

## THE HERITAGE OF TRADITIONS AND TOURISM FACILITIES IN TRANSILVANIA, ROMANIA

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### Abstract

*This paper is an analysis of the Transylvanian region in terms of customs and traditions in this area. Such characterization of an area involves studying the history of this area, which in this case has deepened its mark. Thus, the fact that Transylvania was occupied both by the Ottoman Empire and by the Austro-Hungarian Empire can be seen both in the traditions and customs, in the folk port, the only thing and the most obvious inheritance being the language, that is, the Hungarian language inherited by from one generation to another, studying even at school. The purpose of this paper is to illustrate the traditions and customs of the Transylvanian region by highlighting the folk port and habits that take place every season on different occasions, habits preserved from the estates, ancestors. In this paper we used methods such as cartographic description, analytical method and graphics. These methods helped to translate data into graphs, tables, and charts using EXCEL. The work has gone through three important stages in its development, namely: documentation, analysis of statistical and territorial data research, integration and complex interpretation of information. In the first stage, the documentary we consulted an extensive scientific bibliography which later served as a basis for the present study, providing in particular information regarding the physical-geographic characterization of the study area. The integration of all geographic information allowed, through complex interpretation and their transposition into representative maps, the knowledge and understanding of traditions and customs in Transylvania. As far as the traditions of the most important moments of life are concerned, each of them distinguishes itself from the rest of the regions at different times. As far as the accommodation base is concerned, Transylvania adds approximately 7,000 units with an accommodation capacity of approximately 25,442,084 seats. Although the base of accommodation is quite large, the index of utilization of the capacities in operation is only 23.6%, the region occupying the 4th place in the country. As in the case of the accommodation base, public catering amounts to about 4,000 authorized establishments where tourists can enjoy traditional cuisine specific to the area (Szekler spelled, curtoș kalacs, gulaș, papricaș s.a.). Touristic routes and means of transport are varied, highlighting special transports, namely cable cars, chairlifts, tele-skis. As far as tourism forms are concerned, mountain tourism, cultural-historical, religious, sports, rural, ecotourism, business tourism and conferences, recreation, treatment and weekend tourism are practiced.*

**Key words:** traditions, customs, popular port, heritage, festivals

### INTRODUCTION

Transylvania is one of the richest regions in terms of cultural heritage, here is a series of Romanian traditions combined with traditions of Hungarian nature.

So, in each season, there are a series of traditions and customs that attract tourists throughout the year [4].

As in every region of the country, and in Transylvania, a series of traditions take place in the most important moments of life, traditions that differentiate and highlight the

area in relation to the rest of the Romanian regions.

On the territory of Transylvania itself there are nine counties: Alba, Bistrita-Nasaud, Brasov, Cluj, Covasna, Harghita, Hunedoara, Mures and Sibiu.

Besides these, there are also settlements in the counties of Bacau, Caraș-Severin, Maramureș, Neamț, Sălaj and Vâlcea [5].

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

To accomplish this work I used data provided

by the regional development plan, 2014-2020, regional development plans and general development strategies of the counties: Harghita, Hunedoara, Covasna, Cluj, Bistrita-Năsăud, Sibiu, Alba, Braşov.

Methods such as cartographic description, analytical method and graphics have been used. These methods helped to translate data into charts, tables and charts using the EXCEL program. This paper has three important steps in its development, namely: documentation, analysis of statistical and territorial data research, integration and complex interpretation of information. In the first stage, the documentary we consulted an extensive scientific bibliography which later served as a basis for the present study, providing in particular information regarding the physical-geographic characterization of the study area. The integration of all geographic information allowed, through complex interpretation and their transposition into representative maps, the knowledge and understanding of traditions and customs in Transylvania.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Traditions of the most important moments of life

The most important moments of life are captured in the habits of the area: baptism, wedding, funeral, but also the specific traditions of the area pertaining to each season.

Dominated by a high relief, the region is separated from the localities of the former Wallachian province of the Southern Carpathians, while Moldova separates the Eastern Carpathians [6]. The name of Transylvania comes from Latin, being known from ancient times for the beauty of the forests that covered the surrounding mountains [7]. Exquisite landscapes can be admired in the hilly areas and depressions that accompany the many watercourses. Even climate is another reason to visit this part of the country if we think summer days are much more enjoyable, while the winter snow turns the region into a true paradise for winter sports enthusiasts. Transylvania is one of the

few areas of Romania where traditions have been preserved intact from their ancestral lands [8]. And now you can see on the streets of Maramureş people dressed in traditional clothes. At the work of the field, in the center of the village, at the holidays over the year, or at the church service, the Maramures boast the national port [9]. The traditions and customs here are as alive as a hundred years ago. In this part of Romania it seems that time has remained, people enjoying the holidays over the year, the important events in the family, as well as the work of the field. Christmas, Easter, Rusaliile, Sfânta Maria are occasions for feasting and hunting, but also for prayer and fasting.

