

## STUDY REGARDING ATTRACTIVITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF TOURISTS FOR THE EMBLEMATIC VILLAGES (REPRESENTATIVE) OF ROMANIA

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**Abstract:** Since 2020, once with the appearance of SARS COV 2, the rural tourism market has suffered in Romania. First year determined the majority owners of boarding houses to use more the internet for the visibility of his business. The most they had to gain the boarding houses with few rooms due to the fact that they could accommodate a relatively small group of tourists. Through this paper we tried to determine the influence of certain rankings, tops, on the clients of rural tourism in Romania as well as the preferences of the clients for these villages. In online, appeared a lot of information about the most representative for rural tourism, Romanian villages. Were analyzed 6 charts made up of: freedom, travelers in basketball shoes, the financial newspaper, aventurescu and life.ro. Were found here villages from all regions of our country and we presented the aspects for which they were considered representative. Were performed an opinion poll on 150 respondents to find out their preferences regarding the attractiveness and accessibility of these villages.

**Key words:** rural tourism, tourist villages, folk costumes, respondents

### INTRODUCTION

Starting with the years 1967-1968, we were able to identify attempts at organized tourism in Romania as well. That type of tourism was well represented by tourism on the Black Sea coast.

In 1972, an order no. 297/1972 was elaborated, through which the Research Center for International Tourism Promotion identifies and selects certain representative rural localities that were to be launched in tourism. The County Tourism Offices as well as the local administration bodies took part in these researches. 118 were introduced to the locality, but later, by decree 225/1974, it was forbidden to accommodate foreign tourists in private homes. These villages could not benefit from the estimated promotion, nor from the organization of tourist activities nor from the proper arrangement. [3]

These villages that stood out were: Letesti (Argeș), Fundata and Sirmea (Brașov), Sibiel (Sibiu), Tismana (Gorj), Mirighiol and Crisan (Tulcea), Racos (Timiș), Sfântu Gheorghe (Tulcea), Bogdan Vodă (Maramureș), Vatra Moldoviței (Suceava), Poiana Sărata (Bacău), Vaideeni (Vâlcea).

Until 1990, in the Romanian rural area, visiting and accommodation in the villagers' homes was practiced only rarely, sporadically and unofficially. After this year, due to the varied natural and anthropic potential and a good preservation of the culture and traditions in this area, the interest for rural tourism is accentuated. This is also stimulated by the emergence of associations and bodies that, estimating the value of these settlements in the tourist activity, support and prove them. These include the Romanian Federation for Montana Development (1990), the National Association for Ecological and Cultural Rural Tourism in Romania (ANTREC)-1994, the Romanian Agency for Agrotourism (1995).[5]

Due to these aspects, tourism practiced in rural areas, becomes a form of tourism: rural tourism. This type of tourism is the practice in rural areas which in turn in Romania is structured in villages. On the territory of our country, in 1996 there were 2,686 communes with a total of 13,285 villages. The Romanian villages benefit from a series of characteristics, among which the uniqueness of the landscapes, the traditions and the cultural dowry make these settlements authentic and special.

The predominant characteristics of these localities, suitable for rural tourism are: the natural setting and the close position of spectacular tourist objectives in the category of relief such as gorges, caves, cliffs and slopes. It also benefits from a favorable climatic environment unaffected by modern forms of pollution and forms of natural treatment extremely well appreciated in rural tourism. [8]

Both the mountain and hill splints that are scattered with the houses on the hills with meadows and meadows and sometimes orchards and vineyards and the plains where crafts and other specific activities lead to the fundamental motivation of many tourists, "return to nature". In recent years, there are many positive assessments of practical tourism in these villages, already existing in the tourist literature.

We consider that the following elements have an important role in choosing a village as a tourist destination: natural factors, among which, geographical location, relief, hydrography, vegetation, fauna and climate; cultural factors such as language, folklore, politics, religion, art, science; the human element: mentality and hospitality reflected in the attitude of the local population, of the providers towards tourists; general infrastructure: telecommunications, means of transport, water supply, sewerage systems, structure and appearance of villages, as well as tourist facilities: tourist transport, means of accommodation, food, sports activities, entertainment, information possibilities, etc. [10]

Based on these characteristics, the types of tourist villages were established to identify the specifics of the village in order to promote the most appropriate forms of tourism.

