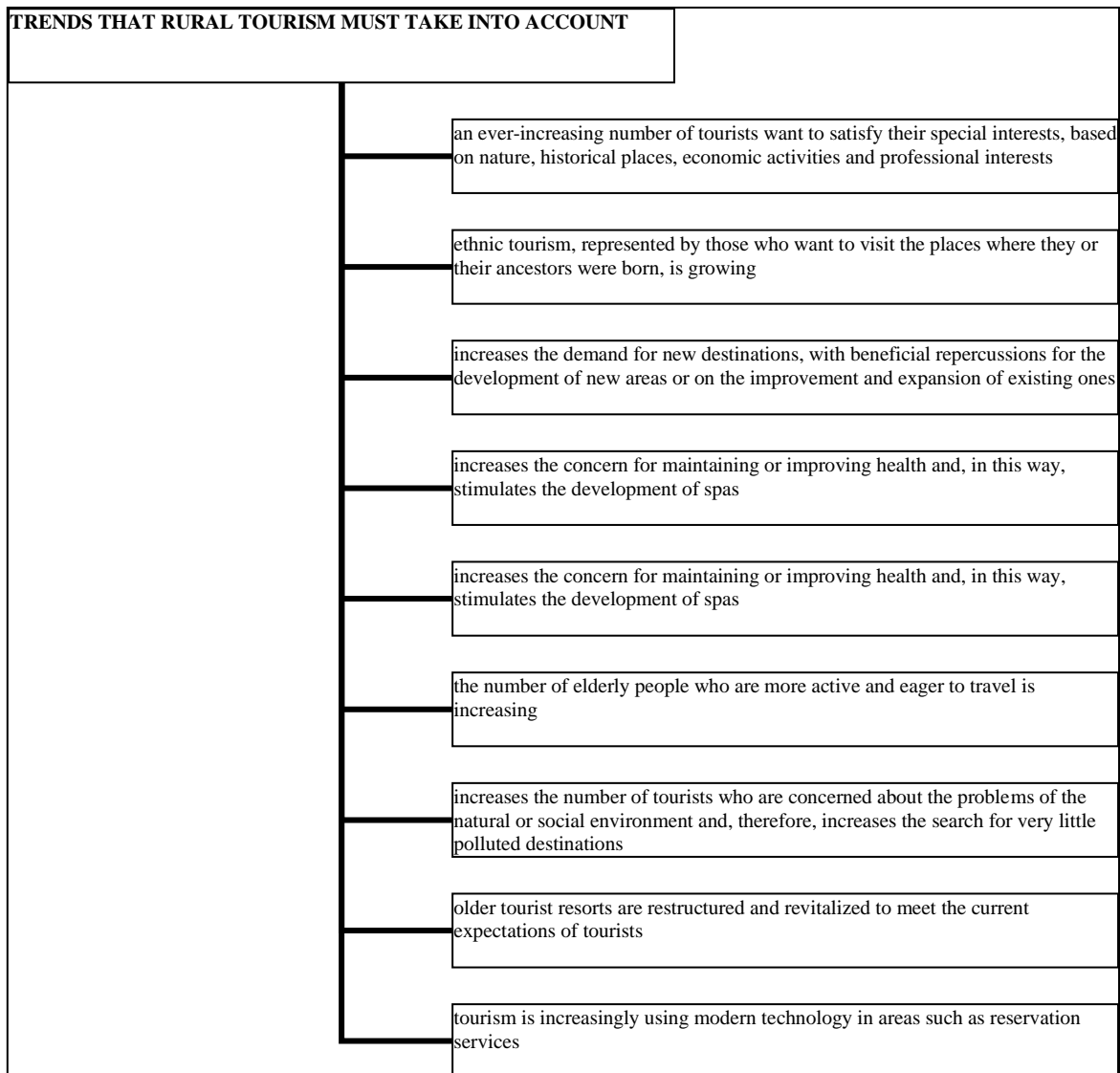
Figure 1. Awareness of the need of tourism and rural tourism

