

RESEARCHES REGARDING THE POTENTIAL OF HUNEDOARA COUNTY

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Abstract: In this paper it is presented the tourism potential of Hunedoara County, the potential highlighted by the beauty and the variety of the natural and antropic framework. Situated in the western part of Romania, Hunedoara County covers an area of 7,016 km², representing about 2.9% from the total area of the country. We chose this County because we believe that it has a remarkable tourist potential, due to the existing tourist attractions, of mountain and depression areas, as well as the variety of elements of architecture, folk art and folklore that offer tourist varieties for the taste of every tourist. One of the most important monuments from the area, with a special charm, due to the special construction style, is the Huniazi Castle, built in the 14th century, on the site of an ancient Roman castle, this being one of the most visited castles from Romania.

Key words: *tourism potential, tourism, tourists, tourist traffic, Hunedoara*

INTRODUCTION

Over time, tourism has transformed itself from a branch of the economy little used at the beginnings of its emergence, into a significant element of today's socio-economic development. We can say that tourism has begun to be more and more present in people's lives, representing at the same time a sign of the evolution and welfare of the population.

Romania, from tourist point of view, has a remarkable potential having a varied geographic area with relief forms and landscapes of an immeasurable value. In addition to the natural tourism potential, our country is also cradled by a wealth of resources of significant cultural and historical value.

According to some authors, the development of tourism implies the existence of a tourism potential which, by its attractiveness, ensures the integration of a tourist region or area in the domestic and international tourist circuits and which allows the access of the tourists through appropriate arrangements. [1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8]

Although Romania has a high tourist potential, it is not sufficiently capitalized. By its capitalization, the country would earn an important source of income, with emphasis on the development of infrastructure and of the tourist material base. [6]

MATERIAL AND METHODS

In order to realize this work we have consulted different bibliographic sources, as well as data obtained from the Hunedoara City Hall and from the National Institute of Statistics. With the help of the data obtained from INS, we managed to highlight the tourist traffic and the tourist flows from the County.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Located in the central and western part of Romania, Hunedoara County borders with Arad, Alba, Valcea, Gorj, Caras-Severin, Timis and Bihor Counties, the county residence being the Deva municipality. The main localities of the County are the municipalities of Hunedoara, Petrosani, Brad, Orastie and Calan, Hateg, Simeria, Vulcan, Petrița, Lupeni, Uricani and Aninoasa. [10]

The predominant relief is mountainous, the County having over 30 peaks - among them is Retezat (2,484 m), Peleaga (2,509 m), Papusa (2,502 m), Gugu (2,291 m),

Parangul Mare (2,519 m). The main rivers have over 500 km length and on the entire surface of the County there are over 80 glacial lakes.



Figure 1. Map of Hunedoara County

Hunedoara County has a valuable tourist potential, due to the existing tourist objectives, due both to the natural conditions, but also to the historical and cultural life continue and long-lasting that has developed on these lands.

Hunedoara County has over 400 tourist attractions, starting with the prehistoric period and continuing with the Dacian, Roman, feudal and modern period. Here are also the two capitals of Dacia and Roman Dacia - Sarmizegetusa Regia and Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa. These touristic objectives are grouped in 5 main areas, namely: *Padureni Land, Zarand Country, Mures Valley, Hateg Country and Jiu Valley.*

When we speak about tourism, Hunedoara is a County that offers diversity, starting with mountains, special landscapes, historical vestiges that are included in UNESCO World Heritage, and last but not least mountain resorts such as: Straja or Parang and spa resorts: Geagiu-Bai and Calan Bai, renowned for the curative qualities that they have.

From the researches carried out here, we can state with certainty that, the potential of Hunedoara County is not very well capitalized, either because of the lack of financial resources, either because of the lack of initiative to promote the region's values.

Although it has a large number of tourist attractions, Hunedoara County is ranked on 19th place at national level, in terms of tourist traffic and accommodation capacity, as it can be seen in the tables and graphs below.

From the data presented in Table 1, there is a slight increase of the number of tourist units, reaching in the year 2016 to 125 units, compared to 67 units in the year 2000. It can be noticed that since the year 2010 tourist inns have disappeared, but has increased the number of agrotourist guesthouse, of tourist guesthouses and tourist villas has increased considerably.

Table 1.
Tourist accommodation structures with functions of tourist accommodation

-Number of units-

Specification	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total	67	86	94	94	96	93	99	109	125
Hotels and motels	24	23	21	23	25	28	30	29	30
Hostels	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	2	2
Tourist inns	5	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Tourist cottages	12	10	3	7	7	6	7	4	4
Camping and cottage units	1	1		1	1	1	1	2	2
Tourist villas	17	18	19	18	17	15	17	19	24
Camps for pupils and preschools	5	5	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Tourist guesthouses	2	16	22	22	25	24	25	25	30
Agrotourist guesthouses	1	11	26	19	17	16	16	24	29
Tourist stops	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Holiday villages	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	1

Source: National Institute of Statistics, 2017, [9]

The way of using the existing accommodation capacities is reflected through the indicator of the tourist accommodation capacity in operation. This indicator expresses the number of days that the accommodation places were occupied in the analyzed period. [3]

In terms of increasing the number of accommodation places, Hunedoara County is on the last place in the Western Region, although in the year 2000 it ranked on second place, after Caras-Severin County. There is a significant increase in the year 2015, a period when tourist units were reintroduced in circuit tourist units in important settlements such as Orastioara de Sus or Hateg.