The characteristics that can be taken into account in the typology of tourist villages are numerous and varied from one geographical area to another, from one locality to another. Therefore the typology of tourist villages is :

- Ethnographic and folkloric tourist villages (Bogdan Voda, Vaideni, Leresti, Sibiel ). In these villages, the traditional dress, the architecture, the furniture and the decoration of the rooms in rustic style, the music and the popular choreography predominate and are imposed as essential properties of the respective village.

- Tourist villages of artistic and artisanal creation (Tismana, Marga) - traditional crafts related to handicrafts and various artistic creations are developed in households or in some specialized workshops where artists and craftsmen make sculpture in traditional materials such as wood or stone, folk weaving ( carpets, beds, cloths), folk costumes and stitching, folk and household ceramics, naive painting and icons on glass, wood and canvas, folk music and dances

- Climatic and landscape tourist villages (Fundata, Bran, Sirnea)

- Fishing and hunting tourist villages (villages in the Danube Delta, Gurghiu valleys and Viseului valleys).

- Vine - fruit tourist villages (Recas, Agapia).

- Pastoral tourist villages (Deeni Valley, Jina).

The originality and uniqueness of these aspects is complemented by the maintenance in time of some associated ethnographic and folkloric values, worthy of consideration in the constitution of a tourist product.

Currently, I have read recommendations about some villages and I have noticed a growing demand for the tops according to the natural and anthropic environment that the respective localities have. [1]

In the Romanian patrimony Romania is well represented for example in Sibiu Biertan county and Valea Viilor, Prejmer and Viscri localities in Braşov county, Rîmetea Alba county, Dîrjiu Harghita county, Saschiz Mureş county, Cîlnic Alba county, Horezu Vîlcea county D, Bşti, Ieud, Plopoş, Poienile Izei from Maramureş etc. [13]

According to the top of the newspaper Libertatea, the six most important tourist localities are: Rîmetea, Alba county, Șirnea, Brașov county, Breb and Botiza, Maramureș county, Jurilovca, Tulcea county, Pleșca, Gura Humorului, Suceava county. [14]

Having two years of experience in the online environment, I found numerous articles and many travel blogs and I also considered useful a point of view of those from travelers in basketball and aventuresc.ro.

Basketball travelers wrote about 10 villages in Romania, of unreal beauty. In their ranking, the first place is occupied by Săpânța Village, Maramureș followed by Fundata Brașov County and Runcuri Bihor County. [15]

Aventurescu.ro considers the village of Breb in Maramureș County the most beautiful Romanian village.

Analyzing these points of view, we conducted a questionnaire on the requirements of domestic tourism consumers. The aim of this study is to observe if there is demand and who forms the tourist demand for Romanian villages. [16,17,18]

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

For this paper we collected data from the National Institute of Statistics and Internet sources. One of the methods used was observation and survey. In the survey, we used the questionnaire as a research tool. I applied the questionnaire on a shoulder of 150 respondents. The objectives of the research are to establish the demand for domestic tourism and especially for tourist villages in our country as well as their preferences for a representative village in a certain area.

### **RESEARCH RESULTS**

Rural tourism is born from the tourist's need to discover new habits, products, traditions, culture, inhabitants. A greater requirement for the development of tourist villages would be the promotion of rural settlements with ethnofolkloric values, cultural and picturesque natural setting, the organization of handicraft exhibitions, ethnographic museums, the stimulation of popular rhapsodies within these rural localities. The more ethnographic and folkloric elements there are, the greater the tourist attraction .

Arrivals registered in the tourist reception structures in September 2021 amounted to 1.072 million people, an increase of 35% compared to September 2020, according to data published by the National Institute of Statistics according to table no. 1.[6]

**Table 1.**

**The name of the table Arrivals and overnight stays of tourists, in tourist reception structures with tourist accommodation functions, by tourist areas, in September 2021 compared to September 2020**

	Arrivals			Night's accommodation		
	Period 01.01-30.09.2020	Period 01.01-30.09.2021	The period 01.01-30.09.2021 compared to the period 01.01 - 30.09.2020	Period 01.01-30.09.2020	Period 01.01-30.09.2021	The period 01.01-30.09.2021 compared to the period 01.01 - 30.09.2020
	Thousand	Thousand	(%)	Thousand	Thousand	(%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>5161.8</b>	<b>7510.3</b>	<b>145.5</b>	<b>12075.4</b>	<b>17122.9</b>	<b>141.8</b>
Romanian tourists	4768.4	6892.2	144.5	11221.9	15787.3	140.7
Foreign tourists *)	393.4	618.1	157.1	853.5	1335.6	156.5
of which:						
- Europe	306.1	489.3	159.8	652.0	1036.2	158.9
- European Union	227.5	378.9	166.5	479.4	793.0	165.4
- Asia	42.1	53.5	127.1	105.9	130.4	123.1
- North America	21.4	37.6	175.7	46.9	84.9	181.0
- South america	3.0	2.9	96.7	6.7	7.6	113.4
- Africa	3.7	3.8	102.7	8.6	8.9	103.5

