

ISSUES CONCERNING THE TYPOLOGY OF RURAL TOURISTIC PENSIONS FORM MARGINIMEA SIBIULUI, SIBIU COUNTY, ROMANIA

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Abstract

The study was conducted in May-June 2013, in two places in the tourist area called "Mărginimea Sibiului", Sibiu, Romania. The research instrument used was a questionnaire comprising 25 questions and was sent to the owners / managers of pensions (18 people) by 9 people from rural places Sibiul and 9 people from Gura Râului. According to data from Sibiu County Tourism Association, in Sibiul there are recorded 40 tourist structures, and in Gura Râului, 22. Data from the field were processed, systematized and interpreted. The overall objectives were: establishing typology of tourist structures, knowing the comfort of pensions, the average capacity of accommodation, the average length of stay. Special attention was given to the knowledge of the main sights of natural and anthropogenic existing and surrounding area. Improving in pensions an infrastructure for sport as a means of leisure was another objective of the research. We also were interested in issues related to the average age of tourists, their backgrounds, insofar there is demand for sports. We wanted to see if the pensions are serving traditional products and cuisine and their origin. Another goal pursued was related to the education level of owners / managers of pensions, their satisfaction in relation to the results achieved, difficulties encountered in the current work, and how to promote services and products. The paper presents some ways to promote rural tourism in Sibiu.

Key words: agrotourism, events, traditional products, rural tourism

INTRODUCTION

„Mărginimea Sibiului” is a unique ethnographic area in Romania comprised of 18 villages, located in the mountains. [4, 10] Localities have developed a mixed economy based on agriculture, livestock farming, traditional crafts and especially sheep breeding. With time, Mărginimea Sibiului became an important point of Romanian rural tourism, here are numerous pensions developing that can provide the conditions needed to spend a memorable stay. [1] A lot of authors consider that tourism is very closely related to the civilization, culture, economy and environment protection. [6, 7] Typical countryside atmosphere, traditions, habits and hospitality of the villagers which are kept untouched increase the attractiveness

of these places. Tourist Network consists of hotels, motels, complex, rural guesthouses, farmhouses, cottages and other utilities make these places to be searched in all seasons. [3, 9]

The pastoral economy [5], specific folk traditions, arts and cultural festivals - local, national and international-, „Mărginimea Sibiului”, Romanian costumes, hospitality, architecture and authentic cuisine Romanian make Sibiu a particular area. A rich fish and cynnetic fauna, flora nature conservation objectives are of great scientific interest for those who love.

Environmental and human tourism resources of Sibiu, as a prerequisite for the development of this field generates specific forms of tourism that completes each other in the different types of destinations: bisezonal

mountaineering; spa tourism; cultural tourism; urban tourism; rural tourism and agrotourism. [2, 8]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in May-June 2013, in two villages from Mărginimea Sibiului: Sibiul and Gura Râului. The research instrument used was a questionnaire to owners of guesthouses, which was completed by 18 people: 9 pensions owner in Sibiul and 9 owners of pensions in Gura Râului. The interview was conducted by a single interviewer. Data from the field were processed, systematized and interpreted.

General objectives: knowing the comfort of pensions, the average capacity of accommodation, average length of stay, main sights of natural and anthropogenic existing settlements, and existing infrastructure for sports.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

From the official dates it is known that in this area there are more than 100 of rural pensions. [11, 12] Purpose of the research was to see if in rural tourist pensions and agrotourism in places in Mărginimea Sibiului exist request and demands on sport activities and leisure.

After processing and systematization of data from sociological survey conducted in 2013 in 18 pensions in the localities Sibiul and Gura Râului, Sibiu, was performed following interpretation of the results:

Most of the villages in the area have retained strong spiritual traditions and ethno-folk.

Although progressive modern buildings have replaced the old traditional, atmosphere in Mărginimea Sibiului remained unchanged.

Based on the natural and human tourism resources in Sibiu were developed following forms of tourism: mountain bisezonal, spa, cultural, urban, rural tourism and agrotourism. In Sibiu there are five ethno-folk areas.