Table 2
The tourist accommodation capacity existing and in function of Hunedoara County

Years	The existing tourist accommodation capacity (places)	The tourist accommodation capacity in function (places-days)
2010	3707	933333
2011	3946	915463
2012	4072	966713
2013	4186	1030567
2014	4468	1180383
2015	4942	1293654
2016	5490	1310703

Source: National Institute of Statistics, [9]

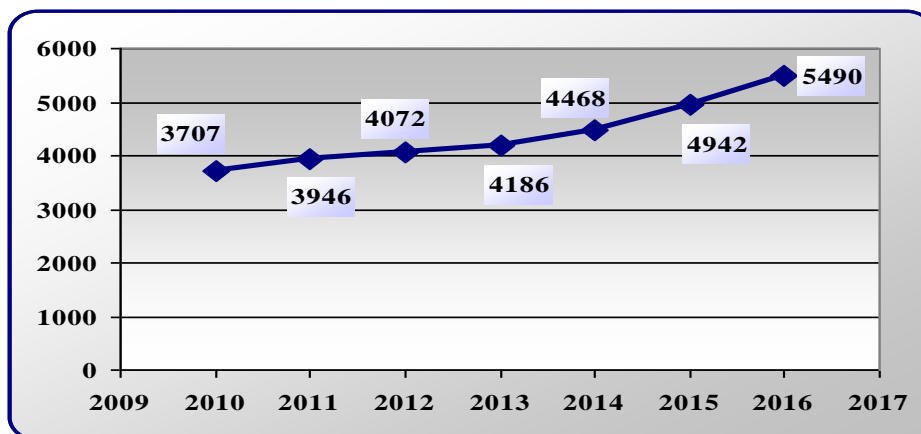


Figure 2. The existing tourist accommodation capacity

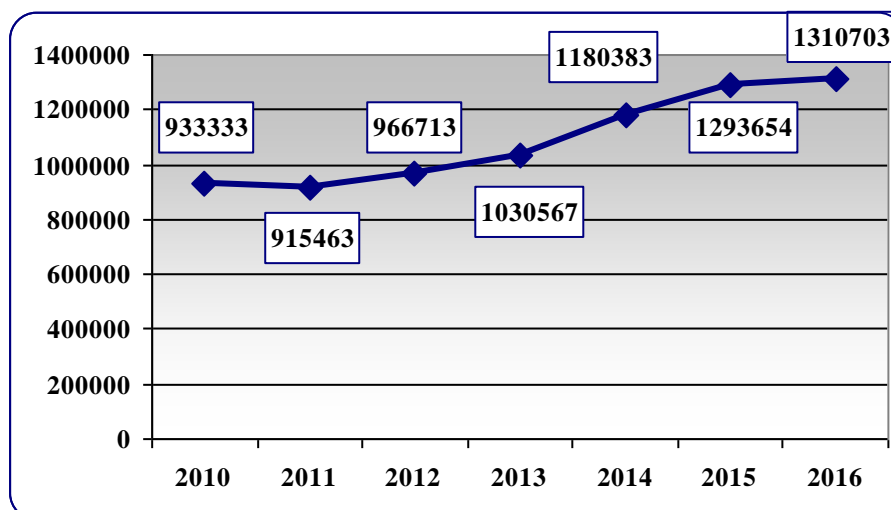


Figure 3. The tourist accommodation capacity in function

Regarding the number of arrivals in accommodation units from Hunedoara County, it can be seen that it has increased from the year 2010 to the year 2015 and in the year 2016 it has slightly decreased. A good thing is that the number of foreign tourists has increased steadily since 2013, as it can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3

Arrivals of tourists in accommodation units from West Region

- number of people -

Specification	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total							
West Region	542801	639657	674981	684383	727668	875750	899961
Hunedoara	71996	82023	86540	88306	110536	151060	143870
Romanians							
West Region	426442	506859	528805	543674	582463	713729	726143
Hunedoara	62621	72928	77537	79202	100866	140286	130778
Foreigners							
West Region	116359	132798	146176	140709	145205	162021	173818
Hunedoara	9375	9095	9003	9104	9670	10774	13092

Source: National Institute of Statistics, [9]