Source: INSE

Regarding the preferences of Romanian tourists, we can see from table no. 2 that they prefer cities in favor of the rural space.

**Table 2.**

**Distribution of arrivals of Romanian tourists in the structures of tourist reception, by tourist areas, in September 2021 compared to September 2020**

	September 2020	September 2021
Bucharest and the county seat cities, exclusively Tulcea	31.8	38.2
Other places and tourist routes	18.5	17.8
Mountain resorts	20.2	19.5
Spas in the spa area	11.6	10.8
Resorts in the coastal area exclusively Constanța	14.6	11.9
Danube Delta area, including the city of Tulcea	3.3	1.8

Source: INSE

Unlike Romanian tourists, foreign ones preferred other destinations and tourist routes as destination, according to table no. 3.

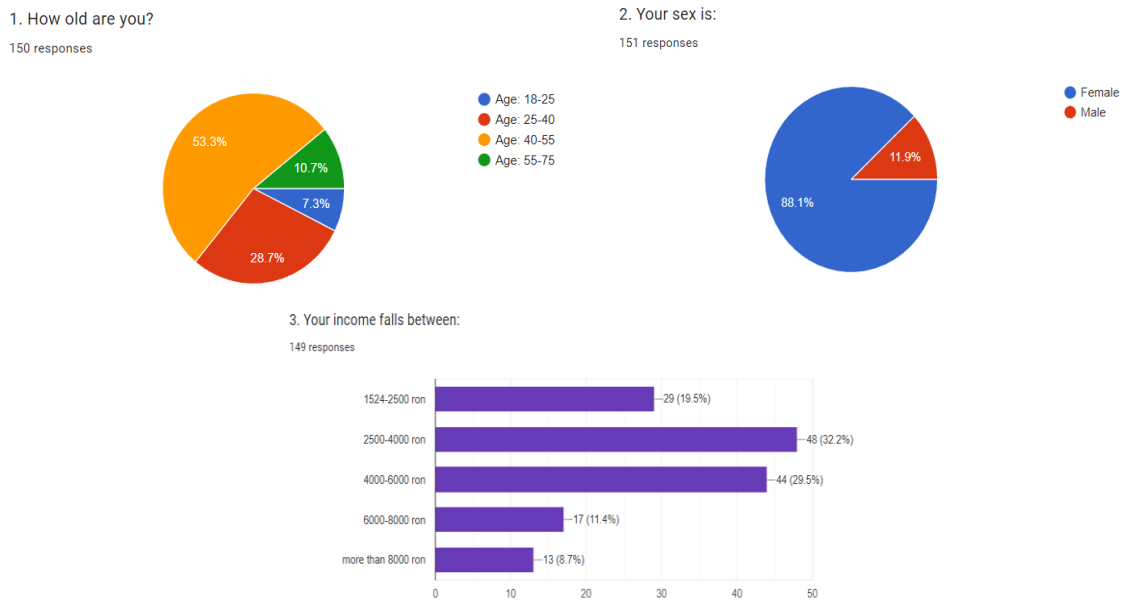
**Table 3.**

**Distribution of arrivals of foreign tourists in the tourist reception structures, by tourist areas, in September 2021 compared to September 2020**

	September 2020	September 2021
Bucharest and the county seat cities, exclusively Tulcea	76.7	75.6
Other places and tourist routes	11.5	14.0
Mountain resorts	7.9	7.1
Spas in the spa area	0.8	1.3
Resorts in the coastal area exclusively Constanța	2.6	1.5
Danube Delta area, including the city of Tulcea	0.5	0.5

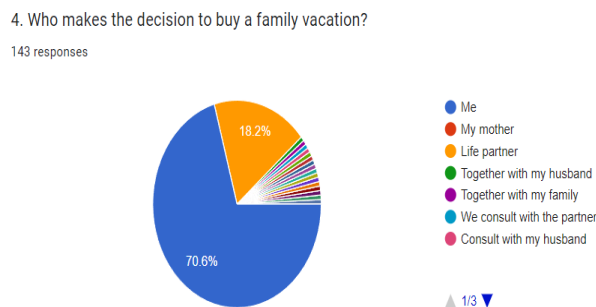
Source: INSE

We also wanted to verify this situation following an opinion poll regarding the demand for rural tourism of Romanian tourists. Questionnaire on the intention to travel to the representative villages of rural tourism in Romania. At the first question we can see that most of the respondents are people between 40-55 years old and women are over 80% of those surveyed.



