ANALYSIS OF RURAL TOURISM POTENTIAL REGION CRISANA

ANALIZA POTENŢIALULUI TURISTIC RURAL AL REGIUNII CRIŞANA

I. BARBU[1]; S. A. BARBU[2]

[1]"Aurel Vlaicu" University of Arad, Arad, Romania;
ionelbarbu@yahoo.com
[2] University of Deggendorf, DE

Abstract: *In this paper we will present a SWOT analysis on the potential of rural tourism in the region Crisana.*
Crisana region is a historical region delimited at north by the river Somes and Maramures region, at west by the river Tisa, at south by the Mures river and Banat region, and at east by the peaks of the Apuseni Mountains and Transylvania region. Crisana Region stretches on both Romania and Hungary, and we will refer only to the Romanian side of it. Crisana region has an area of 17,717 km2 and if we refer to the current counties, this region includes much of Arad county, without the area between the river Mures and Timis county, north of Hunedoara county Bihor county and part of western Salaj county.

Key words: *Crisana, touristic potential, rural tourism*

INTRODUCTION

The Crisana region is a historical region delimited at north by the river Somes and Maramures region, at west by the river Tisa, at south by the Mures river and Banat region, and at east by the peaks of the Apuseni Mountains and Transylvania region. Crisana Region stretches on both Romania and Hungary, and we will refer only to the Romanian side of it.

Crisana region has an area of 17,717 km^2 and if we refer to the current counties, this region includes much of Arad county, without the area between the river Mures and Timis county, north of Hunedoara county Bihor county and part of western Salaj county.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

To analyze the rural touristic potential areas for the Crisana region, we used the SWOT analysis method. The specific of the SWOT analysis is

that it studies both the internal features (the positive and negative factors) and external environmental influences (opportunities and threats).

RESULTS AND DISCUTIONS

The data with this analysis was made was selected from the published articles upon this subject[11],[12], and processed properly, according to the indicators that we considered relevant for this article.

a. Strong points (Advantages)

Ø favorable geographical position, the gateway into the country from the West, several border crossing points, both road and rail;

Ø varied landscape and beautiful natural landscape with potential for practicing various forms of tourism - the mountains about 25%, 35% hills and 40% plains, table 1;

Table 1.

Landscape of Crisana region

County	Relieful		
	mountains %	hills %	plains %
Arad	35	15	50
Bihor	24	32	44
Hunedoara	68	32	-
Salaj		predominantly	small

Table 2.

Hydrography and forested areas

County	Hydrography		Forested areas, mii ha
	Reprezentative courses and lakes	density, km/km^2	
Arad	Mureş, Crişul Alb, Tauţ, Ghioroc		212
Bihor	Barcău, Crişul Negru, Crişul Repede, Cefa, Tămaşda, Inand, Homorog		195
Hunedoara	Mureş, Crişul Alb, over 100 natural lakes, Bucura, Zănoaga	0,5-1,1	313
Salaj	Someş, Crasna, Barcău,	0,7-0,8	106

[11] Ghinea D. – Enciclopedia geografică a României, Editura Enciclopedică, Bucureşti, 2002

[12] http://www.insse.ro/cms/rw/pages/arhivabuletine.ro.do 2006-2010, the last acces december 2011

Ø particularly karst topography (over 6000 caves from which dozens are arranged and are great attractions for both tourism and caving);

Ø large number of natural reserves and protected areas (Arad county has 17 and 2 of them are natural monuments, Bihor county has 61 of which 16 are natural monuments, Hunedoara county has 12 of which 2 are natural monuments, and Salaj county has 4. In total there are 94 reservations of which 20 are natural monuments.)

Ø diversity and the relatively high number of natural attractions and antropics: about 1100, of which about 550 in villages (in Arad 414 objectives of which about 200 in rural areas, in Bihor 435 of which about 200 in rural areas, in Hunedoara 140 of which about 100 in rural areas and in Salaj 135 of which 60 in rural areas), historical and architectural monuments, archaeological sites, fortresses, castles, places of worship (churches, wooden monasteries century. XVI-XVIII);

Ø mountain paths in the Zarand Mountains, Codru-Moma, Bihor, practicable and for cycling, European path of long distance E7 which is crossing the Arad county from west to east;

Ø flora and fauna of great diversity and a valuable hunting and fishing because of the diversified landscape of forest area (approximately 510 000 ha, 28% of the region), water courses and natural lakes and artificial tab. 2;

Ø rich network of rivers and hot or mineral water sources with potential for geothermal drilling, famous spas (Baile Felix, 1 Mai, Moneasa Geoagiu Bai, Lipova, Stana de Vale), tab.2 ;

Ø temperate continental climate, with moderate to mild winters, relatively warm summers, mean annual temperature -2 – 11^0 C, and the winds occurs in almost all directions at speeds ranging from 2 to 7.7 m/s, so there are good conditions for practicing tourism, tables 3 and 4;

Table 3.