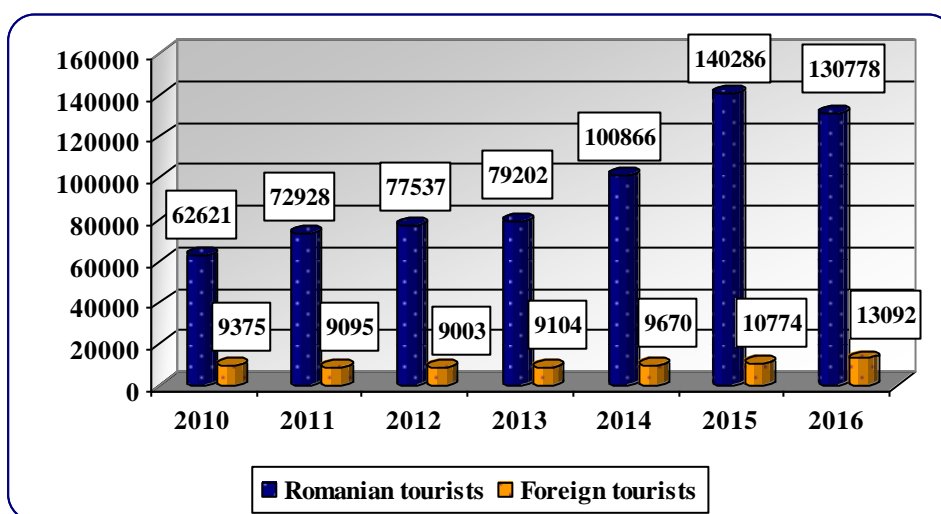


Figure 4. The evolution of tourist arrivals in accommodation units from Hunedoara County

The same trend is visible also in case of the number of overnight stays, where the number of foreign tourists has steadily increased from one year to another, but a significant increase can be noticed in the case of Romanian tourists, from the year 2010 to the year 2015 and in the year 2016 the number of those has began to fall slightly. A significant number of overnight stays were recorded in the Geoagiu-Bai resort.

Table 4

**Overnight stays on tourists in accommodation units from the West Region
- number of people -**

Specification	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Total							
West Region	1504943	1682795	1672222	1755149	1829515	2233754	2283902
Hunedoara	222679	230935	232024	237875	272133	343788	323446
Romanians							
West Region	1254705	1404924	1382868	1469292	1527517	1872194	1914718
Hunedoara	205625	209916	214881	221841	255698	325422	303699
Foreigners							
West Region	250238	277871	289354	285857	301998	361560	369184
Hunedoara	17054	21019	17143	16034	16435	18366	19747

Source: National Institute of Statistic, [9]

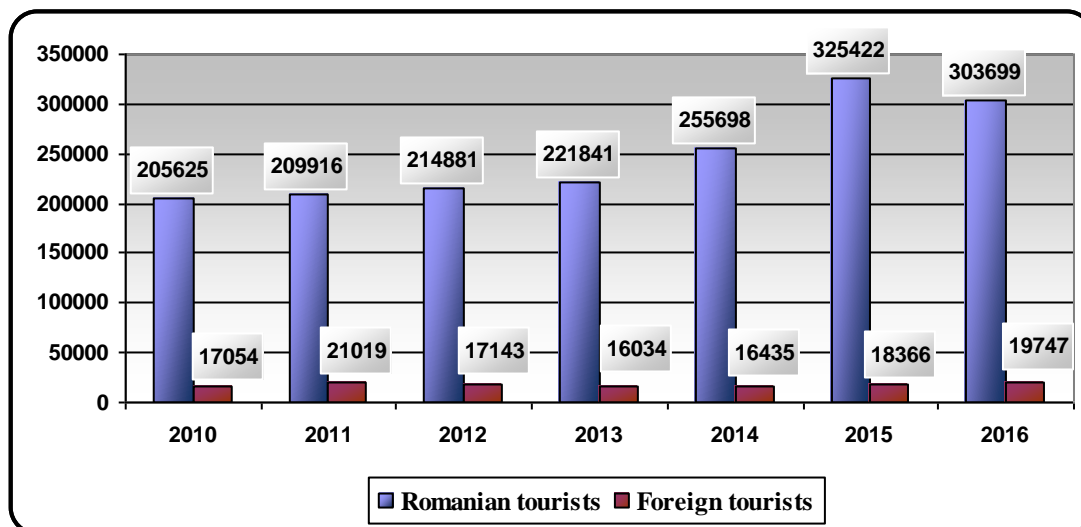


Figure 5. The evolution of overnight stays in accommodation units from Hunedoara County

In conclusion, Hunedoara County is one of the richest in terms of tourist attractions. Visiting this region you will find one of the most beautiful castles in Europe, the Corvin Castle, archaeological sites of major importance for the history of Romania, fortresses, fortifications and churches with fascinating stories, exciting museums and a geopark dedicated to dinosaurs.

All this increases the tourism potential of Hunedoara County, which is in a constantly development process.

CONCLUSIONS

The beauty and variety of the natural environment, as well as the richness of the cultural elements, give to Hunedoara County a remarkable tourist potential, this being recognized worldwide for the Dacian fortresses, for the architectural monuments, as well as for beautiful wooden churches.

The re-launch of tourism in Hunedoara County should be a priority for decision-factors, because it generates jobs, attracts investors and at the same time increases the

region's income.

A weak point of Hunedoara tourism is the poor management regarding the infrastructure, the arrangement of the resorts from the area, the lack of advertising and the insufficiency or deterioration of the mark on the tourist routes.

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