

NATURAL AND ANTHROPIC TOURIST POTENTIAL IN TRANSILVANIA

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Abstract

This paper is an analysis of Transylvania regarding the natural and anthropic potential of the Transylvania region. In this paper we used methods such as cartographic description, analytical method and graphics. These methods helped to translate data into charts, tables and graphs using the EXCEL program. The paper is based on documentation, analysis of statistical and territorial data research, integration and complex interpretation of information. The integration of all geographic information allowed, through complex interpretation and their transposition into representative maps, the knowledge and understanding of the natural and anthropic tourism potential in Transylvania. The data used were provided by the following institutions: Counties Councils, County Development Strategy 2007 - 2013, National Institute of Statistics, ADR Central analysis "Balnear tourism-economic domain with potential development in the Center Region". Regarding the natural tourist potential of the area within the region, there are natural and national parks (eg Cheile Bicazului-Hășmaș National Park), nature reserves (eg Aiud Cheile, Cheile Râmețului, Cheile Întregalde), winter resorts (eg: Predeal, Păltiniș) and spa resorts. The cultural and historical heritage is also complex and includes ancient vestiges (eg: The remains of the Roman castles Apulum), cities with a complex cultural heritage (eg Brasov, Sibiu), fortified churches and fortresses (eg Prejmer Church, Viscri, Saschiz, Rupea Fortress, Râșnov Fortress), castles and palaces (eg Bran Castle, Brukenthal Palace), monasteries (eg Sâmbăta de Sus).

Key words: natural potential, anthropogenic potential, cultural value, edifices, gems

INTRODUCTION

Transylvania has a lot of natural and anthropic attractions, due to the presence of numerous protected areas with a large number of endemic species and the presence of monuments of cultural and historical value (castles, churches, museums, etc.) [9]. 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, Caraș-Severin, Maramureș, Neamț, Sălaj and Vâlcea.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

To accomplish this work we used various methods such as cartographic description, analytical method and graphics. These methods helped to translate data into graphs,

tables, and charts using EXCEL.

To conduct this work was carried out a review of studies specialist who treated topics such as urban tourism, cultural tourism, heritage and tourism potential natural and human, infrastructure general and specific tourism sector, movement and tourism demand. Typology research work was used in qualitative and quantitative, where they were addressed several areas of tourism.

For example, if the qualitative research were applied the following research methods: the method of documenting the consultation literature that could be accessed and official documents and observation method, and the quantitative research used the following research methods: analysis method and data processing, graphic and cartographic method, the method of observation and interpretation.

The data used were provided by the following institutions: Counties Councils, County Development Strategy 2007 - 2013, National Institute of Statistics, Central ADR Center analysis "Balnear tourism-economic domain with potential development in the center

region".

The data were processed and converted into tables, graphs and then interpreted and analyzed. Data used in this study are part of the textbook on the desk.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Natural attractions. Mountain resorts.

With a very generous nature and a cultural heritage of great value, the Transylvania Region has a high and diversified tourist potential. Without attempting a clear separation between the forms of tourism practiced in the Transylvanian Region, we consider a differentiated analysis useful. Regional research and studies show that tourism with the highest development potential is mountain tourism, spa tourism, cultural tourism and rural tourism [17].

National parks and natural parks

This includes the following: Bicazului-Hasamsş National Park, Roşu Lake, Caliman National Park, Natural Park Mureşului Superior Park, Bucegi Natural Park, Piatra Craiului National Park, Apuseni Natural Park, Scărişoara Glacier.

Natural reservations

Representatives of: Sfânta Ana Lake, Reci Bastard, Daffodil Glade from Dumbrava Vadului, Emperor's Beech (Baia de Arieş), Detunata, Huda lui Papara, Gorges from Trascăului Mountains, Iezer Ighiel, Râpa Roşie, Mud Volcanoes, Reservation of steppe peony from Zau de Câmpie commune [3].

Winter resorts

In this category are included: Poiana Brasov, Predeal, Păltiniş, Bălea, Arieşeni, Izvorul Mureşului, ski areas: Timişu de Sus, Pârâul Rece, Topliţa, Mădăraş, Bucin, Săcele, Ciumani, Luncile Prigoanei (Şureanu Mountains) [4].

Spa and spa resorts

In Transylvania there is the highest density of spa resorts in Romania. Mineral salt-rich mineral waters, former salt lakes, mofts, mud, peat, highly ozonized air (rich in resinous aerosols and negative ions) are the most important natural curative factors. Since the end of the nineteenth century several spa and spa resorts have been developed, the most

important being Sovata, Covasna, Băile Tuşnad, Predeal, Balványos, Malnaş, Vâlcele, Praid, Borsec, Homorod, Harghita Băi, Izvorul Mureşului, Lacu Roşu, Ocna Sibiului, Bazna [5].