### Traditions of the spring season

"Mărţişorul" is a small object of ornamentation connected to a braided string made of a white and red thread, which appears in the tradition of Romanians and neighboring populations. Women and girls receive marches and wear them during March as a sign of spring arrival. Together with the marriage, spring flowers are often offered, the most representative of which is the snowdrop. Currently, the marriage is worn throughout the month of March, after which it is caught by the branches of a fruit tree. It is believed that it will bring abundance in people's homes. It is said that if someone asks a desire while hanging the marriage of the tree, it will be fulfilled at once [1].

In the Transylvanian settlements marquises are hung by doors, windows, horns of domestic animals, as it is believed that they can scare the evil spirits.

The Daffodils festival "blooms" the Braşovian tradition in Şercaia commune, the village of Vad. The Narcissus Festival takes place every year in May in the Dumbrava Vadului Reserve, unique in Europe as a dimension. It lies right in the middle of the Făgăraş Mountains, an area where daffodils grow in large numbers. This reservation is also known as "Dumbrava with coprinas". In fact, the word "coprin" translates into "daffodils."

Easter is a holiday full of meaning and symbols, with beautiful traditions and customs, kept with holiness. One of the habits is that every man, however poor he may be, is

taking a new coat [3].

For this holiday the villagers paint eggs, prepare pasta and other traditional dishes. On this occasion, chigala is prepared. "Chigala" is a traditional cake made from Easter, fluffy topped with plum jam and poppy.

Participating in the Resurrection service is an indispensable ritual of Transylvanian families. Children are used to going home from home and proclaiming the Lord's Resurrection. Instead they get red eggs. Also in these parts of the country there is the tradition that the men in the village can compete at the collision of the eggs.

In Cluj and Mureş, each farmer adorns his gates with fir branches gathered from the forests near the localities.

Also on Saturday before the Resurrection, the unmarried boys go to the unmarried girls' homes with their own trees, so as not to remain unmarried. Girls give them red eggs and money in exchange for these habits. It may happen that sometimes the young people like it and the knife's habit takes place [2].

Splashing with perfume is another custom made by the Catholic Easter. As a rule, every woman in the community is sprinkled with perfume to keep going all year round, staying so beautiful and giving birth to healthy babies. Initially, women were sprinkling with water.

The Junii Braşovului is one of the best known habits of the locality, held on the first Sunday after Easter, also known as "Tomii's Sunday". This habit, from the early hours of the morning, is a true parade. So we can admire the Young Juni, the Dorian Juniors, the Curcant Juniors, the Old Juniors, the Rosy Juni, the Albiori Juni or the Braşovecheni Juniors. They ride the most beautiful horses, anchoring national flags across the city, stopping for a few minutes in Council Square. Later on, he continued his journey to Solomon's Stones, where the habit of throwing his bucket is taking place.

During the scroll, the Junii Braşovului cried "Christ Risen!", The crowd answering them every time "True Risen!"

The Ascension Day, celebrated 40 days after the Resurrection, has a fairly large Orthodox significance, but also a series of traditions and customs respected by the inhabitants of the

rural region. In the region of Transylvania, on the day of Ascension, men wear walnut leaves on the girdle, embodying the Christian image of the Savior Jesus Christ when he ascended to heaven. The women share freshly crumbling bread made of unleavened dough, onion and brandy, because those who have gone through eternal rest can be spoiled by the meridians sent by the earth to the world beyond. From a Christian point of view, it is said that those who cease to live on the holy day of Ascension reach heaven, regardless of the sins they have committed during their lives. Tradition also says that on the day of Ascension it is not advisable to borrow salt from the house, since those who have cows in the household will no longer enjoy plenty of milk. It is equally important that on the day of the Ascension of the Lord you will make red eggs, renewing the tradition of Easter again [3].

The habit of Căluşul is very common in the Transylvanian villages. This custom is related to the feast of Pentecost. This custom is to practice a traditional dance, imitating the walking and treading of a horse. Through the custom of Căluş, each person who participates celebrates the people who were close to the past, being practiced on the Saturday before the Rusalii, called the Summer Mothers.

Near them is the "Mutul", the symbol of Căluş, who is the god and the protector of the horses. They wear rags at the top of the pans, red ribbons are hung on them.

#### **Traditions of the summer season**

The traditions of St. Ilie take place with the Christian celebration of this holiday on July 20th. It is said that St. Ilie is a rain raid, thus increasing the harvests of the households.

However, traditions begin to be prepared on the eve of this holiday when households begin to get wet which more to call the rain. A series of popular sayings are said for St. Ilie to endure and to send the rain to the earth.

Inborn ox is a feast that takes place in the summer, usually very close to Sânziene or Rusalii [1].

This tradition is preserved for rich crops in the agricultural year, the harvesting of storms and hail. Tradition embodies a very beautiful ox adorned with flowers, bells and fabrics made

by village women. The ox was worn on every street in the village, accompanied by a rather large number, usually disguised with certain looks surprised by mythologies. According to the popular beliefs, the inbuilt ox shows a deity that helps every village farmer, protecting his crops and households [2].

