

## STUDY REGARDING THE AGROTOURISM IN MOUNTAIN AREA OF CARAS-SEVERIN COUNTY

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**Abstract:** *Agrotourism represents a certainty for Romanian rural area, presenting itself as a complex and well articulated activity, designed to satisfy the economic, social, cultural, spiritual needs. Mountain agrotourism part of agrotourism, represents tourist activity organized and developed in hilly and mountainous areas, in peasant households, as a complementary activity of the rural population.*

**Key words:** *agrotourism, peasant households, agrotourist guesthouses*

### INTRODUCTION

The general reasons of tourism activities development, in rural area to those of allowing the spending of a holidays in nature, removing from pollution, traffic etc., converge of primary objective to obtain some favorable economic results for agrotourist service providers - agricultural entrepreneurs. This aspect is determined for using the full facilities from their own farm (buildings and machines) and a better use of the products obtained in the unit [4, 6].

The development of agrotourism is constituted as a benefit for the local population, who wants to spend their holidays in other quiet areas, but low income level does not allow them costly itineraries; prices practiced in agrotourism being more affordable compared to classic tourism, favoring the development of mass tourism.

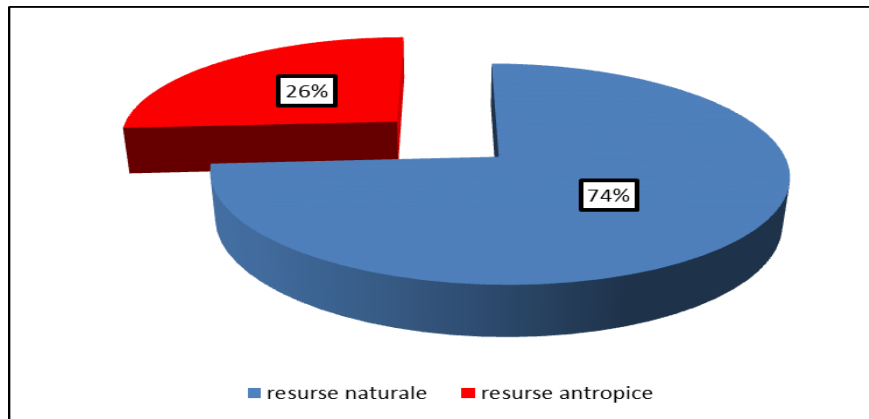
### MATERIALS AND METHODS

In order to realize this study we used, besides specialized literature and data's provided by the Statistical Yearbooks of I.N.S and Travel Yearbooks. Scientific research methods used were: the binom induction and deduction and comparative analysis, used in comparing specific indicators.

### RESEARCH RESULTS

Caras-Severin County is the third the largest from the country. The predominantly landscape is the mountainous one, 65.5%. The rest of the territory is covered by depressions - 17%, hills 11%, and hilly plains about 6.5%. Relief mostly mountainous offers fewer opportunities to agriculture. The tourist potential is high but poorly exploited, could be an important alternative in the economic reconversion of the area.

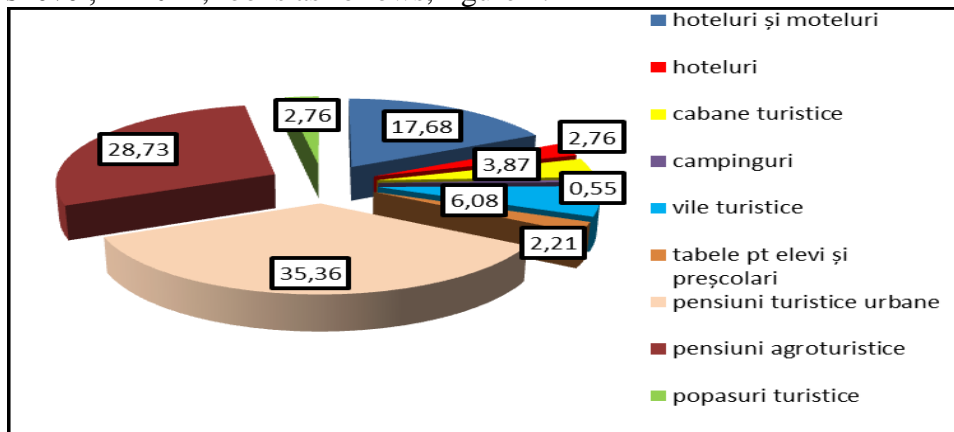
On the territory of Caras Severin County we encounter a large number of natural resources. The generous mountain frame, Danube Clisura, the five parks (four national and one natural) river systems and thermal waters, with some of the most picturesque gorges from the country and the multitude of caves and karst formations make that natural resources to constitute the main tourist attraction of the County (figure 1).



