

DEVELOPMENT OF ROMANIAN VILLAGE THROUGH RURAL TOURISM AND AGRITOURISM

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Abstract: Romania is positioned very well at the international level, from the point of view of agritourism and rural tourism, and the locations that chose to capitalize on local resources in this way had nothing but to gain. Recognizing that the influx of financial resources from tourists in rural areas has a significant economic impact and rural traditions, crafts and customs are in danger of disappearing and yet represent value and interest to tourists came with the positive consequence of the involvement of several entities in rural tourism, both public and private ones. A proposal to develop the Romanian village through tourist activities, using the public-private partnership is the subject of the research and why not a suitable solution for the rural area.

Key words: village, rural tourism, public-private partnership

INTRODUCTION

In Romania, the village is the oldest form of human settlement and can be found in all geographical areas of the country. It consists of an agglomeration of houses and outbuildings, which form the hearth of the village, and of a territory used for agriculture called the border, or village estate. In the lowland regions, large villages predominate, with 2,000-3,000 inhabitants, where the houses are grouped compactly. In the hilly regions, the villages have a population of 500-1,500 inhabitants, with houses lined up along the valleys or roads, or slightly scattered due to the vineyards and orchards that stretch between the houses. This is the most widespread type of village from the country. In the mountainous regions, the villages are small (300-500 inhabitants), with houses generally far apart from each other, and in the intramountain depressions, the villages are larger, with houses closer together. The village is the place where the material and spiritual culture of the Romanian people was born, developed and preserved. [14]

In Romania there are 2,685 communes totaling 13,285 villages, respectively with an average of five villages per commune, [15] the highest density is found in the depressions and in the hill and plateau areas. In the Subcarpathians we have the highest concentration of localities: 12.21 per 100 square kilometers. Romania has the highest share of the rural population (45%), compared to the entire population, among the European states - more than Bulgaria, Hungary or Poland, even than Albania. According to typology, our villages fall into the following categories: [16]

- a) agricultural: participates with more than 70% in the realization of the country's agricultural production;
- b) handicraft activities (fabrics, clothing, etc.)
- c) industrial functions (extractive, processing);
- d) mixed functions (agricultural and forestry, agricultural and fish farming, agro-industrial
- e) special functions (especially tourist, currently fashionable agritourism)

The village speaks through the daily life of the inhabitant, still conditioned by the fertility of the land, by rain and sun, by the harvests gathered at the end of the seasons, which flow rhythmically according to the cosmic clock of the universe. The reality of the Romanian village comes with many negative aspects, many villages are almost depopulated, there are villages from which young people have left. This has been the

reality for at least 60 years. It didn't happen overnight. Unfortunately, there are too few measures to revitalize the village and to involve young people in its development. With all the profound transformations that have taken place in the Romanian village, it will represent a reference space for Romanian culture itself. Traditions have not completely disappeared. Many new things are added, many "fashionable" requirements are added. [12] But there are many cultural stereotypes that remain somewhat constant. The Romanian village is the place where there are carols and carolers, grandmothers still tell old stories to grandchildren, old women still weave or sew costumes for the holidays. The village is a place in which more and more information penetrates, in which the inventions of the 20th century have penetrated - electric light, running water, sewage, the Internet and the means of communication of the 21st century. Unfortunately, sometimes the moral values of preserving a heritage built by traditions disappear, which does not mean that the spirituality of the village disappears. [17]

The territory of Romania presents a wide variety of cultural-historical values - popular art, ethnography, folklore, traditions, historical vestiges - a harmonious natural setting, with a varied and picturesque landscape background. All these are values of Romanian rural tourism in a special way. What do we do with the over 13,285 villages that are actually the most numerous forms of settlement from Romania? Rural tourism represents one of the forms of tourism [5,6,7,11] with which we can be in competition with any European country developed for tourism. Therefore, a possibility to develop the Romanian village can be through rural tourism and agritourism, [9,10] why not using the public-private partnership. [17,8]