In July, the Carta celebrates the "Harvest House". On this day, the oldest villagers teach the youngest to cut wheat spikes and to bind wheat sheaves. Women bind wheat sheaves in the form of a cross. They are placed one above the other, forming a bucket. The harvest house is a popular event in the Sibiu region, the entire Carta village being dressed in a feast, going through the village center to the homes of the households. The builder of women in wheat sheep is carried through a village of two little girls accompanied by a lot of people. The housewives sit at the gates, waiting for the glass to splash it with fresh water, fountains, a sign of welfare and freshness. Those attending the event are welcomed by the hosts who went to harvest wheat with traditional Romanian dishes. During the event, the song "Wheat Song" is rumored, and the two-eyed maid is left to the church.

#### **Traditions of the autumn season**

The wretched Sheep is one of the habits of the inhabitants of Bran, symbolizing the end of a pastoral year. The Shepherd of the Sheep takes place in Bran at the moment when each shepherd descends with his feet from the mountain to the village to leave every shepherd to his sheep with important pieces of cheese.

The Wailing Sheep is a joyful celebration that tells the arrival of the cold season. On this day, every shepherd is so glad to see his relatives and friends whom he has not seen for some good months. Each shepherd boasts the fruits of his labor, turning with fat males and chocolate cheeses made by traditional recipes. The Shepherd of Sheep has become a true popular festival taking place in October every year.

The Halloween holiday at Bran Castle takes place on the night of October 30 and is becoming more and more a true tradition of the inhabitants and tourists. This takes about

two days, during which tourists will be scared, Bran Castle becoming the perfect place for mystery seekers. The most foreign tourists are.

#### **Traditions of the winter season**

Cumulus of Romanian, Hungarian and Saxon beliefs and legends, Transylvania offers the traveler some of the most beautiful and animated traditions and customs of the year. Practiced to bring good luck, health and rich fruits to the entire community, these traditions are preserved with holiness from their ancestors and are unique in Romania and Europe. The casting of evil spirits, the revival of nature and life, survival and soul purification are some of the most important meanings of these traditions. Steaua is a winter habit, preserved from ancestors and held every year on December 25, Christmas. The chariots walk through the village with Star and proclaim the birth of the infant Jesus. Usually, the carols go in four, with the angel and three rays. For their carols, the children receive nuts, apples, or colognes.

The girls' call to juni. It's an annual custom, which takes place on Christmas Day, on December 25th [2].

The goat is another winter habit that takes place on the Christmas holiday. The habit of this carol has a special significance: the goat brings abundance and health in the coming year. The carols get dressed and start dancing the goat all over the village, wishing the villagers wealth, work and health.

Butea Junilor. "This custom is specific to winter holidays, but preparations start as early as October. The "junkyard" is formed and hosts during the holidays. Then, a week before Christmas, sons of the village bring their homemade dishes for Christmas. On Christmas Day, the sons are dressed in holiday clothes and start walking around the village. After the caroling, the virgins head for the house of the host, where they will eat" (according to: [www.turism-transilvania.ro](http://www.turism-transilvania.ro)).

Meteleaua. This habit is pagan, being celebrated each year at the winter solstice. On this occasion, the villagers fired fires to drive away the evil. Later the shots were replaced by a meteu (straw dolls). The fire of myth symbolized the rebirth of nature and life.

These shots are now associated with Christmas, in every village in Ardeal burning the moth in the center of the village. This feast takes place on December 28, and the bunch of sons have their thematic costumes [3].

Borița. "It is a Christmas tradition specific to the Csango Hungarians in Transylvania. Borita is a mask carried by a virgin from the group of carolites who dance and play songs designed to cast out evil spirits. Dance is done only by the boys and it also signifies the cycle of life "(according to: [www.turism-transilvania.ro](http://www.turism-transilvania.ro)).

Sumedru's fire takes place annually on October 26 by St. Dumitru. Both adults and children dress up in a popular harbor and dance around a fire. St. Demetrius is the protector of the shepherds and the rich fruits, and the coals of fire are taken by the villagers and used for the fertilization of fields and gardens.

Farsang is a spectacular custom, specific to the Saxon community. This custom takes place before Easter and is the last Easter party. It marks the beginning of a better year, full of fruit, wealth and health. The feast of the feast consists of the most colorful costumed sons and gets to the courtyards of all the villagers to rid the evil spirits of last year and bring freshness to a new year with luck.

The cock roar is a 400-year-old tradition specific to the Hungarian community in Transylvania. This habit takes place every year on the first Easter day and the participants are children and adolescents. The legend says that during the invasion of the Tatars, the inhabitants housed the Black Fortress, but they were discovered after the cock crow. Those who survived the slaughter decided to shoot the cock. This habit signifies survival.