**Figure 1 The distribution of tourist resources of the Caras-Severin County**

Positioning of the Caras-Severin County in a special natural environment, in an area predominantly mountainous, with a rich and varied forestry and wildlife found, with a representative hydrographic network, with special cultural-historical values favor the development of tourism in various forms, these elements representing tourist destinations with a high degree of attractiveness.

The structure of accommodation establishments, by category, at the Caras-Severin County’s level, in 2014, looks as follows, figure 2.



**Figure 2 The structure by categories of the accommodation tourist establishments, Caras-Severin County**

Tourist urban guesthouses are the main accommodation unit, at the Caras-Severin County’s level, with a share of 35.36%, being followed by agrotourist guesthouses, with 28.73%. The high percentage of these structures is due of the fact that, the Caras-Severin County has the most active rural tourist activity, at the level of West Region, here being concentrated 46.43% from the total of agrotourist guesthouses.

From the point of view of the attractiveness of the areas, opportunities to practice rural tourism in the County exist in all tourist areas, unfortunately the infrastructure is not sufficiently developed in order to expand this type of tourism. [8].

In Caras-Severin tourism practiced in rural area knows quite an intense activity. At the County’s level, in 2015 there were registered a number of 65 guesthouses, figure 3. These are distributed in the territory, as follows: 13 localities in which we find recorded only one agrotourist guesthouse (Moldova Noua, Oravita, Bautar, Bolvasnita, Carasova, Constantin Daicoviciu, Dalboset, Dognecea, Glimboca, Paltinis, Pojejena, Sacu and Slatina Timiș), 2 localities with two agrotourist guesthouses (Sichevita and Socol) Mehadia and Berzasca with 3 agrotourist guesthouses, sasca Montana and Valiug with 4, Coronini with

5 agrotourist guesthouses, Turnu Ruieni with 7, Brebu Nou with 11 and Zavoi with 12 rural agrotourist guesthouses. [1,3 ]

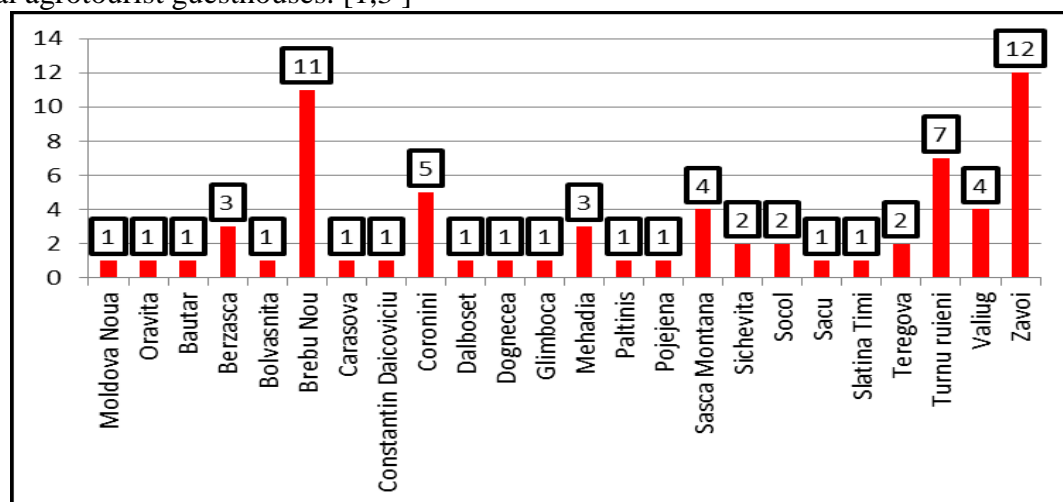


Figure 3 Distribution of agrotourist guesthouses by localities of the county, 2015

Tourist demand represented by the number of tourists which visit the analyzed area. Regarding the number of tourists accommodated, in the period 2000-2015, Caras-Severin County ranks on third place at the level of West Region, after Timis and Arad Counties, concentrating 17.40% from the total number of tourists.

