



Centre for Research on Settlements and Urbanism

Journal of Settlements and Spatial Planning

Journal homepage: <http://jssp.reviste.ubbcluj.ro>



The Resolution of the Fifth Edition of the
International Conference
Rural Space and Local Development
with the theme
Rural Mountain Areas.
Experience, Preservation and Future Challenges

Between 18th and 22nd of July 2012, Faculty of Geography, Department of Human Geography and Tourism, Centre for Research on Settlements and Urbanism, Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca organized the 5th edition of the International Conference Rural Space and Local Development focused on research subjects regarding the mountain rural areas. The venue of this year's edition was Sighetu Marmăției, Maramureş County, ROMANIA.

A significant number of specialists in the field registered to lecture their research results in our conference. They represented research institutions from 18 countries in Europe, Asia and South America such as: France, United Kingdom, The Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Russia, Bulgaria, Republic of Moldova, Poland, Serbia, Ukraine, Italy, Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Israel, Iran, Japan and Brazil and 5 universities and 2 research centres in Romania.

At the opening ceremony we were honoured to have Acad. Dr. Ioan Aurel POP, the rector of the Babeş-Bolyai University and Ovidiu NEMEŞ, the mayor of Sighetu Marmăției Municipality among us, who presented their opening speeches.

The conference was organized in two sessions, one plenary session and eight panel sessions for which 112 papers were registered.

The research subjects of the keynote speakers in the plenary session were directly focused on the natural and social-economic particularities of the Romanian Carpathians, European and South American mountain regions with concluding remarks towards their economic management.

The eight subjects of the panel sessions were as following:

Panel session 1. Rural Population. Status, Dynamics, Tendencies.

Panel session 2. Economic Development in Rural Mountain Areas.

Panel session 3. Settlements in Rural Mountain Areas. Past, Present and Future.

Panel session 4. Development Policies and Good Practices in Rural Mountain Areas.

Panel session 5. Tourism in Mountain Rural Areas. Expectation and Reality.

Panel session 6. Traditional Versus Modern in Rural Mountain Areas.

Panel session 7. Environmental Reconstruction and Preservation.

Panel session 8. Resource Management of Rural Mountain Areas.

The conference and the highly valuable scientific papers lectured demonstrated that mountain rural areas have represented everywhere a vital natural heritage of the human kind and an undoubted specific economic support.

Due to their particular natural organization, mountain areas seem repulsive from the lowland areas that concentrate more than 80% of the global population. This is why according to minimax principle the latter are the most populated and intensely exploited. However, having the increasingly growth of population at global level, the humankind has to turn its attention to the mountains due to the following facts:

- they still offer a mostly unaltered nature, thus being able to support and complete synergically the global ecological balance;

- through a sustainable economic exploitation mountains may constitute the healthy food source for

The Resolution of the Fifth Edition of the International Conference Rural Space and Local Development with the theme *Rural Mountain Areas. Experience, Preservation and Future Challenges*

Journal of Settlements and Spatial Planning, Special Issue, no. 1 (2012)

about 2.5 billion people and may offer workplaces for peripheral population not touched by the chaos of the globalization;

- states and regions emphasize on the importance of the presence of mountain areas and have to put together a set of measures for using the mountain areas for local economy purposes, which would have a positive impact on economy at national and global level.

- through their specific resources of water, wood, mining, pastures and hayfields, mountains cannot ever be excluded from the economy of the states that have mountains on their territory;

- the demographic drain in mountain areas, especially that of young population has to be rapidly stopped through balanced economic and social measures together with a wise policy regarding the mountains.

Scientific experience and good practices gained in some mountain sectors in Romania have to be consistent with the not delayed support for the start up

of an optimal management of mountain areas in our country. Thus, a set of congruent laws on the mountains becomes necessary as a definite social command.

If we do not know what should be done, it means that we need to look at the good practices abroad and learn from them in order to better exploit the mountain rural areas for a better economic outcome.

July 20th, 2012

Sighetu Marmăției, ROMANIA

International Conference
Rural Space and Local Development