In recent years, the PPP phenomenon has made its way into many fields, including the rural environment. Entrepreneurship in rural areas is often based on community, with strong family ties and a relatively broad impact on the rural community. The stimulation of rural entrepreneurship can be achieved in partnership with rural entrepreneurs, taking into account their own needs and aspirations perceived by themselves, expressed in their own way. Practitioners must be fully aware of the importance of communication and partnership, have a correct awareness of the subject of rural entrepreneurship and adopt a consumer-focused approach in relation to entrepreneurs from the countryside. [13]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research has as main objective the proposal to implement a public-private partnership project so as to develop the Romanian village through tourist activities (rural tourism or agritourism). In order to fulfill this proposal were undertaken several steps: characterising the Romanian village, establishing the awareness of the necessity for tourism and rural tourism development and detailing the proposal made. There were collected information as theoretical background and based on them was realized the proposal.

RESEARCH RESULTS

A proposal to *develop the Romanian village through tourist activities (rural tourism or agritourism), using the public-private partnership* is the subject of the research and why not a suitable solution for the rural area.

Justification of the proposal. In the European Union there are precedents regarding tourism in the rural environment, tourism structures in the rural environment being considered:

- the holiday village (large), with full board;
- the village - boarding house, with full board and leisure facilities;
- large boarding house;
- family boarding house, existing in the countryside;

- camping for short stays and/or transit ("caravaning").