From the total of tourists registered, in 2015, in the tourist reception structures from Caras-Severin County, 95.06% of those are Romanian and 4.94% are foreigners. In 2015, it can observe an increasing of the share of foreign tourists who spent their leisure stay in agrotourist guesthouses, 7.71%, compared with the average of the County, 4.94%.

Table 1 Arrivals of tourists in agrotourist guesthouses from Caras-Severin County, in 2015

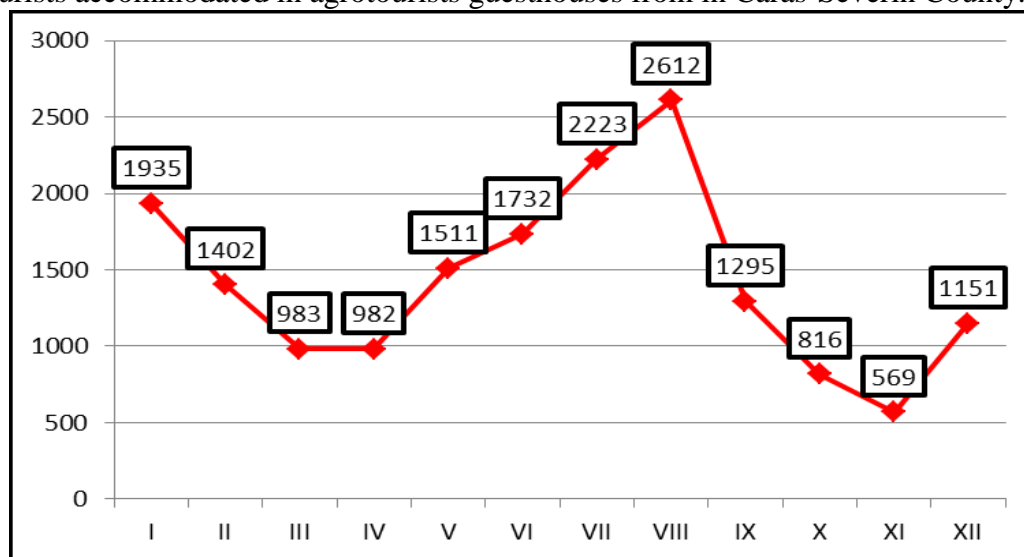
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	2015
Anina	2	-	-	10	4	-	14	8	4	-	-	-	42
Oravita	7	-	7	-	8	17	18	8	-	2	3	7	77
Bautar	7	2	7	5	14	1	-	8	7	2	9	-	62
Berzasca	-	-	-	-	2	4	7	9	34	-	-	12	130
Bolvasnita	4	5	7	3	7	13	10	7	15	7	4	11	93
Brebu Nou	171	84	111	150	123	217	416	380	185	145	82	217	2281
Constantin Daicoviciu	31	27	29	30	29	30	29	30	29	30	29	29	352
Coronini	30	70	43	75	40	45	27	35	37	37	38	24	501
Dognecea	-	-	-	-	2	5	23	47	2	-	-	-	79
Glimboca	5	5	6	12	9	4	5	13	6	14	9	3	91
Mehadia	28	10	10	22	53	144	153	151	22	12	24	18	647
Paltinis	38	43	89	76	84	74	111	116	113	116	108	105	1073
Pojejena	12	24	50	35	22	26	40	103	43	21	19	13	408
Sasca Montana	-	-	-	76	222	176	304	383	110	42	54	20	1387
Sichevita	39	74	48	55	64	62	47	45	34	62	40	24	594
Socol	-	-	4	4	4	-	-	-	6	6	4	-	26
Turnu Ruieni	216	148	180	25	14	43	59	45	59	51	3	90	933
Valiug	493	319	74	95	191	209	236	293	115	-	33	176	2234
Zavoi	52	25	6	65	173	174	191	274	130	75	15	56	1236

Source: <https://statistici.insse.ro/shop/>

In table 1. it presents the number of tourists arrived, in 2015, by months, in localities of Caras-Severin County in which are registered agrotourist guesthouses. The

Valiug locality has concentrated in agrotourist guesthouses existent on the area of the locality a total number of 3039 tourists.