Santilia takes place in the first week after St. Elijah and has a peculiar character, celebrating the fire and the sun. On this day, the sons are giving gifts to the girls with whom they will be married with torso and curls. This day was long awaited by the shepherds, who throughout the summer climbed to the hill with the sheep, from where

they were no longer allowed to descend. However, by Santilie, the village goes up to the sheepfold. The Wheel in Flames. This habit takes place annually by Easter for Easter fasting. It takes place during the night, when rolled up by the village sons are rolled up in the valley. The wheels are for young girls who have not yet married. This custom announces the coming of the spring and the end of the marriage period.

In traditional culture, on the eve of the New Year or the New Year, a habit called "sowing" is practiced. When they come to the sowing, the sowers say that in the evening they walked with the plow and they looked, and now they must resemble the furrows. Those who participate are children, flames or men. The sowers have a handful of rice, wheat, rye or corn for sowing in their pockets. They tell the lyrics of a popular poem, hating the households to have health and abundance. The seeds are thrown into the house, over people, and after sowing the house is not matured anymore. There is the belief that if the first person to enter the door is a girl or a boy, the farmer will have the birth of female or male offspring in that year. Only cheerful and healthy ladies are allowed to married girls.

The Lole fleeing is a habit dating back to the Middle Ages in Agnita fortress in Sibiu County. The legend says that a young woman known as Ursula came out of Agnita's fortress from time to time, cracking whips, making deafening noises, thus banishing the frightened Turks. Until recently, the tradition of the Agnita lollies was related to the protection of the handicraft handbag, which had the role of protecting these boxes. "Run of Lollies" is a parade open to shoemakers. Lolls run on the streets to drive out bad spirits and protect guilds from parades. If they are recognized by the passers-by in the area, they offer as a reward a donut. The "Run of Lollies" custom takes place at the end of the cool season in February [1].

The Ionian Udine is one of the often used traditions of Tălmăcel, celebrated annually on Saint John the Baptist Day.

Each year, on the feast of St. John, dozens gather in church to celebrate this feast. The feasts dressed in the feast of the feast, specific

to the popular harbor, riding on white horses accompany a car with oxen adorned as a feast. Behind them there are several donkeys, the old man and the maid made of straw, but beautifully arranged and adorned. Everyone seems to be heading to the river to wet all those named "Ion". After being wet, all the Ions in Talmacel are served with coils, wine and brandy. The joy of this tradition is passed on to the inhabitants of the entire village, its origins being heard throughout the country.

The Feast of St. John the Baptist is celebrated on January 7, right after the new year.

The Turks from Holbav are one of the customs that have been preserved since the ancient times and made known the region of Transylvania both in the country and abroad. The Turks of Holbav are playing on St. Nicholas on December 6, wishing to announce the arrival of Christmas holidays.

Bear's Day is part of the traditions and customs of the Transylvanian people from the mountain peak. Bear's Day is celebrated 40 days after Christmas, exactly on February 2, when every Christian celebrates the Lord's Encounter. According to customs, Bear's Day coincides with this Orthodox ritual feast, also called Stretenie. According to the elders, on Winter's Bear Day he meets with the summer, and there is a real fight between the cold and the hot season. Also on Bear's Day people can make predictions about the weather look over the year. Following the bear, named Martin, people could know how it would be in the winter or summer.

The customs of Saint Basil in Hunedoara aim to find begging by unmarried girls. This habit in Hunedoara was called sanvasai. This habit consists in the fact that the girls and the boys gathered at the home of one of those present. In a dark room 9 or 12 plates were placed on the table with the bottom up. Under the plates were placed various items such as comb, spin, bread, basil, mirror, bread, knife, scissors, etc. The girls chose a plate, interpreting the nature and qualities of the future husband according to what was under the plate. Such a habit of Saint Basil takes place every year in the area of Orăștie, but also in the land of the Forestry. Saint Nicholas' plaques. Just like the tradition of fasting, the tradition of St. Nicholas' pies

(December 6) is preserved especially in the areas of the Transylvanian villages. The girls are all gathered on December 5 to knead the dough for the pies. In the evening all the boys in the village gather together with the girls and start to spend the next day. The traditions of the snakes trap. In the old days, when the Saxon population of Transylvania was still large, on December 12 a tradition was practiced that required the father to walk with a tray on his head, in which a few twigs were laid. He had to walk around the house to protect the house from all the bad things.

**Tourism infrastructure**

The tourism infrastructure of the region is very wide, the quality of services being different from one locality to another.

The tourist base of the Transilvania Region included in the year 2016 6,946 accommodation units, of which 1,748 hotels and motels, 266 hostels, 194 cottages, 923 villas and bungalows, 1530 boarding houses and 2028 boarding houses, the rest being other types of tourist units (Table 1. Fig.1.) [11].