Favorabilitatea climatică

County	Climate	Average anual temperatures, ^{0}C			Average annual precipitation, mm
		plain	hill	mountain	
Arad	Continental-moderate	11	8-9	6	600-1000
Bihor	Cont.temperate moderate	10,5	8-10	2-4	600-1400
Hunedoara	Continental temperate		10	-2	530-1400
Sălaj	continental temperate moderate	9,6	6		630-1000

Table 4.

Direction and wind speed

County	Direction, %						Speed, m/s
	SE	S	SW	W	NW	N	
Arad	13,7	13			10,7	12,4	2,6-6
Bihor		28,1		3,6		8,6	7,5-7,7
Hunedoara				14-15	12-14		2-6
Sălaj	16,1		10,5		9,2		3-4

Ø region with tourist attraction, especially domestically and internationally less, providing favorable conditions for practicing a variety of forms of tourism: hiking, climbing, caving, rafting, adventure tourism, winter sports, short and long term rest , children and youth camps, spas etc.

Ø variety of accommodation: hostels, lodges, tourist stops, campgrounds, cottages and hotels from 2-4 stars (only ANTREC affiliated pensions there are 14 in Arad county, 35 county towns in Bihor, 14 villages in the Hunedoara county and 2 towns in Salaj County);

Ø population structure shows a significant share of the rural areas, a large number of bigger villages (263), even larger number of small villages (1430), population density is rather low, averaging 70 inhabitants/ km^2, while de national average is 92-93 inhabitants/ km^2, tab.5

Table 5.

Population structure and administrative units

County	Population, %		Area, %		Density, loc/km^2	Administrative units	
	men	women	urban	rural		villages	Small villages
AR	48,17	51,83	51,82	48,18	61,7	67	267
BH	48,81	51,19	49,68	50,32	82,7	90	429
HD	49,24	50,76	76,03	23,97	75,2	55	448
SJ	49,06	50,94	42,23	57,77	66,8	55	281

Ø rich cultural offer: festivals and celebrations, theatrical performances, concerts, exhibitions, sport competitions, customs and traditions preserved, intercultural, ethnic and religious diversity due to ethnic cohabitation: Hungarians, Germans, Serbs, Slovaks, Bulgarians, tab.6;

Table 6.

Structure of the nationalities

County	Nationality, %		
	romanians	hungarians	gypsies
AR	80,5	12,5	2,8
BH	66,5	28,8	3,4
HD	91,9	6,1	1
SJ	72,2	23,7	3,5

Ø working structures that favor tourism business: industrial areas on the outskirts of big cities, chambers of commerce exhibition halls, conference rooms and business meetings organized at several hotels, active and competent institutions to promote and develop tourism tourist information office and NGOs with the object of activity in tourism, travel agencies, human resource training institutions (universities, colleges, chambers of commerce);

Ø ethnographic exhibitions and events, actively practicing traditional arts and crafts, local traditions in farmers activity

Ø accessibility is acceptable given railway network with an average density of 50-55km/1000 km^2, the national average of 47.8 km/1000 km^2, public road network from 7967 km of which 2006 km are modernized and a density of approximately 30-32 km/100 km^2, compared to the national average of 30.7 km/100 km^2, tab.7

Table 7.

Railway and road network

County	Railway network		Public road network		
	length, km	density, km/1000 km^2	length, km	modernized, km	density, km/100 km^2
AR	485	62,5	2079	498	26,8
BH	474	62,8	2491	581	33
HD	339	48	1972	634	27,9
SJ	176	45,5	1405	293	36,4

b. Weaknesses (Cons)

- Industrial units polluting activity or dismantled and a negative visual impact;
- In many villages the rural activity collection, recycling waste, and restoring the natural ecological areas, poorly developed;
- Pollution of rivers and lakes;
- restricted leisure offer, recreation areas lack forested areas;
- State of degradation of many buildings and monuments;

- quality of the presentation and translation into museums or tourist attractions is generally poor;
- The including of local traditions and folklore for the touristic activities is sporadic and ineffective;
- weak and undiversified offer of souvenirs;
- Poor quality of bus and car routes to stations, routes of buses with no fixed programs and the lack of displays for the program, poor quality of trains, buses and other means of transport;
- Poor infrastructure, poor quality of roads (inadequate and poorly maintained roads), lack of access roads discourage potential tourists, the streets within the villages are at best cobbled, very few are paved;
- Lack of indicators for the tourist attractions - conventional international tourist signs are brown;
- campsites for tents and caravans, absent;
- Urban facilities (bank offices, post, exchange, etc.) insufficient or old in rural tourism;
- lack or insufficient capacity of car parking areas and toilets in tourist areas or traffic routes;
- poor awareness of the importance of tourism to the economy, especially in rural areas;
- Unattractive wage levels, which stimulate labor migration outside the country;
- Professional training in the field does not exactly match the needs of employers;
- failure in school education in environmental protection and tourism;
- Poor awareness of opportunities and potential career in the tourism industry;
- Low levels of education and communication in various languages of international circulation;
- Insufficient use of IT tools and the Internet for information, marketing and booking, promoting the tourism potential failure caused by lack of involvement of tourism operators in developing and promoting national and international tourist market touring programs of the region;
- Lack of regional brands, even if there are brands for certain counties;
- Lack of a database of festivals and cultural events that allow an effective promotion for domestic and foreign tourists;
- reduced collaboration of the public / private sector on issues of marketing, poor information, lack of motivation and lack of confidence on population regarding touristic potential capitalization and on loans for