There is an extensive ongoing program of sustainable tourism development in Sibiu, short and medium term. Doing the careful exploration, specialized socio-economic

effects and ecological tourism phenomenon was elaborated optimal strategy and viable which gives the guarantee of a real and a revival benefit of all types of tourism of Sibiu. Due to the complexity of strategies and programs set, we summarize only to review those measures, actions and targets aimed at Mărginimea Sibiului, as a prerequisite for continuous improvement of rural tourism.

The main objectives of this program are to develop and upgrade tourism offer represented by natural and human resources; promotion of tourist product of Sibiu domestic and international; providing skilled labor; increasing the quality of tourism services; establish and promote active collaborative relationships with related sectors.

Summary of processed data in a study of pensions in localities Sibiul and Gura Râului in 2013:

-Related to initiate tourism both Sibiul and Gura Râului most pensions owners have completed a course in tourism (> 77,7%);

-On motivation and maturity of this activity is noted the tradition for this occupation for owners from Sibiul, having a seniority, while in Gura Râului this occupation is more recent, most owners practicing this craft with passion.

-Comfort level of pensions included in this study is higher in Gura Râului, where only 22,2% of them are classified 2 daisies, the remaining 77,8% having 3 daisies or 4 stars compared to pensions from Sibiul where 66,6% of pensions in the study were classified with 2 daisies;

-Average of available accommodation places is close to the 2 locations in the study giving an average of about 17 seats available for accommodation / tourist structure;

-The typical length of stay in Sibiul is 2-3 days while in Gura Râului the typical length ranges from 2-3 days for the 36,4% of pensions to 7 days in 9,1% of tourist structures, where the main activity is the tourism school and during the summer season being carried out numerous camps for school;

-Predominant age category is 35-50 years, so if Sibiul village and commune Gura Râului;

-For both area, natural resources are most prevalent, but the two cities and tourist presents anthropogenic resources (cultural and historical).

-Location in the mountains of the two towns offer tourists the opportunity to explore so closely mountain areas by organizing hiking and recreation opportunity or recovery from stress accumulated in the urban area for tourists seeking rest;

-Most popular 3 tourist attractions in Sibiel, according to pension owners are Museum of icons on glass "Pr Zosim Oancea "Salgo, Castle and Hermitage" Sibiel", and in Gura Râului the most popular attractions are the dam and lake situated on river Cibin, Natural Reserve "Iezerele Cindrelului" and Cheile Cibinului. Also important in this localities are the two churches: small church dedicated to the venerable "Mother Paraskeva" church dedicated to "St. Archangels Michael and Gabriel", also called "Gura Râului cathedral";

-Regarding the relationship between Romanian and foreign tourists in Sibiel are more foreign tourists (in 55,6% of pensions) and in Gura Râului 88,8% of owners surveyed stated that the balance tilts in favor of Romanian tourists;

-From the point of view of local events in Gura Râului stands out an activity more intense; in the village there are two festivals already well known, "Peony mountain" and „Fusion Festival”, followed by Day of popular costumes, while Sibiel are popular local events like holidays - Feast offering, winter holidays, celebration of Midsummer and traditional wedding event organized on request;

-In Sibiel only 33,3% of owners believe that local events attract more visitors in pensions, while in Gura Râului the owners - 88,8% - consider that the local events attract visitors all the time. They consider that this is also a good way for the promotion of the area;

-Regarding the existence of craftsmen in these localities are found painted glass icons workshops, craft which is prevailing in Sibiel, there are also weavers in both Sibiel and Gura Râului, a forge who still works in Gura Râului, a woman who performs arrangements

with feathers for young men, a small bakery where they make traditional bread both in Gura Râului, a pumpkin seed mill for oil that works in some periods of the year, but this workshops are not visited very often. A large part of Gura Râului owners do not consider that they are sufficiently developed and that would have great impact on tourists, instead in Sibiel, all owners of pensions organize such visits for tourists;

-Leisure possibilities are very similar for the two cities included in the study, both offering guests the opportunity to hike in the mountains, carriage rides/sledge, equitation - better represented in Sibiel - cycling, table tennis, rummy, chess and backgammon. People can meet Romanian evenings with local band and dancers or opportunity to know the different habits of Mărginimea Sibiului. They make visits to artisan workshops, picnics, campfires, ATV rental;