Table 1. Transylvania Travel Receiving Structures in 2016

Type of structure	No.
Hotels	1,748
Hostels	266
Apartment hotels	21
Motels	218
Inns	3
Tourist villas	635
Tourist cottages	194
Bungalows	288
Holiday villages	7
Campgrounds	61
Tourist stops	38
Touristic houses	59
Camps for pupils and preschoolers	58
Tourist guesthouses	1,530
Agrotourist hostels	2,028
Accommodation spaces on river and sea vessels	10

Source: National Institute of Statistics, 2017

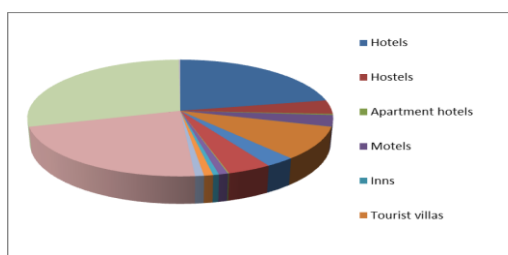


Fig.1. Transilvania Tourism Reception Structures in 2016

Source: Own determination.

The Transylvania Region holds 37.9% of Romania's agro-touristic pensions, 34.4% of the tourist boarding houses and 33.6% of the chalets. Braşov County is one of the six holiday villages of Romanian tourism.

However, it should be mentioned that the tourist base in the region is partially obsolete, the lack of modernization affecting the quality of services offered to tourists. The network of tourist accommodation units is unevenly distributed, the highest concentration being registered in Brasov County (881 units, representing 36% of the total number of tourist units in the region), the opposite is Covasna County, with only 97 units accounting for 4% of the total (Table 2, Fig.2.) [12].

Table 2. Distribution of tourist accommodation facilities in Transylvania in 2016

County	Number of structures
Alba	159
Bistriţa-Năsăud	43
Braşov	881
Cluj	192
Covasna	97
Harghita	371
Hunedoara	125
Mureş	291
Sibiu	295

Source: National Institute of Statistics, 2017

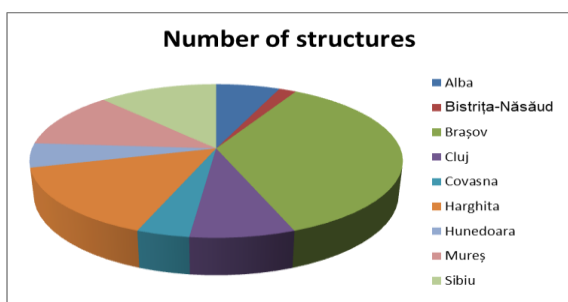


Fig.2. Distribution of tourist accommodation facilities in Transylvania in 2016

Source: Own determination.

### Catering

In Transylvania, gastronomy characterized by Transylvanian and Hungarian dishes. From potato bread to meat and smoked food, from teleme to pies, the food in the heart of Transylvania is diversified and very tasty.

As for this sector, there is a conspicuous presence both in number and type, in Transylvania being found over 4,000 authorized units. Only the city of Cluj-Napoca

owns approximately 660 authorized units and is distributed as follows: - Bar & Bistro - 1 unit; - Day Bar - 233 units; - Brasserie - 1 unit; - Buffet bar - 6 units; - Buffet-bistro - 1 unit; - Cafe bar - 71 units; - Cafe bar - café 5 units; - Cafe - 13 units; - Confectionery - 6 units; - Fast food - 47 units; - Summer Garden - 1 unit; - Pizzeria - 17 units; - Snack bar - 9 units; - Self-service restaurant: 8 units; - Classic restaurant: 153 units; - Restaurants with artistic program - 1 unit; - Restaurants with specifics: - national (Romanian) - 7 units; - local - 1 unit; - Austrian - 1 unit; - Irish - 1 unit - Italian - 3 units - Mexican - 1 unit; - Chinese - 1 unit; - Hungarian - 1 unit; - Family-friendly restaurant (hostel) - 1 unit in Mount Cold; - Restaurant - 3 units [13].

### Travel routes and means of transport

One of the essential premises for the development of tourism is the provision of access to the objectives and areas of tourist importance. The areas with the highest intensity of tourism are the major cities of the region, the tourist resorts in the mountain areas and the spa resorts, the agrotourism areas (Mărginimea Sibiului, the Bran-Moeciu area, the Arieş valley, certain settlements in Szeklerland), most mountain areas and the areas with scattered cultural and tourist attractions (Saxon fortified churches, peasant castles, etc.) [14].

The main tourist areas in the Transylvanian region (except the cities of tourist importance) and the related road infrastructure:

- the Apuseni Mountains area, a tourist area in Alba County with various tourist resources (special karst phenomena, ski resort, agritourism, cultural tourism). Main roads: DN74, DN75, DJ762, DJ750 DJ108, DJ107K, DJ 750C, DJ107M.