investment in tourism from they could benefit;

- Promotional materials are inadequate or poor quality;
- Low participation in fairs;

c. Oportunities

ü Superior capitalization of the touristic potential, development of recreational areas, improvement of the region's towns image, are opportunities that can be exploited by the organizations interested in developing the local tourism.

ü Participation in national and international tourism fairs;

ü Exploiting the advantages and disadvantages offered by organizing the first international tourism congress in Romania, in May, 2011, at Alba Iulia.

ü The existence of a tourism strategy in the Hungarian euroregion Haidu - Bihor and national strategy of developing the tourism, as well as developing strategies for the Western Regions V and VI Northwest;

ü government funding programs for retraining;

ü Increased tourist traffic to Central and Eastern Europe and an often request upon the tourism types based on nature and undamaged landscapes

ü direct vicinity of Hungary, which in the east does not have a very attractive landscape for tourism

ü Romania's EU integration, harmonization of legislation with the European Union 's one and for the entry into the Schengen area;

ü Programs from the local and central authorities for developing the rural enviroment, like adopting the tourism strategy for the Arad county.

ü Building in the future a section of highway for the Budapest - Bucharest route, a route that should pass trough Bors and a section of the IV paneuropean road, Nadlac-Arad-Timisoara

ü numerous and active partnerships between institutions and business people in the border regions Haidu Bihar - Bihor and Arad - Bekes;

ü Internal and external funding opportunity programs in which the target is the tourism sector;

ü relatively good economic development, low unemployment percentage, especially in Bihor and Arad;

ü cross-border cooperation in tourism development in the context of achieving Euro-region Danube DKMT, Mures, Cris, Tisa.

d. Threats

- Neighborhood / county competition with a more developed and capitalized rural tourism potential (Cluj, Satu-Mare, Alba)
- Degradation of historical and architectural monuments;
- gradual loss of traditions and customs in rural areas;
- Cultural pollution and the magnifying dimensions of the kitsch

phenomenon;

- Depopulation of villages and youth migration to cities or other countries;
- Low standard of living for a significant segment of the population;
- Failure to comply with legal regulations resulting environmental damage, damage upon the protected areas of forest, fish and wildlife, water pollution;

CONCLUSIONS

Crisana region is a historical region delimited at north by the river Somes and Maramures region, at west by the river Tisa, at south by the Mures river and Banat region, and at east by the peaks of the Apuseni Mountains and Transylvania region. Crisana Region stretches on both Romania and Hungary, and we refered only to the Romanian side of it. Crisana region has an area of 17,717 km2 and if we refer to the current counties, this region includes much of Arad county, without the area between the river Mures and Timis county, north of Hunedoara county Bihor county and part of western Salaj county.

Crisana region has great rural tourism potential areas, but insufficiently explored.

Local authorities and entrepreneurs should find ways of development projects that conquer worth all this potential

REFERENCES

1. **BARBU** I. - Rural tourism in Romania, news and views - Conferinta UAV Arad, noiembrie 2010
2. **BARBU** I. - Analiza evoluţiei turismului în judeţul Arad - Conferinţa naţională a doctoranzilor din România - Ediţia II-a - Oradea,
3. **BARBU** I. - Tourism in county Arad. Rural tourism - economic implications - Analele Universităţii "Constantin Brâncuşi" din Târgu Jiu, Seria Economie, Nr.4/I/2011 – Revista B+
4. **BARBU** I., **BARBU** S. - Rural tourism – economic implications - International Scientific Conference Eco-trend 2011, 8th edition- Exit from the crisis and revival of sustainable growth, Tg. Jiu
5. **BARBU** I., **OLAH** Gh., **BARBU** S. - Rural tourism development in North-West of Romania - Conferinţa naţională a doctoranzilor din România - ediţia I-a - Oradea, noiembrie 2010
6. **GHINEA** D. – Enciclopedia geografică a României, Editura Enciclopedică, Bucureşti, 2002
7. ***http://www.insse.ro/cms/rw/pages/arhivabuletine.ro.do 2006-2010, ultima accesare decembrie 2011