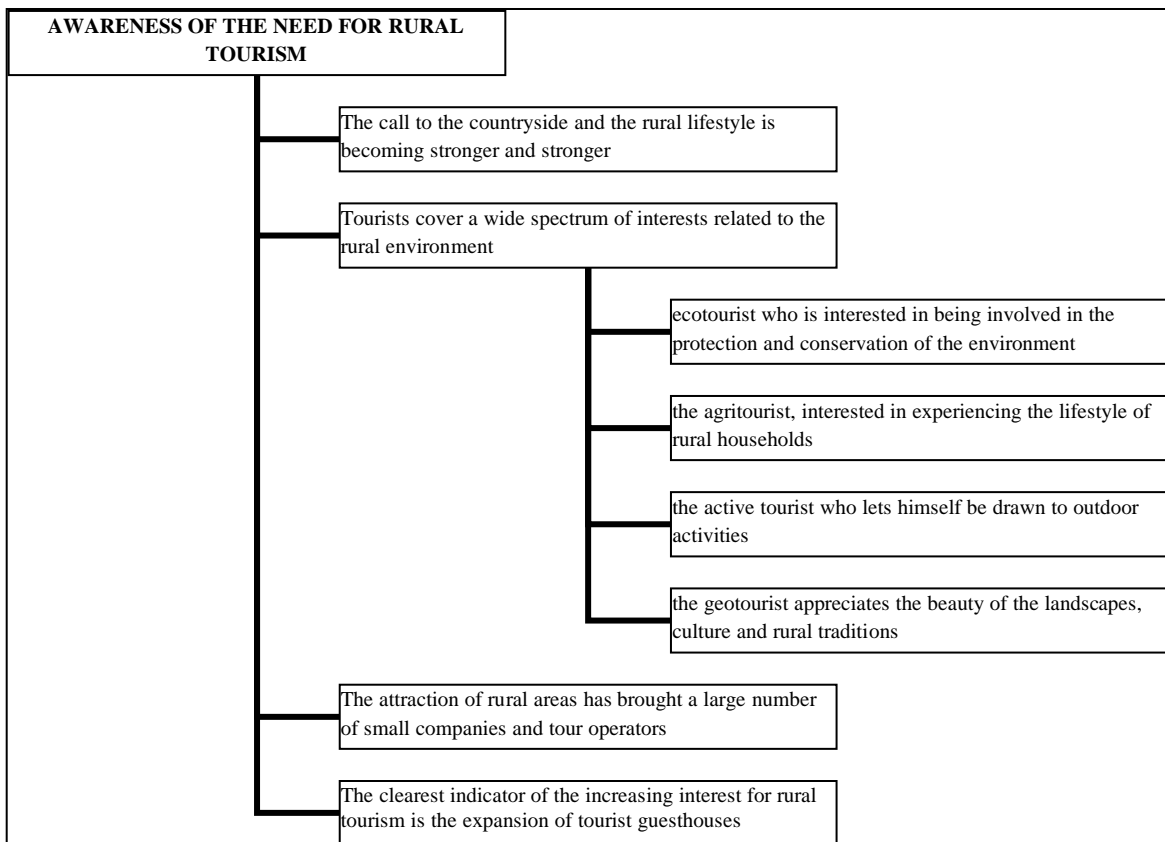


Figure 1. Awareness of the necessity for tourism and rural tourism

The development of tourism is an extremely sensitive aspect, because tourism represents one of the most competitive economic activities in the world. Tourism development does not happen automatically, because it is linked to image and reputation. Successful and sustainable tourism requires cooperation between all responsible factors and requires the formation of partnerships between the public sector, which must support tourism, and the private sector, which must provide the facilities and services for different markets and market segments. Without understanding mutual objectives and problems, tourism will not develop satisfactorily and beneficially.

The proposal to develop the Romanian village through tourist activities (rural tourism or agritourism), using the public-private partnership is necessary to promote the specific, authentic way of life of rural areas and capitalize on this way of life through tourism. In the case of the proposal implementation, the direction of tourist flows will be generated towards rural areas with traditions and with adequate tourist infrastructure for the development of rural tourism.