In order to increase the accessibility to many mentioned tourist areas, which in turn will be felt in the economic development, it is necessary to develop and implement investment projects for the rehabilitation and modernization of some road sectors (especially county roads). At the level of the Center Region there is a relatively large number of road sectors that provide accessibility to areas or tourist attractions and require rehabilitation, upgrading or extension

work. Regarding the special transport means, within Braşov County there is a good cable transport network. Here, there are 4 cable cars, 2 of them link foot and peak of Tâmpa mountain, and the other 2 are located in Brasov, one in Kanzel and the other two connects Capra Neagra to Mount Postavarul. Also in Braşov are telegondole and 6 tele-skis in Poiana Braşov and Predeal.

Another cable car is the one present in the Fagaras area connecting Balea Waterfall Balea Lake which stretches over 3700m. Within the Bucegi Mountains there are 3 cable cars, one connects Babele Buşteni, another connects Gura Ialomiţei Cave to Babele, and the other connects the 1400 share of 2000 Sinaia. The counties of Harghita and Covasna have a number of ski slopes for which tele-skis were placed on different routes, depending on the length and difficulty of the slope [15].

#### **Facilities for treatment and recreation**

In this respect, Transylvania has a number of resorts where mineral resources are used for both curative and recreational purposes. This type of tourism offers a wide range of options and addresses people of all ages. Sovata is one of the most important spa resorts in Romania Besides the complex treatment infrastructure, the Sovata resort has several possibilities for recreation, including in the cold season, where two ski slopes are arranged here.

In Covasna, the present resources make possible a series of procedures such as heated mineral water baths, mopedes, aerosols, inhalations, paraffin wraps, electrotherapy, galvanic baths, massage, medical gymnastics. Băile Tuşnad is a resort of national importance recommended for treatment of various diseases such as cardiovascular, digestive, endocrine. And here are a series of procedures such as paraffin wraps, herbal baths, galvanic baths, massage, internal mineral water therapy, magnetotherapy, medical physical culture, reflexology.

The Ocna Sibiului resort has a permanent character and is known for its salty waters with healing properties. In the resort there are procedures such as baths, underwater massage, whirlpools for upper and lower limbs, mud and paraffin treatments and

contrast therapy (sauna), collective sprays, dry massage services and cervical and lumbar elongations, procedures with low-, medium- and high-frequency currents treat subacute and chronic inflammatory disorders of the annexes and sterility.

Praid is recommended for treating respiratory diseases.

Patients spend a number of hours as the doctor visits while visiting the mine. By the conditions in the saline the tonus of the neuro-vegetative system is restored. Inside the salt mine there is a museum, a church, a wine cellar [16].

Borsec, one of the oldest and most famous spa resorts in Central and Eastern Europe, located in the same name. Here are procedures like internal and external mineral water, electrotherapy, physiotherapy, electropuncture, ionization, balneophysiotherapy and medical recovery.

At Harghita Baths tourists have inhalations, internal and external cures with mineral waters, relaxing conditions and special rest.

The Homorod Spa has ski slopes.

At Balványos tourists can enjoy mofetes, electrotherapy, aerosols, thermotherapy (paraffin wraps), kinetotherapy, aeroheliotherapy, carbonated baths, medical gymnastics and maintenance in the gym. In-house treatments including underwater massage.

Malnaş, Vâlcele, Miercurea Sibiului, Bazna are spas of local importance.

The spa tourism is very likely to develop in the following years due to its strengths, and the existing baths are in competition with the well-equipped thermal baths in Hungary. In these potential resorts there is not yet special medical or balneo-therapeutic treatment, medical care being provided in school camps where it exists or in the medical cabinet of the locality. These resorts generally have open lagoons in degraded condition.

#### **Auxiliary equipment**

Concerning recreational means, they differ in typology and number in each county of the region. These consist of parks, cinemas, sports halls, summer gardens, horse riding, etc. In the county of Cluj there is a slight development and diversification, the county



being represented by only a few classical products destined either for the summer season (ponds and swimming pools - Cluj-Napoca - Clujana, Sun, plus the Olympic basin, Iulius Mall, Hotel Belvedere, Dej - Toroc spa park, Gherla - Tehnomedical Complex, Turda - Durgauvalea Sărată from the Spa Complex Cojocna) or hibernal (the ski slopes from Băișoara, Dângău - Căpuș, Feleac and Mărișel) such as the theme parks, thematic festivals, business meetings and congresses or others, are also well below the level at which the resources can foster their development [17].

In 2012 in Bistrița-Năsăud county there were 183 cultural homes, increasing compared to 2001 when there were only 53 such units. There is only one cinema in the whole county, Dacia, but no films have been projected in recent years. In the county there are no amusement parks, botanical gardens or zoos. According to available information, the possibility of spending leisure time using the existing infrastructure is low.

In Harghita County for tourists who prefer sports-extreme activities, they have adventure and fun parks: Harghita Băi - Balu Park Adventure Park, Salt Praid Club Adventure Park, which was the first underground adventure park in Europe opened in 2012, Ciumani adventure parks with water slides, Club Aventura Park in Băile Tușnad.