-Regarding the demand for sports tourists, 66,6% of the owners of pensions in Gura Râului states that there is demand, particularly from the Romanian tourists and in Sibiel 44,5% of them stated that there is demand for such activities. The same percentage of owners in both areas – 88,8% offers the possibility of practicing sport activities in the pensions; the most popular activities are walking with the cart / carriage / sleigh, in both locations, followed by hiking;

-In Gura Râului there are land sports opportunities, billiard game, archery and also there is the possibility of access to swimming pool, jacuzzi and massage, and at Sibiel, horse riding and cycling tourism are better represented and may climbing performance;

-In Gura Râului 66,6% of the pensions have dedicated facilities for sporting activities: tennis sports (tennis/ football / volleyball, etc..), swimming pool, jacuzzi, billiards, table tennis, dedicated space in the garden for shooting with spring. Sibiel has the same percentage of 66,6%, which designate the pensions without special places for play and the only sort of space is arranged for tennis tables;

-As age group, 55,5% of tourists who prefer sports activities fall within 20-35 years in

Sibiel, and in Gura Râului the most represented category is 35-50 years, who prefer such activities in a proportion of 42,8%;

-Products and traditional cuisine offer is wide, so if Sibiel pensions and in the case of the Gura Râului. Thus, 88,8% of pensions offer tourists traditional products such as dairy and meats of the region. Vegetables or fruit from traditional varieties and preparations such as fruit jam, pickles or vegetable stew or compote are offered to a lesser extend;

-Most owners of pensions are supplying these products from local producers and a smaller percentage of producers in other areas and shops;

-Regarding the opportunity to expand, a significant percentage of owners said they did not want to even expand: 54,5% - in Sibiel, 33,3% - in Gura Râului;

-The best ways of expansion are represented by organizing local events, increasing the number of seats available for agrotourism accommodation or orientation - when we talk about Sibiel.

-For the owners of pensions from Gura Râului the main possibilities of extending are: the arrangement of pools or a spa center, arrangement of green spaces, the building of larger dining rooms, followed by increasing the number of seats available for agrotourism accommodation and orientation;

So are Sibiel pensions and those in Gura Râului. The most common way of promoting products and services is the Internet, followed by working with travel agencies. A smaller number of pensions use leaflets, brochures, flyers, advertising space in magazines and tourist guides. It is particularly popular a kind of advertising "word of mouth" as a way to promote;

-Satisfaction of the owners of pensions is high both for the Sibiel – 88,8% and in the case of the Gura Râului – 7,7%;

-The main difficulties faced by owners of pensions are: very demanding tourist in terms of accommodation conditions; irresponsible tourists, especially younger ones; unpaved portions of the village that make access difficult or due to excess dust that rises

compel owners to numerous action cleaning windows, doors exposed to road; lack of support from the state; lack of a common strategy in the ministry to the level of pensions to attract foreign tourists, there is no collaboration with the municipality; too short tourist season: from May to September; low level of awareness of Romanian tourists bound for genuine values; insufficient promotion zones; long and steady effort from the owners; lack of free time; lack of reliable peoples among employees.

CONCLUSIONS

To better promote tourism in Sibiu, rural tourism and agrotourism, we believe the following:

-Develop new promotional material for the media (articles, radio and TV), web pages, editing of brochures, booklets, catalogs, brochures, posters for the tourist offer in the mountainous area of the county, rural tourism and agrotourism in Marginimea Sibiului. Organize in Sibiu a Tourism Fair for Transylvanian area and attending to domestic and international tourism fairs.

-Involving students from Sibiu faculties in promotional activities by specialty practice, rural tourism, ecotourism and agrotourism.

-Arranging exhibitions themed tourist (of all types) in educational institutions at all levels in Sibiu.

-Organizing camps for students to practice ecological tourism with maximum benefits for both humans and for nature, not only in Mărginimea Sibiului, but in all tourist areas of the county.

-Support establishment of micro private farms of the pupils and students in the purpose of tourism and environmental education.

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