On second place is situated Sasca Montana locality, 2436 tourists, followed by Zavoi, 2345 tourists and Brebu Nou 2267 tourists. These five localities have accommodated in agrotourist guesthouses existent on their territory for more than half from the total number of tourists accommodated in agrotourists guesthouses from in Caras-Severin County.



**Figure 4 The structure of tourist arrivals in agrotourist guesthouses, Caras-Severin County, 2015**

In the specific conditions of the tourism activity, beside to the characteristic aspects of the dispersion in space of tourist flows, it is noted frequently also an unequal distribution in time of the demand for services witch, in various areas of tourist interest, leads to a pronounced concentration of tourists arrivals at certain times from a calendar year and, the reduction of tourist arrivals in other periods. These seasonal variations, have serious economic and organizational implications in tourist activity. [2,7].

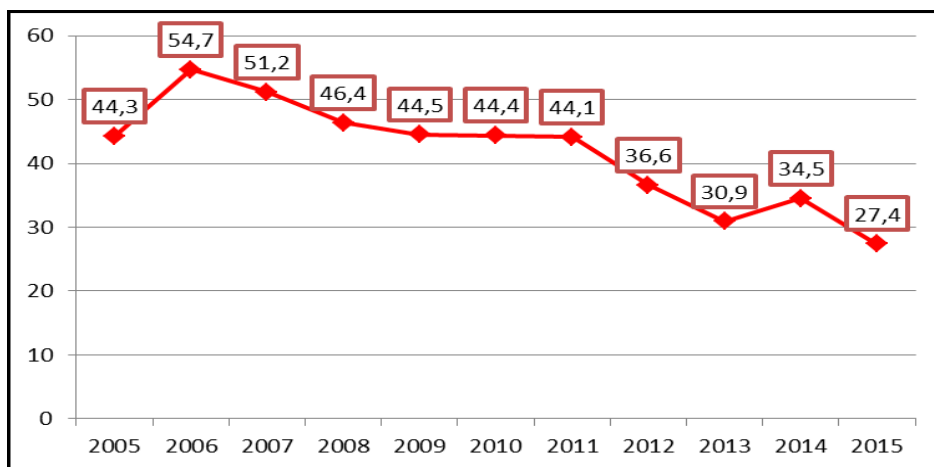
Regarding tourists accommodated in agrotourist guesthouses from Caras-Severin County, can be seen (figure 4) a greater concentration of tourist arrivals in summer months (June, July, August) but also in winter (December, January and February), the tourist activity being characterized by the existence of two periods of the season, both summer and winter. This fact is due to the variety of landforms and existing tourist resources at the County's level, which makes possible the practicing of some varied forms of tourism.

The evolution of the number of overnight stays is a fluctuant one, consisting in increases and decreases of the number of overnight stays during the analyzed period. In 2015, the value of this index is with 6.55% lower than in 2005, at the level of West Region. At the Caras-Severin County's level the situation is more disastrous, the number of overnight stays, decreasing in the same period with 31.05%. [5].

In 2015, the value of overnights stays recorded in accommodation units from Caras-Severin County, represented 30.56% from total overnights stays recorded at regional level.

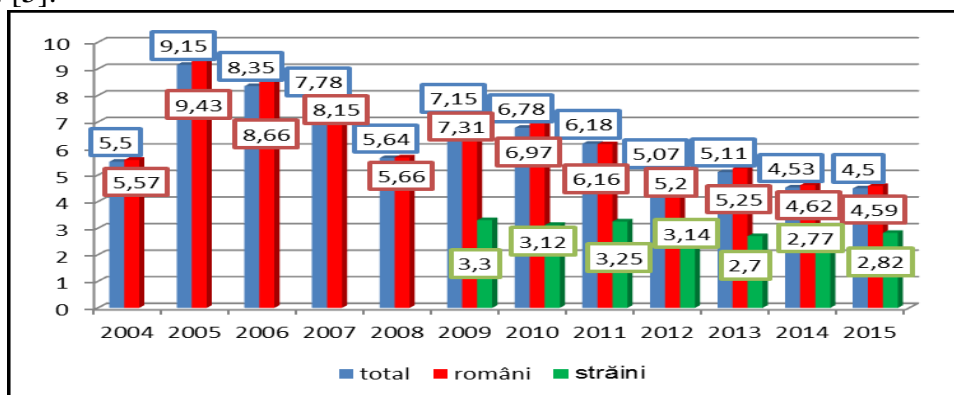
The overnights stays of foreign tourists, in agrotourists guesthouses, in 2015, represent 8.50% from total overnight stays registered in Caras-Severin County.