**Figure 1. Information about respondents**

When asked about income, we can see that the majority of respondents earn between 2,500 and 6,000 RON, so after covering the daily basket for consumption, they will have a part left and to practice tourism. All interviewees have a say in the decision to buy a vacation.

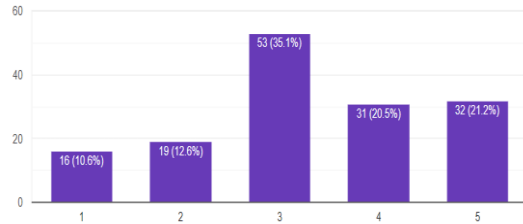


**Figure 2. Taking the decision of purchasing a trip**

Only 32% of respondents consider it important to spend their holidays in the country. We noticed that 5.4% of respondents visited all areas of our country, maybe that's why 10.6 percent do not consider it important to spend their holidays in the country.

5. How important is for you to spend your vacation in Romania?

151 responses



6. Which areas of our country have you visited so far?

148 responses

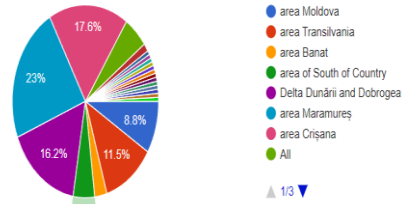
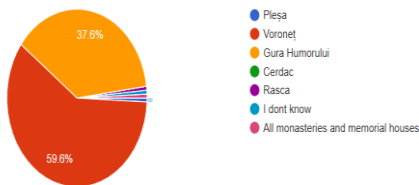


Figure 3. Spending holiday in Romania

Regarding the representative village in the area of Moldova, 59% of respondents consider Voroneț locality as the most important. Regarding the Transylvania Area, opinions are divided, but the villages of Viscri, Rupea and Lunca de Sus are among the respondents' favorites.

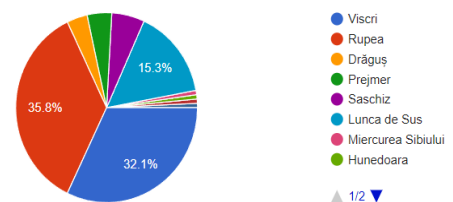
7. In terms of the natural setting, history, architecture, you consider it the representative village in the Moldova area?

141 responses



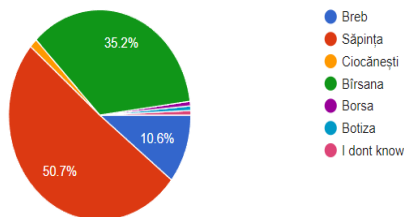
8. In terms of the natural setting, history, architecture, you consider it the representative village in the Transilvania area?

137 responses



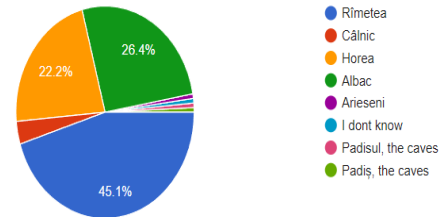
9. In terms of the natural setting, history, architecture, you consider it the representative village in the Maramureș area?

142 responses



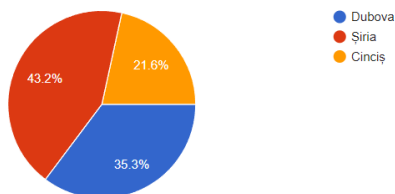
10. In terms of the natural setting, history, architecture, you consider it the representative village in the Apuseni area?

144 responses



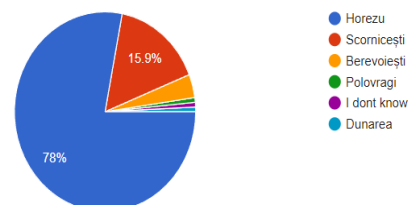
11. In terms of the natural setting, history, architecture, you consider it the representative village in the Banat area?