In Harghita County there are more than 20 equestrian and hippie centers in Miercurea Ciuc, Gheorgheni and Odorheiu Secuiesc as well as in other localities such as Homorod Băi, Subcetate and Iacobenii. Bicaz Canyon and Red Lake provide the conditions for practicing more activities from climbing to boating. Canyoning can be practiced in the Seacă Valley and off-road turns can be made with off-road cars, motocross or enduro. Within Brasov County, recreational infrastructure has grown more and more. Swimming pools, cyclotourism trails, pistes, ski slopes built to the highest standards, tennis courts, mini-golf and paintball, horse riding, amusement parks, etc. were built. At the same time, a number of private sports halls appeared due to the increasing interest in martial arts, fitness and maintenance

gymnastics.

### **Types and forms of tourism practicable in Transylvania**

With an extremely generous natural potential and a valuable cultural heritage, the Transylvania region has a high and diversified tourist potential. Regional studies and studies show that tourism with the highest development potential is mountain tourism, spa tourism, cultural tourism and rural tourism.

Mountain tourism is most favored due to the existence of mountainous masses spread over large areas, the presence of mountain huts, the presence of marked trails and the promotion of these areas as perfect for practicing winter sports, mountaineering, hiking, speotourism. Transylvania is the first region of the country in terms of mountain tourism potential due to landscape diversity and numerous endemic flora and fauna species. Within the Transylvania region there are a number of locations such as Predeal, Poiana Brașov, Bușteni, Azuga, Sinaia locations that have a high tourist potential in both seasons.

Poiana Brasov ranks first in terms of shi resorts in the country. It has 12 slopes of varying degrees of difficulty, 17 km long slopes and cable cars. The Predeal locality includes 10 ski slopes on a 8 km long ski run. The counties of Covasna and Harghita have approximately 23 approved ski slopes and totally have a length of 13,583 m, the longest ski slope is 1,149 m and is located at Pasin Bucin, of which 19 are managed by commercial companies and 2 are managed by associations that are also equipped with cable transport installations.

Harghita County has a favorable context for practicing outdoor sports: mountain biking, cross-country cycling, nordic walking, caving, hiking, skiing, escalade, tyrolean, hippie, river-rafting, canoeing, enduro, moto-cross etc.

Within Cluj County, the ski slopes are scarce and poorly diversified, the only place that has ski slopes is Băișoara, a medium-sized slope. The county of Cluj is highlighted due to the speoturistic potential given by the presence of a large underground cavities (about 160), including the second cave in Romania, the

Humpleu Cave (with over 40 km of development and some of the most grandiose halls in Romania European endocars: 250-300 m long, 100-150 m wide, over 100 m high), respectively the Altar Cave, considered to be the most beautiful natural underground cavity in Europe [18].

Mountaineering is another form of mountain recreation that can be practiced in several areas of the Transylvanian mountain range, such as Cheile Turzii, Someșului Cald and Turenilor, which have a series of high-difficulty routes (IV-VI) but and some initiation routes (grade II-III). However, it is necessary to have an adequate endowment of the routes, the development of the climbing areas, the building of some tourist bases for hosting the practitioners. Hiking is primarily stimulated by the morpho-seismic value of the mountainous area where the spectacular and varied morphological landscape is a major attraction. The high and prolonged peaks of Mount Mare or Trascau, the pyramid dome of the Vlădeasa Massif, the key sectors and gorges (Turzii, Turenilor, Someșul Cald, Arieș, Hășdatelor, Crișul Repede) are frequent landmarks for those who follow such a depravity of tourism.

In the county of Harghita numerous tourist routes offer the possibility of hiking (eg the Maria Route) as well as cycling or equestrian tours: Giurgeu Mountains - 6 trails, Hasmas Mountains - 14 trails, Harghita Mountains - 10 trails, Gurghiu Mountains - 3 trails. In spite of the net advantage of the mountainous area from this point of view, even the depression area itself is not deprived of the hiking, on the contrary, especially as the mountain routes have as a starting point the localities located in the depression area or the contact with it.

Piscine leisure tourism has favorable conditions of affirmation due to the existence of a dense and mostly unpolluted hydrographic network, but with a drainage regime strongly affected by the massive deforestation in the last century and accentuated in the last two decades, which has a negative impact on the potential biological fish, much diminished. It can be practiced along the main rivers, Someșul Mic, Someșul

Mare, Someș, Arieș, in the area of the Transylvanian Plain, Țaga, Geaca, Cătina, Cămpenești, Mărtinești, which are important areas for a great variety of species which can be harvested or accumulation lakes in Someșul Cald basin or Drăganului Valley.

Cultural and historical tourism is favored by the numerous architectural and historical monuments and, of course, the many customs and traditions. Most of the events are supported or even organized by local authorities. Relatively low distance between objectives favors their integration into different thematic circuits.