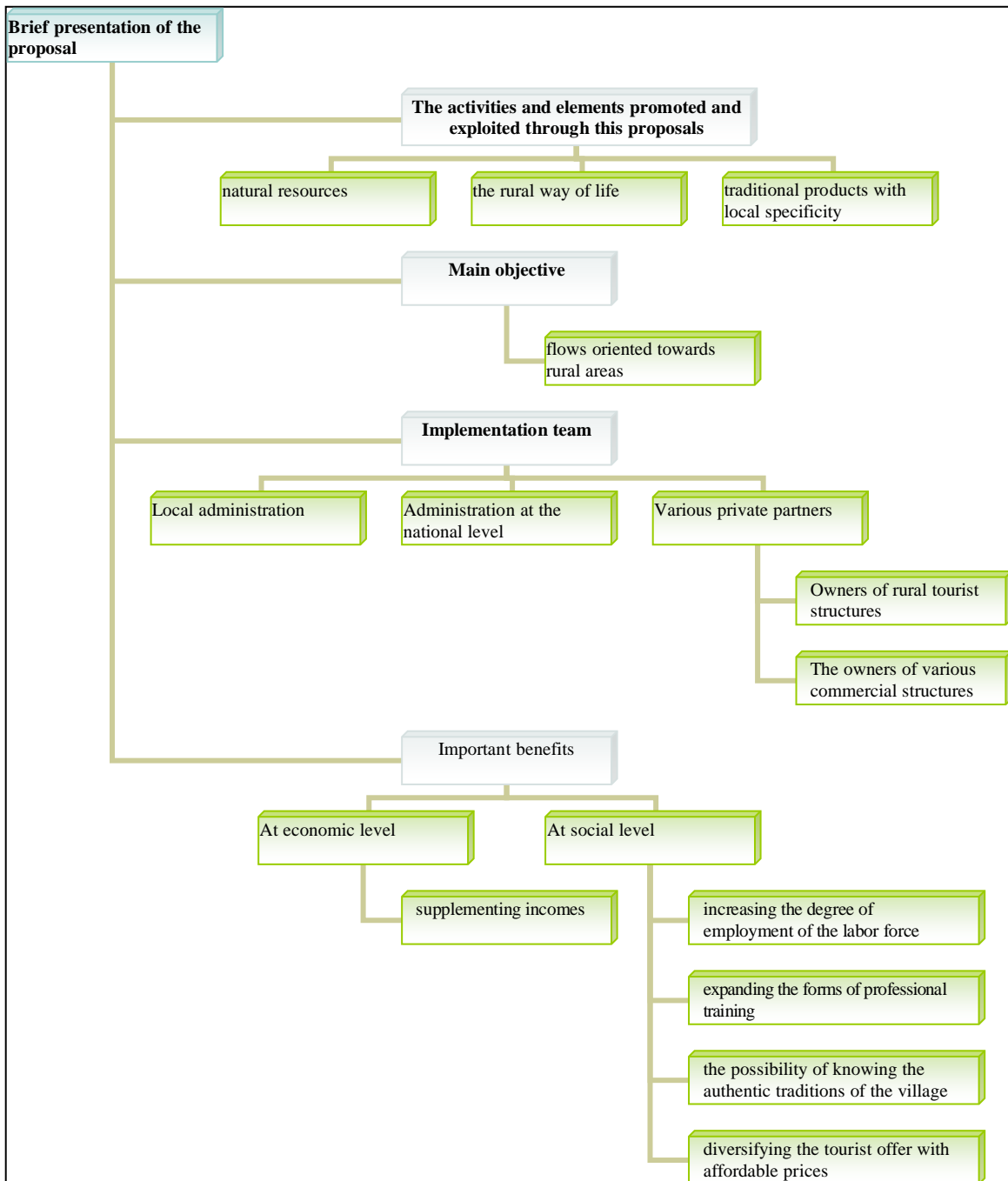


Figure 2. Development the Romanian village through tourist activities (rural tourism or agritourism), using the public-private partnership. Brief presentation

The area where the proposal can be applied. The project is proposed to be applied at the level of any villages or communes in those geographical areas that have tourist resources and some infrastructure that can support this type of activity. Because rural tourism means a certain specific way of life, where the focus must be on: [1,2,3,4]

- interest for natural resources;
- emphasis on the rural way of life that includes occupations and crafts of the area, the specifics of local architecture, traditional manifestations;
- the capitalization of some traditional local products, obtained from various farms from rural area where the project will be applied.

The implementation team can be made up of the inhabitants from rural areas where the project is applied, the local administration, the owners of the rural tourist structures, various directly interested private partners.

Table 1.

Exemplifying the public-private partnership for the proposal

Main actors	The role in the territory	The position in the territory	Function in the territory
Local administration	Local community development strategies	Public Administration	Representation of citizens' interests
	Representation of citizens' interests	Local public administration	Creation of policies for the development of local communities
The administration at the national level	Educational and professional training role	State institution	Attracting young people to visit rural areas
	Tourism development strategies	State institution	Coordinating the activity of relevant institutions
Various private partners - The owners of the rural tourism structures - Owners of various commercial structures		Private partners	Capitalizing on rural resources primarily through accommodation, then through trade

Promoted values are: creativity in identifying alternative methods of developing the area; preserving and promoting the resources of local traditions; harnessing local resources in partnership with benefits for all parties involved.

CONCLUSIONS

The Romanian tourist village can contribute to the discovery of our country, as a possible tourist destination, thus favoring interest in Romania as a place that offers a wide range of experiences, wonderful vacations, but also as a business opportunity. Romania has and relies on:

- the wide range of natural and cultural resources;
- convenient price-quality ratio;
- the unique features of our country: history, culture, people;
- important picturesque, mountainous places;
- mineral and thermal waters, very spectacular flora and fauna;
- the old traditions preserved until today in many places of the country and respected by tourists.

Rural tourism has the advantage that it acts in the sense of opening new investment perspectives. Thus, tourism facilitates a contact between people from the most diverse environments, and ideas and actions, directed towards the superior capitalization of various local resources. Among the potential tourists of the rural environment can also be registered business people who have the ability to notice more quickly the perspectives of the implementation new activities and their financial perspectives, aspects that can be beneficial through their effects for the rural community (jobs, modernization of the infrastructure and services). Obviously, keeping pleasant memories of rural vacations can encourage business people to start investing in the respective environment.

The proposal to implement a public-private partnership project so as to develop the Romanian village through tourist activities (rural tourism or agritourism) represents an integrated package of activities that will develop the quality of the infrastructure for rural tourism in the countryside, will ensure greater social and economic sustainability and

ecological in the future and will connect: hotel companies with agriculture; local product cooperatives; cultural attractions, such as museums and architectural sites, and recreational activities, such as pedestrian walkway networks.

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