Cultural and historical heritage.

Cities with a complex cultural heritage

This category includes the following cities: Braşov, Sibiu, Tg. Mureş, Vauban Fortress from Alba Iulia, Sighişoara, Sfântu Gheorghe, Miercurea Ciuc.

Ancient vestiges - The remains of the Roman castles Apulum (Alba Iulia). -The Roman mines from Roşia Montană -Căpâlna. Dacian fortress, a site included in the UNESCO heritage list, along with 5 other Dacian fortresses in the Orăştie-Tilişca Mountains. The ruins of the Dacian fortress -Covasna. The vestiges of the Dacian fortress Valea Zânelor.

Fortified Churches, Fortresses. -The fortified churches in Transylvania, included in the UNESCO heritage. Seated 850 years ago, the Saxon population has made a significant contribution to the economic and social development of Transylvania. Of the approximately 150 fortified churches in Transylvania, UNESCO chose and included in the world heritage seven churches, all located in the Central Region (Biertan, Valea Viilor, Prejmer, Viscri, Saschiz, Călnic, Dârju) considered by the experts as the most beautiful and more representative[8].

-The fortified churches of Alma, Moşna, Dealu Frumos, Merghindeal, Iacobeni (located in the northern part of Sibiu County) are among the most important fortified churches in Transylvania, built between the 13th and 15th centuries, being listed on the list of the national architectural patrimony .

-Harman, a fortified church in Barsa Country, built between the 13th and 15th centuries, a blend of Romantic and Gothic styles.

Church of Cismadioara, Cârţa Monastery, Făgăraş Fortress, Mediaş, Rupea Fortress, Feldioara Fortress, Rasnov, Slimnic Fortress [2].

Castles and palaces

Bran Castle, Mureş County, Bethlen Castle and Kemeny Castle, Lăzarea (Harghita County), Boita (Sibiu County), Balta Fortress

(Alba County), Sânmiclăuș (Alba County), Racos (Brasov County), Avrig (Sibiu County).

Monasteries

The category of monasteries includes: Saturday Up, Râmeț Monastery.

Other cities with cultural objectives of major tourist importance: Sebeș, Aiud, Blaj, Odorheiu Secuiesc, Târgu Secuiesc, Reghin, Dumbrăveni.

The economic importance of tourism is kept at a very low level, both at regional and national level, and in recent years there has even been a downward trend in the share of tourism in the Gross Domestic Product. Thus, the share of tourism in regional gross value added decreased from 3,6% in 2008 to 2,3% in 2015, while at national level the share of tourism in gross value added decreased during the same period from 2, 6% to 1.9% [16].

Capitalizing the tourism potential

The touristic potential of the Transylvania region is capitalized through a series of festivals, fairs, exhibitions taking place annually in different regions of the region throughout the year, holidays in this region being history and spectacle.

In the summer of Alba, the Festival of Dacian Fortresses in the Fortress of Balta, and in winter the Snow Festivities, held in February.

The only rural tourism fair in the country is hosted by the Albac commune, the Land of Moti, in September and offers tourists competitions for fishing, gastronomy, craft fairs.

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In spring, the International Theater Festival, the largest festival of its kind in South-Eastern Europe, takes place in Sibiu. In addition, the National Festival of Folk Traditions in Dumbrava Sibiului aims at capitalizing on the national treasure of Romania.

The Easter Fair in Sibiu attracts merchants from all over Romania, offering unique gifts to visitors, such as handicrafts, sweets and flowers. In Covasna County, tourists can take

part in unique traditional events. At the end of February, in Sfântu-Gheorghe, there is the international gourmet festival "Pomana Porcului", where you can enjoy the most delicious dishes.

In June, Bully Festival in Turia attracts thousands of gourmets every year, where bulz is prepared according to a local recipe. Participants at the Harghita Coal Festival can enjoy bean with bramble, calf at the prow and the desert kurac kalacs. Dozens of tourists from England, Norway, Ireland, Austria and Hungary have fun in September, when the Aldamas Village Cow and Feast Festival takes place. Another famous gastronomic festival is the Praid Festival of Sarmalele. In Brasov, the Jubilee Celebration takes place every year on Sunday after Easter. The Brasov Days and the Popular Craftsmen's Fair in Romania, organized in spring, are special attractions for the locals as well as for the tourists. The "cock shot" on the first Easter day is a traditional habit of the Hungarians, whereby a domestic bird is sacrificed on the basis of a legend. Another tradition is Sântilia, an ancient feast of shepherds shepherds. The event takes place in Poiana Anghelescu on July 20th [2].

