



Human Pressure on the Environment Through the Rural Tourism

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Rural Tourism - Definition and the Evolution of Rural Tourism Concept in Romania

The rural tourism represents the tourism form, which has destination the rural space using agrotouristic and individual farms.

The main activity of these forms is to perform the tourists services with a permanent character and they are represented by boarding house for tourists, hotels, camping, holiday villages for artistic creation, camps for development of some skills, camps for ecological activities.

In Romania, we notice the appearance of some tourism forms having as purpose in which we put together the rest with practical activities, useful in the same time for the person and also for the entire society, or other saying, is joining the utility with pleasure, not necessary following the utilitarian aim of activities but underlining and developing of some skills in different fields (paint on glass, sculpture etc). So, by promoting these activities we try to preserve the Romanian traditional skills and promote them.

Is supposed that the Romanian rural tourism began in the 18th century but for sure we noticed it at the beginning of the 20th century, its main feature although staying the spontaneity and especially its unorganised character, the tourists of rural areas being practically occasionally.

The Romanian rural establishments, appeared in the ancient times, on the very different forms of relief, still keeping the traditions, covered by a rich and original folklore with real possibilities for tourist valorification in a organised system which endorse the rural tourism development. The first attempts were noticed at the end of 1960 years concerning the group of foreign tourists, which spent their holiday at the Black seaside shore, several representative rural settlements were selected to introduce them in the circuit of internal and international tourism.

So, 14 rural settlements were declared as experimental title, named tourist villages: Lerești and Rucăr (Argeș county), Fundata and Sirnea (Brașov county), Sibiel (Sibiu county), Tismana (Gorj county), Murighiol, Crișan and Sfântu Gheorghe (Tulcea county), Racoș (Timiș county), Bogdan Vodă (Maramureș), Vatra Moldoviței (Suceava), Poiana Sărată (Bacău county), Vaideeni (Vâlcea county), which have been introduced in tourist circuits through programmes with tourists from abroad. But in 1974 the new law forbidden the accommodation of foreign tourists in private farms, these village become not functionally as tourist destination and, as a result, they couldn't be fulfilled out in a proper way, the activity has been, with few exceptions, reduced to minimum.

After year 1990, the interest for rural tourism appeared again by increasing the number of tourists who required as destination rural villages, this fact determining the creation of new specialised organisms for bringing their contribution to promote and develop the tourism activities in the rural areas, but also to achieve a legal system to establish several facilities in order to support this activity.

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The Rural Tourism in Romania - Rural Tourism Categories

This promotion of the most adequate forms of tourism in rural locality suppose to establish what type of tourist villages are, to put them together in several fundamental types concerning the most important geographical, social, economical characteristics but also the most important tourists reasons and options, tourists which frequented that localities.

So, that determined a selection of the tourists those forming groups in a specific kind of village, following the tourist reason or option.

The tourist village has to fulfil a lot of natural, historic, social-economic conditions, which must be representative and specific for every type of tourist village. Because these features are numerous and so different from one village to another, we will present only one typology of most illustrative tourist village for Romanian rural tourism.

Ethnography - folklore tourist village - where the folk songs and dances, the specific architecture for area, the furniture and inside decoration in rustic style, the traditional costumes are preserved. The tourist tender is composed by permanent traditional exhibitions (as an ethnography museum in opened air if it is possible), the organisation of traditional festivities as Sunday village round dance, a rural wedding with all its ritual, fairs with a real tourists participation.

There are to be standing out as illustrative from that kind of village -Bogdan Voda, Sibiel.

As tourism forms that can be practised here, there are to be noticed the weekend tourism (the accommodation and meals can be assured at farms), as well as transit tourism.



Figure 1. Interior country house.

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Tourist villages for artistic and handicraft creation remarkable through the local artists creation, and also through some tourists interest regarding the acquisition of some products from the source.

As type of tourism now practised, there is only the circulation tourism, the villages that offer adequate services are included in tourist circuits. Although, these villages have the possibility for weekend tourism, as a supplementary offer for interested tourists, is the pleasure materialised in initiation, taught by some handicraftsmen, in some popular skills as: painting on glass, sculpture in wood, seams and embroidery.

There are to be mentioned as illustrative the villages Tismana, Marga, Săpânța.



Figure 2. Săpânța – Maramureș County.

Tourist villages for climate and landscape are adequate for practising weekend tourism, the main feature being the environment and geographical position isolated from the great metropolis. As amusement there are trips in nature in villages as Sirnea, Lerești, Rametea and Fundata.