In the analyzed period, the value of the index of net use of accommodation capacity was considerably reduced, from 54.7% in 2006, to 27.4% in 2015.



**Figure 5 Evolution of the net use index of accommodation capacity, in Caras-Severin County, 2005-2015,%**

Average length of stay is an important indicator in the analysis of tourism activity. figure 6 it is shown this indicator for the period 2004-2015, at the level of Caras-Severin County. [5].

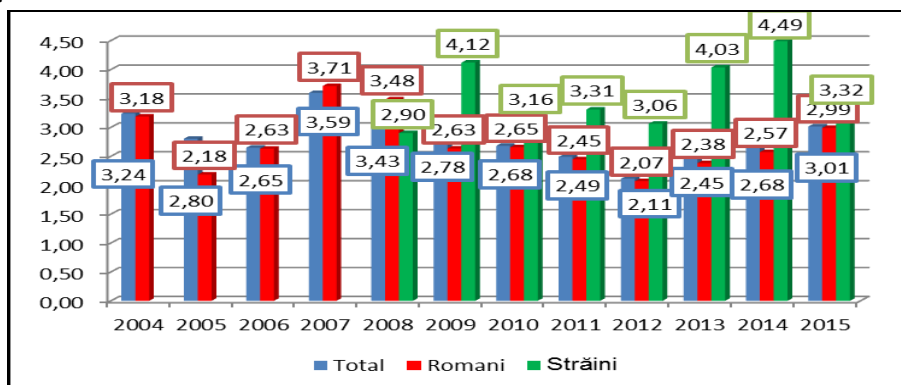


**Figure 6The average length of stay, Caras-Severin County**

The average length of stay for the whole of the tourism activity has recorded in the period 2004-2015, a decrease from 9.15 days/tourist, to 4.5 days/tourist.

In 2015, the average length of stay for Romanian tourists was slightly higher to the county's average, 4.59 days/tourist, and the one of foreign tourists is lower, only 2.82 days/tourist.

The average length of stay, in agrotourist guesthouses is presented in the following figure (7).



**Figure 7 The average length of stay for tourists accommodated in agrotourist ghousehouses, Caras-Severin County, 2000-2015**

The average length of stay in the case of agrotourist guesthouses has had a sinuous evolution, marked both by increases and decreases. In 2015, the value of this indicator was 3.01 days/tourist, lower than the one from the beginning of the analysed period, 3.24 days/tourist. Also, the value is lower of the County average, on the total of accomodation units, 4.5 days/tourist.

In case of Romanian tourists accomodated in agrotourist guesthouses, the average length of stay is lower to the value registered per total tourists, in 2015, this having the value of 2.99 days/tourist.

If we analyze the average length of stay for foreign tourists, accomodated in agrotourist guesthouses from Caras-Severin County, we find that it has the highest value, in 2015 the size of this indicator being 3.32 days/tourist, value higher of the county average for the total number of foreign tourists that have developed an tourist activity in Caras-Severin County. [2].

### CONCLUSIONS

It is important that at the County's level to assess the real chances of tourism development and thus to become one of the key branches of the County's economy. So it would achieve a number of benefic effects: creating new jobs, geographic transfer in terms of resources, planning and land use, balance of payments, faster integration through tourism into the European Union. It must, also, be taken into account the fact that agrotourism has a greater impact than other activity to the development of other economic branches. It is necessary to make a short analysis in order to determine the main priorities for the development of rural tourism and agrotourism in our County.

For economic development of Caras-Severin County, it requires rapid assessment of the chances of rapid development of agrotourism so that it becomes one of the key branches of the County's economy.

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