Religious tourism. In Brașov County this is especially practiced at Sâmbăta de Sus Monastery, where the religious services during the great holidays attract a great flow of people. Also within Brașov county there are 7 monastic complexes and a series of churches with special values.

In Cluj County this form of tourism is favored by the existence of important places of worship, the most representative objective of this type, the Nicula Monastery is celebrating its patrimony as an event that attracts visitors on August 15 not only from the county but also from the entire Transylvanian area and even from the extra-Carpathian regions (in 2015 the number of participating pilgrims was estimated at about 600,000) [19].

Sports tourism. In the counties of Brașov, Harghita, Covasna there are practiced alpine skiing, cross-country skiing, mountaineering, mountain biking, horseback riding, gliding and gliding, hunting and sport fishing in hilly and mountainous areas. The most effective solutions for harmonizing tourism requirements with the requirements of environmental protection and sustainable development are rural tourism and agrotourism.

Transylvania has a rich and varied tourist potential, only partially capitalized. Rural tourism has witnessed spectacular dynamics in the last 20 years, the number of tourist and agrotourist guesthouses in Transylvania being over 1,000, and that of the offered accommodation places reaching almost 19 thousand. The Transylvanian region owns 37.9% of Romania's agro-tourism pensions

and 34.4% of the tourist boarding houses. In Braşov County one of the six holiday villages of Romanian tourism is found. In Brasov county, agrotourism is practiced in Poiana Mare, Fundata, Moeciu, Bran, Sacele-Tarlungeni. In Cluj county agrotourism is practiced in many localities of Huedin Depression, Someşan Plateau and Transylvanian Plain.

The agrotouristic areas of Transylvania are: - Sibiu's border. -Areaş area superior (Albac - Gârda - Arieşeni - Avram Iancu - Vidra). - Rimetea. -Corund- Sovata. - Săcele area – Întorsura Buzăului.

Ecotourism is the form of tourism where the main interest of the tourist is nature, namely the observation and appreciation of all nature-related objectives that meet several conditions: educational character, conservation and nature protection, negative impact on the natural and socio-cultural environment. In the county of Brasov there are guest houses and eco-certified tours present in the Zărneşti area where tourism is in the most advanced stage in Romania, due both to the natural environment (Piatra Craiului National Park) and to the promotion and organization activity; the Vama Buzaului area; Buneşti-Viscri area; Făgăraş area [20].

Business and conference tourism has developed especially in major cities and several resorts that offer great accommodation comfort and have the necessary technical facilities. In Braşov County, this type of tourism is constantly growing, which is favored by the better facilities, namely well-equipped conference rooms. Recreational tourism is taking place in several resorts, namely Predeal, Bran-Moeciu-Fundata, Poiana Brasov, Covasna s.a. Traffic tourism is practiced in both forms of transit and traveling. Weekend tourism is also practicable in mountain and sub-Carpathian areas, with rare occasions when a tourist's stay exceeds the weekend. The treatment / spa tourism is favored by the existence of important mineral resources such as springs and mud with curative properties. Thus, in Transylvania there are a number of resorts where these resources are utilized such as Baile Turda, Someşeni, Băile Tuşnad, Sovata, Covasna,

Harghita Băi s.a. This type of tourism attracts a large number of tourists of all ages. In some cases, lower investment in infrastructure has led to a decrease in the number of tourists.

## CONCLUSIONS

Transylvania is the geographical region located within the Carpathian Arch being also one of the historical regions of Romania. On the territory of Transylvania itself there are nine counties: Alba, Bistrita-Nasaud, Brasov, Cluj, Covasna, Harghita, Hunedoara, Mures and Sibiu. Besides these, there are also settlements in the counties of Bacau, Caraş-Severin, Maramureş, Neamţ, Sălaj and Valcea.

As far as the traditions of the most important moments of life are concerned, each of them distinguishes itself from the rest of the regions at different times.

As far as the accommodation base is concerned, Transylvania adds approximately 7,000 units with an accommodation capacity of approximately 25,442,084 seats. Although the base of accommodation is quite large, the index of utilization of the capacities in operation is only 23.6%, the region occupying the 4th place in the country. As in the case of the accommodation base, public catering amounts to about 4,000 authorized establishments where tourists can enjoy traditional cuisine specific to the area (Szekler spelled, curtoş kalacs, gulaş, papricaş s.a.). Touristic routes and means of transport are varied, highlighting special transports, namely cable cars, chairlifts, tele-skis.

In terms of facilities for recreation and leisure, Transylvania dispose of a series of resorts (Sovata, Covasna, Băile Tuşnad, Borsec, Balvanyos s.a.) where natural resources (mineral waters, sapropelic sludge) are used for curative and recreational purposes.

In addition to the facilities, there are a number of recreational facilities such as parks, cinemas, botanical gardens, zoos, amusement parks, horseback riding, etc.

As far as turism forms are concerned, mountain tourism, cultural-historical, religious, sports, rural, ecotourism, business tourism and conferences, recreation, treatment

and weekend tourism are practiced.

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