Tourist villages for fishing and hunting have as main offer the sportive fishing or hunting, the tourists can also profit by hunting and fishing gastronomic services.

Villages for fishing are mainly gathered in the Danube Delta-Murighiol, Crișan, Sfântu Gheorghe, and those for hunting may be situated in other regions of the country.

Tourist villages for wine and fruit growing are remarkable through the fact that the tourism is permanently, as the main activities continue after the fruits harvest, offering them or the products resulted after their processing. Consuming the fruit juice may be associated with other specific meals. There is as type of tourism leisure, tourism for rest and recreation, tourists can perform as entertainment any kind of activities related to fruits picking and processing in villages as Recaș, Agapia.

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Pastoral tourist villages have as main tourist attraction meals based on dairy products. The tourists may assist or participate at different specific activities (milk processing, cooking a shepherd specifically meal with traditional dishes), to notice as representative villages Vaideeni, Jina.



Figure 3. Râmeț monastery, Alba County.

Tourist villages for sports practise are those which offer conditions for winter or summer sports, without to require special and expensive fittings out.

Other kind of tourist villages:

- Tourist villages for organised and unorganised tourism;
- Balneo-therapy tourist villages;
- Museum tourist villages.

Major Components of Environment Affected by Rural Tourism

Displaying the tourist activities attracts a lot of implications regarding problems concerning a good utilisation of local resources, the administration and favourable image of implicated localities and persons.

Although, the tourism development and fittings out in tourist purpose are the positive pole of the ecological activities because increasing the attraction and functionality of some area or rural locality suppose:

- to protect, conserve and prevent the environment degradation;
- to preserve the tourist objectives;
- to integrate in landscape the tourist and leisure fittings out;

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- to educate the tourists due to develop the respect for nature and create an ecological behaviour.

Regarding those above mentioned, in the last time it is talking much more about a development of sustainable tourism, otherwise a result can be a destroyed environment and not only.

The conclusion of those who has studied that kind of ecosystems is incredible: a cultural, social, natural environment must not receive more tourists than it is capable. When in a village of 800 habitants arrive 4 000 tourists, we cannot speak about a tourist housing, but the surroundings will be totally destroyed.



Figure 4. Vaser valley.

For this reason, many rural localities use the concept of sustainable development, which suppose to fulfil the present society necessities but also taking care of the future. The negative effects of the tourism development about the environment can be decreased by a rational capitalisation of the tourist potential, so that the ecological balance of some tourist resources or settlements not to be disturbed by submit them to uncontrolled tourist pressures or circulation.

The rural tourism must stimulate the preoccupation for permanent maintenance of nature and its resources, also assuring their continuity.

Behaviour Implications Determined by the Diminution of the Effects and Forms of Human Pressure on the Environment through the Rural Tourism

Often, mentioning the name of “tourist” in the tourism literature is as the cause of the problem, in terms of the environmental, economical and social impacts of its activities, other saying, of the impact created because of his behaviour regarding the pollution generated by the tourism field.

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The tourists produce damage for the environment, leaving behind them a lot of garbage. To many visitors in one area may produce, for example, the degradation and erosion for places not so visited. Consumes generated by tourist activity regard the local resources (water, liquid or solid combustible) which can be at a very moment excessively exploited.

But the simplistic view that tourists are just the cause of the problems which lead to the need for the sustainable tourism is not helpful. It is clear that tourists bring benefits as well as problems and generate responsibilities and also rights.

As responsibilities for tourists we mention:

- to respect local laws and regulations;
- do not deliberately harming the local physical environment;
- to minimise the use of scarce local resources;
- do not offend local religions beliefs and cultural norms of behaviour;
- to protect the natural wildlife.

The rights of tourists and the responsibilities of the host community:

- the right to a safe, clean, physical environment;
- the right to courteous and competent services;
- the right to free and unrestricted movement.

However, there is a strong agreement that most tourists see their annual holiday as an escape from their everyday responsibilities, as a moment to be carefree and there is no use to think about what surrounds you.

Even so, the rural tourism will solve some problems regarding fulfil of territory and also will try to equalise the differences between village and town. This kind of tourism represents a possibility for sustainable development concerning the main tourist regions of our country. Although the Romanian tourism presently cross a difficult period, we think that Romanian rural tourism will be integrated in the segment represented by European rural tourism.

That's why the ethnography specific for Romanian villages, maintaining the traditional way of life must be preserved and perpetuated to become a real tourist attraction and permanent supports to receive guests.

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