139 responses



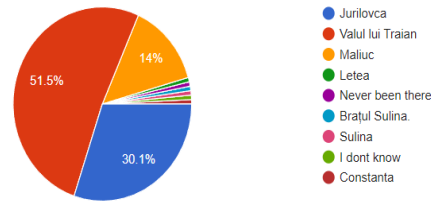
12. In terms of the natural setting, history, architecture, you consider it the representative village in the South of Country area?

132 responses



13. In terms of the natural setting, history, architecture, you consider it the representative village in the Dobrogea and Delta Dunării area?

136 responses



**Figure 4. Representative village from Romania**

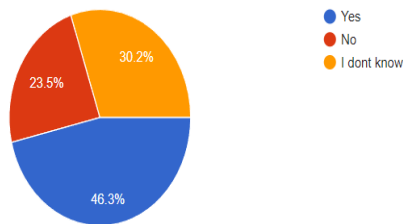
In the Maramureș area we also have a favorite village of 50% of the respondents, this being Săpânța, followed by Bîrsana and Breb. And in Apuseni, the village of Rîmetea is preferred, followed by Albac and Horea.

In the Banat part, opinions are divided between 3 localities, Syria, Dubova and Cinciș. In the southern part of our country, the village of Horezu wins detachedly in the preferences of the respondents.

In the Danube Delta, preferences put the village of Valul lui Traian first, followed by Jurilovca and Maliuc. When asked if any of the villages listed above is on the list of vacation priorities, 46 percent said they would like to visit one of the villages, which confirms that there will be demand for this type of tourism-rural tourism.

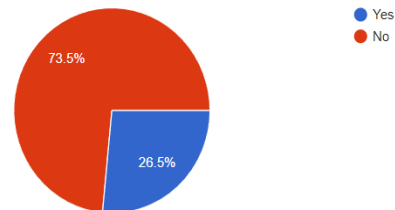
14. In the near future, are any of this village among your priorities?

149 responses



15. In these choices you also consulted the specialized magazines or tourism influencers?

147 responses



**Figure 5. Chosing the Romanian village as a holiday destination**

A relatively small number of 26.5 % of respondents are influenced by the choices made by the tops made by newspapers or by tourism influencers. Only 33.3 % of those surveyed chose the Romanian village as a holiday destination due to the fact that they received holiday tickets.

16. Did the fact that you receive a holiday voucher lead you to choose the village as your holiday destination?

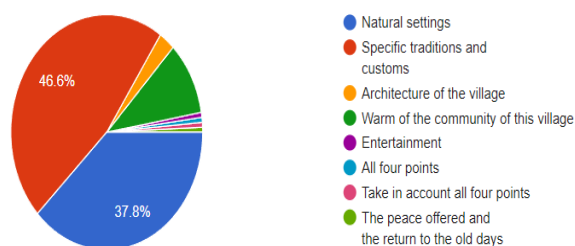
144 responses



**Figure 6. How holiday tickets influence the choice**

17. What are the advantages of Romanian villages as a holiday destination, seen through your eyes?

148 responses



**Figure 7. The strengths of the Romanian village as a holiday destination**

Among the strengths of the Romanian village as a holiday destination are : the specific traditions and customs, the natural setting and the warmth of the communities in these areas.

## CONCLUSIONS

The diversity of the Romanian village as a natural and cultural-historical tourist potential will determine in the future new possibilities for tourism development.

Romanian villages with tourist potential are those that maintain their traditional lifestyle specific to the area. Those villages will become permanent tourist localities that are particularly profitable for the respective community, raising the standard of living in these areas.

The priorities regarding the rural development policy will have to be established according to the degree of economic and social development, the future possibilities of tourism development in those areas and the degree of viability of the rural localities.

Until now, in Romania, the tourist villages have been only partially the object of a tourist promotion and publicity on the internal and external markets, because they have not constituted a priority tourist offer.

From the previous data we noticed that the demand for this type of tourism is higher among foreigners visiting our country and we consider that through a more intense promotion policy of this type of tourism - rural tourism, will have a much larger number of customers. in the near future.

The Romanian villages that stand out through a unique natural setting and which in turn cultivate their ancestral history and architecture as well as specific culinary traditions are the ones that will manage to increase the number of both foreign and local tourists.

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