In Cluj, unlike fairs and exhibitions, cultural festivals and events of various types represent artistic manifestations from various fields that address the segment of cultural tourism practitioners (film-cinema, classical music, theater, folklore, modern music - starting from jazz, electronic music, pop and rock, poetry, epigrams, humor, guitar, etc.) and may have a national or international character.

From the category of festivals stand UNTOLD which is the most famous music festival in Romania. It was named Best Major Festival at the European Festival Awards 2015. Although it is only at its third edition, Untold managed to raise 240,000 people in the first year, and in about 2016 about 300,000 [14].

Tourist flow The total number of tourists accommodated in 2016 is 3,322,548, which places Transylvania first in the country. Compared to 2000, 3 times more tourists arrived in 2016 (Table 1). According to the table (Table 1), all Transylvanian localities

register an increase in the number of tourists annually [6].

Table 1. Arrivals in the period 2000-2016

Year	Number of incoming tourists
2000	1,149,884
2001	1,142,949
2002	1,083,557
2003	1,226,682
2004	1,399,867
2005	1,504,556
2006	1,641,565
2007	1,883,623
2008	1,854,864
2009	1,473,967
2010	1,494,191
2011	1,862,651
2012	2,106,814
2013	2,359,123
2014	2,489,308
2015	2,992,527
2016	3,322,548

Source: National Institute of Statistics, 2017

According to Figure 1, the number of tourists increased year on year, except for 2009 and 2010 when there was a slight decrease in number. This is due to the growing interest of local authorities who have endeavored to promote the region, both by capitalizing on natural heritage and by creating festivals, fairs, competitions that attract thousands of tourists annually [15].

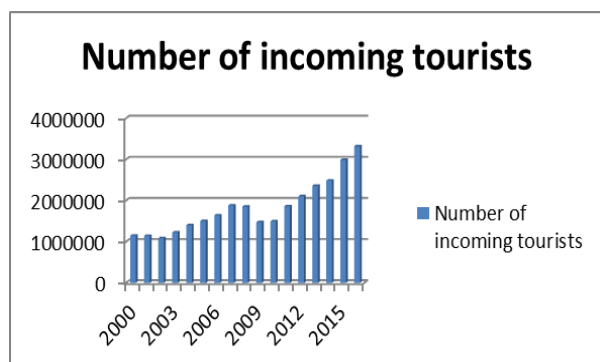


Fig.1. Number of incoming tourists
 Source: Own determination.

Regarding the nationality of the tourists, the number of Romanian tourists is steadily increasing (Table 1 and Fig. 1). However, there are several numerical alternations between 2000-2010 and a considerable increase in the period 2010-2016, theory valid for all counties of Transylvania [10].

Table 2. Romanian tourists arrivals in the period 2000-2016

Year	Romanian tourists arrivals
2000	941,935
2001	906,628
2002	820,875
2003	924,038
2004	1,020,795
2005	1,134,495
2006	1,296,593
2007	1,484,291
2008	1,493,739
2009	1,194,352
2010	1,191,469
2011	1,507,850
2012	1,727,467
2013	1,950,649
2014	2,031,982
2015	2,448,062
2016	2,700,853

Source: National Institute of Statistics, 2017

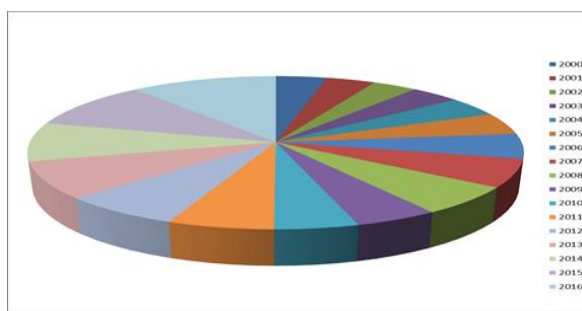


Fig.2. Arrivals of Romanian tourists in the period 2000-2016

Source: Own determination.

Regarding the flow of foreign tourists, there is an alternation in numbers, being at the same time increasing in all regions of Transylvania. Overall, in 2016 there were 608,603 foreign tourists, 50% more than in 2006 (Table 3 and Fig. 3) [7].