The development of tourism [1,2,14,15,17,] is an extremely sensitive aspect, because tourism is one of the most competitive economic activities from the world. Tourism development does not occur automatically because it is connected to an image and a reputation. Successful and sustainable tourism requires cooperation between all stakeholders and requires the formation of partnerships between the public sector, which must support tourism, and the private sector, which must provide facilities and services for different markets and market segments. Without understanding the objectives and mutual problems, tourism will not develop satisfactorily and beneficially. In recent years, in the strategy of the Ministry of Tourism, a main objective has been the development of rural tourism in order to solve, among other things the shortage of accommodation in some resorts, at certain times of the year, access to rural tourism of Romanian and foreign citizens, the access of people with lower incomes, as a result of the practice of lower tariffs, the foreign exchange contribution and the balancing of the balance of payments. The NDP [17] considers that tourism is a means of achieving other strategic priorities, such as "increasing competitiveness by facilitating market access for companies", by promoting domestically and internationally, through tourism, specific economic products. According to the plan, the development of a national tourism brand will have a contribution to the country's image with an impact on foreign investment in Romania and on the current account balance. The main key issues that need to be addressed in order to increase tourism in the future would be the following:

ASPECTS NECESSARY TO BE REMEDIED FOR THE PURPOSE OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT	
	Instability of the institutional framework with responsibilities in the development of tourism strategies and policies
	Lack of cooperation between tour operators
	Poor contribution of tourism to GDP
	Insufficient information and promotion
	A large number of outdated accommodation structures
	Low occupancy rate of accommodation structures
	Insufficient development of small and medium enterprises that can start operating
	Insufficient development of tourist products and poor focus on accommodation structures and catering units

**Figure 2. Issues necessary to be corrected in order to develop tourism**

The recognition of the fact that the expenses of tourists in rural areas has a significantly higher economic impact than in cities and that rural traditions, crafts and customs are in danger of disappearing has inspired many people and NGOs to invest time and money in rural tourism. Specialized studies have identified the main trends in the field of tourism, so far and which will increase:

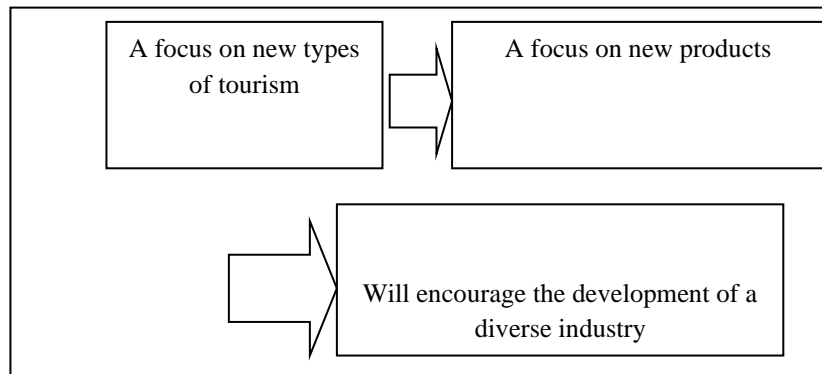


**Figure 3. The tourist market trends**

A focus on new types of tourism, and on new products, will encourage the development of a diverse industry both in terms of opportunity and seasonality. The essential condition for the development of the rural tourism product refers to the improvement of the general infrastructure of the rural locality, with influence on the entire local economy. [4,5,6,7,8,9]

The appeal of rural areas has also attracted a large number of small businesses and tour operators, who combine their love of the rural lifestyle with a business that also allows others to participate. As a result of this activity, numerous rural tourism products and tourist opportunities are available. However, there is a low coherence of the product offer and in general a lack of related public activities. Probably the clearest indicator of the increase in interest in rural tourism is the expansion of tourist pensions in recent years stimulated to some extent by the availability of European funds. Rural tourism benefits from the fact that many main points of tourist attraction and heritage in Romania are located in rural areas, such as painted monasteries, wooden churches, fortified Saxon churches and Dacian fortresses. Internationally established tourist brands of Bukovina, Maramures, Danube Delta and Transylvania, and which are also suitable especially in rural areas. The accommodation structures, the operators of tourist activities as well as the

specialists in agrotourism and ecotourism are therefore well positioned to benefit from the increase of the interest shown towards the rural tourism.