Table 3. Foreign tourists arrivals 2006-2016

Year	Foreign tourists arrivals
2006	329,305
2007	383,941
2008	349,184
2009	270,443
2010	293,347
2011	345,706
2012	370,344
2013	399,370
2014	447,656
2015	533,691
2016	608,603

Source: National Institute of Statistics, 2017

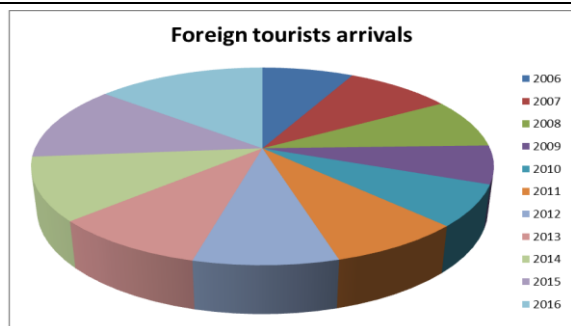


Fig. 3. Arrivals of foreign tourists in the period 2006-2016

Source: Own determination.

Compared to the two categories of tourists, Romanians are considerably above the numerical level, in 2016 being 4 times more Romanian tourists than foreign tourists (Fig. 4) [11].

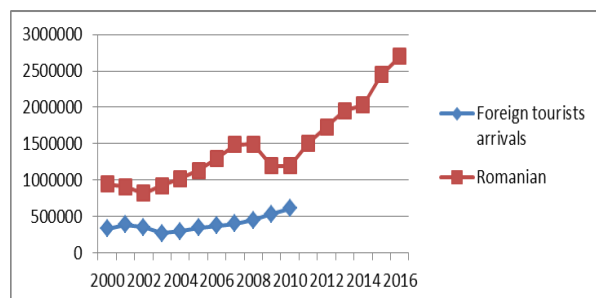


Fig. 4. Arrivals of Romanian and foreign tourists from 2000 to 2016

Source: Own determination.

Overall, at the level of the region, the number of overnight stays also shows an increase over the 15 years studied, with the exception of 2009 and 2010 when the number of arrivals was lower compared to the rest of the analyzed period (Fig.5 and Table 4) [1].

Table 4. Overnight stays in the period 2001-2016

Year	Overnight stays
2001	3,474,414
2002	3,174,152
2003	3,449,053
2004	3,613,916
2005	3,828,655
2006	4,024,893
2007	4,446,282
2008	4,405,702
2009	3,579,594
2010	3,507,824
2011	4,184,375
2012	4,584,499
2013	4,998,502
2014	5,305,651
2015	6,437,992
2016	6,857,453

Source: National Institute of Statistics, 2017

In 2009 and 2010 the number of overnight stays decreases by approximately 1 million if compared to 2008 when there were 4,405,702 [13].

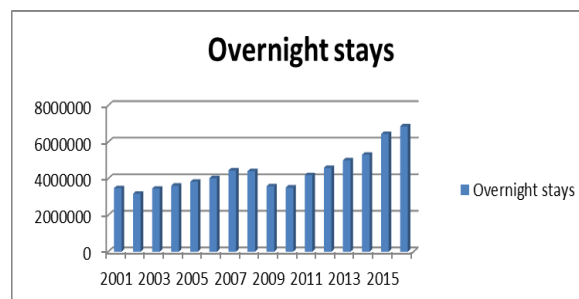


Fig.5. Overnight stays in the period 2001-2016

Source: Own determination.

In conclusion, the increase of the conditions regarding the accommodation base, the increasing capitalization of the natural and cultural-historical heritage has led and continues to increase the flow of tourists, attracting also tourists from other countries [12].

CONCLUSIONS

Transylvania is the geographical region located within the Carpathian Arch being also one of the historical regions of Romania.

Regarding the natural tourist potential of the area within the region, there are natural and national parks (eg Cheile Bicazului-Hășmaș National Park), nature reserves (eg Aiud Cheile, Cheile Râmețului, Cheile Întregalde), winter resorts (eg: Predeal, Păltiniș) and spa resorts. The cultural and historical heritage is also complex and includes ancient vestiges (eg: The vestiges of the Roman castles Apulum), cities with a complex cultural heritage (eg Brasov, Sibiu), fortified churches and fortresses (eg Prejmer Church, Viscri, Saschiz, Rupea Fortress, Râșnov Fortress), castles and palaces (eg Bran Castle, Brukenthal Palace), monasteries (eg Sâmbăta de Sus). The tourist potential is redeemed through a series of festivals that take place annually, festivals that can bring together up to 300,000 people (eg Untold). As far as the tourist flow is concerned, it is constantly increasing from one year to the next, as it is at regional and local level.

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