**Figure 4. Essential condition for the development of the rural tourism**

Rural tourism has the advantage that it does not specifically create the products it offers to tourists as large hotels do, but capitalizes what exists to further develop them, but without services it is difficult to develop even this branch of tourism. Every potential tourist has his own needs that influence the way of spending the holiday and therefore the range of services included in the tourist product must be as diverse as possible. It must take in consideration that the more distant the clientele is, the more information they need about the stay, and the shorter the stay, the better organized it is. If the stay is longer, more attractions must be found, increasing the chances of local partnership.

The development of the rural tourist offer is possible if the most suitable solutions for organizing and financing its revitalization will be found in a convenient time frame. [10] Currently, there are three such alternatives for developing the tourist offer:

- the restoration of the peasant households and of the entire agrarian policy;
- stimulating complementary non-agricultural activities, in particular by creating new economic units, especially agro-productive and service ones, and by capitalizing on the tourist and agricultural potential;
- selection of specific localities of the Romanian ethnographic areas for the staged financing of some complex arrangement projects for the rural tourism;
- elaboration of studies and projects of local arrangement of the rural space, especially as a project for the practice of sports, leisure and cultural entertainment, tourist programs, in order to offer to the tourists in the rural areas a wide range of occupations and attractions.

Studying the tourist product of the Romanian rural environment, in concert with the determinants of the purchasing decision in the conditions of the tourist market and corroborating with the strengths and weaknesses, we find that - minimizing weaknesses and maximizing strengths - creates a profitable niche market. This includes: mountains, rivers, beaches, watersheds and fishing opportunities, caves, ski slopes, historical monuments, wine bars, monasteries, castles and the Romanian countryside itself; of course, this spectrum of possibilities must be narrowed. The aim is to identify the characteristics that make Romania different from other destinations.

The Romanian rural tourism product is a “young” product and made, for the most part, by mimicking or more correctly following the example of other providers. Given the need to achieve quality, repeatable and perfectible services, it is necessary to organize and lead this activity, in the spirit of achieving a professionalization of providers, as well as the products themselves. In order to get out of the international tourist competition, it is necessary to modernize, relaunch and develop the Romanian tourism and to create modern

and competitive tourist products on the tourist market. The scope of tourism activities in rural Romania should be expanded from simply providing accommodation to: displaying popular gastronomic products; leisure and animation specific to village areas.

## CONCLUSIONS

Rural tourism brings a considerable contribution to the development of rural areas, to the creation of new jobs, to the updating of the demand for the most diverse local products. It can be said for sure that tourist offers with European and traditional attraction must be modernized and relaunched, through which the county's economy would benefit, attracting first of all a large number of domestic consumers. At the same time, through an adequate promotional policy, the rural localities can become a renowned rural tourist center in the countries of the European Union.

The introduction and wider use of the elements of rural tourism and ecotourism in the mentality of travel agencies and tourism investors, as well as the practice of rural and ecological tourism would be particularly beneficial. The strong media coverage of rural and ecological tourism in all ways and more recently, on the Internet, the creation of electronic pages with current information, updated daily by specialists, with short duration of obtaining images and complete information on the entire tourist activity is a chance to be taken into account for the success of rural tourism at national and international level.

Referring only to some of the ways to achieve this goal called rural tourism, as well as to the immediate benefits that this way can bring to tourism as a whole, especially as the *acquis communautaire* provides for the European integration of Romania, among others, from the point of view of tourism, but also from the point of view of computerization of the most important fields of human activity, we propose adequate attention, because rural tourism represents a high economic potential that can bring important benefits and can become a quick access among European Union countries.

## REFERENCES

- [1]. **ADAMOV TABITA CORNELIA**, 2006, The policy of regional rural development – present and perspectives, Energy Efficiency and Agricultural Engineering, Association of Agricultural Engineering in Southeastern Europe, Rousse, Bulgaria, ISSN: 1311-9974
- [2]. **ADAMOV TABITA CORNELIA, IANCU TIBERIU, PEȚ ELENA, PÎRVULESCU LUMINIȚA, POPESCU GABRIELA, CIOLAC RAMONA, ȘUBA ANKA**, 2020, Aspects regarding the development of the agritourist activity in Bran-Moeciu area, *Lucrări Științifice Management Agricol*, ISSN 1453-1410, Seria 1, vol.21(1)
- [3]. **BRAN FLORINA, MARIN D., ȘIMON TAMARA**, 1997, Turismul rural. Modelul european, Editura Economică, București
- [4]. **CĂLINA A., CĂLINA J., IANCU T.**, 2017, Research regarding the implementation, development and impact of Agritourism on Romania's rural areas between 1990 and 2015. *Environ. Eng. Manag. J.* 16, pp. 157–168
- [5]. **CIOLAC RAMONA**, 2012, Necessity and perspectives of rural tourism business expansion, *Lucrări Științifice Zootehnie și Biotehnologii (Scientific Papers: Animal Science and Biotechnologies)*, ISSN 1221-5287, Editura Agroprint Timișoara, vol.45 (1), pp. 440-443
- [6]. **CIOLAC RAMONA**, 2020, Agritourism-a possibility of capitalizing the resources of the rural community, *Lucrări Științifice Management Agricol*, ISSN 1453-1410, Seria 1, vol.22(3)

- [7]. **CIOLAC RAMONA**, 2020, Agritourism-relevant aspects, *Lucrări Științifice Management Agricol*, ISSN 1453-1410, Seria 1, vol.22(1)
- [8]. **CIOLAC RAMONA**, 2017, Tour-operator. Essential element in tourist product's logistics., *Lucrări Științifice Management Agricol*, SERIA I, VOL. XIX (3), pp. 117-124
- [9]. **CIOLAC RAMONA**, 2018, Perception of the Romanian tourist offer in the context of international tourism flows, *Lucrări Științifice Management Agricol*, SERIA I, VOL. XX (1), pp.155-162
- [10]. **COJOCARU C.**, 1995, Sprijinul intensiv pentru satul românesc, în "Tribuna Economică" nr. 8, 9
- [11]. **CSOSZ, IOAN**, 2007, Agroturism și Turism Rural, Editura Mirton, Timișoara
- [12]. **GIANNAKIS E.**, 2014, The role of rural tourism on the development of rural areas: The case of Cyprus Elias. *Romanian J. Reg. Sci.*, 8, pp.38–53
- [13]. **LANE B.**, 1994, "What is rural tourism?", *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*
- [14]. **MARIN DIANA**, 2009, Importance of business plan for stimulating entrepreneurship from rural tourism activities, *Lucrări științifice USAMV Iasi, seria Agronomie*, „Proceedings of the 51<sup>th</sup> international scientific conference „Romanian agriculture in EU – opportunities and perspectives” USAMVB Iași
- [15]. **MARTIN SIMONA CRISTINA, CSOSZ I., CIOLAC RAMONA**, 2011, The specifics of the business plan for rural tourism entrepreneurs, *Agro Buletin AGIR 3 (2)*, 201-206
- [16]. **PASQUILINI B., JACQUOT B.**, 1992, *Tourism en Europe, Action Touristique*, Dounod, Paris
- [17]. Master Planul pentru turismul national al Romaniei 2007-2026, [http://www.mdrl.ro/\\_documente/turism/studii\\_strategii/masterplan\\_partea1.pdf](http://www.mdrl.ro/_documente/turism/studii_strategii/masterplan_partea1.pdf)