LUCRĂRI ŞTIINŢIFICE, SERIA I, VOL. XIV(4)

RECREATIONAL RURAL TOURISM IN EUROPE

TURISMUL RURAL RECREATIV IN EUROPA

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Abstract: *The twentieth century has shown that a country's economy can and should support economic development in an industry that has huge potential: tourism. No economist, but no ordinary man can deny this truth, as is assumed by investors, many of them become "strategic" in certain parts of the world. On the other hand, authorities, regardless of their level, are forced, by specific interests, to adopt economic policies favorable to tourism, making it in some countries, national economic engine.*

Key words*: recreational rural tourism, sustainability, investment, sustainable development.*

INTRODUCTION

It's hard to understand, at first sight, where this rising interest of the Europeans for such tourism comes from, in opposition to everything that is required throughout Europe. Any foreigner – other than European, particularly the Western European one, visits this part of world precisely for its cultural, historical, architectural or gastronomic richness which he is certain of finding here. Who hasn't ever dreamt, at least once, to visit Parisian boulevards or the Roman ancient markets?

Who didn't want to let himself impregnated with the fragrance of the flowers, colors, antiquity and importance of castles or of the exhibited items from the great western museums? How come the Western European isn't any more interested in such touristic offers, being on the contrary attracted to what is natural, pure, fresh or simple?

On the other side, the need to escape, to go out for rinsing his eyes, mind and soul, anywhere but in town, has become a usage.

The answer is obvious: a society, suffocated by town planning an industrialization, by glass or concrete towering buildings or by different forms of pollution, a society where green areas must be created because they don't exist anymore, is looking for alternatives of breaking-out of daily occurrence, and rural recreational tourism is an easy alternative and why not, satisfactory enough for these needs.

It's about a series of physical but especially emotional and mental needs, hopes and desires of the tourists to find, by rural recreational tourism, a return to the origins, long and by majority lost, the coming back to the authentic life, the one that connects you to nature and its metamorphoses, thing that make you really feel the cyclic changing of life and world, as it is and not how it's dictated by the wall clock. In a dynamic world, always in alert, rural environment brings the tranquillity and possibility of entertaining, which in fact, has become one of the major aim of the townsman, this time, ready to pay for them.

The rural environment, at first seem like a "lagging behind" of a so called civilized society, abandoned by the majority because of the lack of opportunity they were facing, neglected by the most of them, because the value, the elite and the financial possibilities were concentrated in urban environment, became little by little the refugee, the solution, the motif for the new appearance: recreational rural tourism.

Talking about rural tourism in Europe, on the one hand, quite because the contrast between what urban Europe offers from the touristic point of view and what must of the western people are waiting for, and on the other hand because of the existing resources from the other parts of the same Europe, as base and support for this kind of tourism.

Considered for a long time a space of diversity and alternation, the world of the European continent, proves itself once more, extremely complex and varied, being able to offer in the same time goods and services, ardently sought because of their oneness but also refused by others because the over-saturation of the daily living together with these.

Let's notice that world has evolved, that the political, economic structures have changed, but the need of supporting and developing European tourism in general and rural recreational one in particular, proves

to being an action priority for lots of continental decision factors. It's an invitation for the Member States to improve their attractively, promoting cultural and recreational tourism and taking into account new forms of tourism such as the rural one.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The authors have used and applied the following methods of work; a selective bibliography study foreign and domestic, identification and data collection, processing, analysis, observation and interpretation. The ultimate goal of this study is to highlight the potential of tourism available in Europe.

Although the twentieth century emphasized the need for this type of tourism, it has not necessarily occurred in this period. Not aware that it is a rural tourism or recreational its fundamental impact on people's lives, the ancient Greeks created an amusing rural prototype in recreational areas, when, for reasons related to their religious beliefs, moved to other locations (usually located in rural areas) to bring offerings to the gods. Neither the Romans did not hesitate to do so, their preference for thermal waters, circus and realizing relaxation especially in rural areas as the Middle Ages, because the famous "discovery journeys" , rural tourism to acquire one of its main dimensions: hospitality.

On the other hand, rural tourism will develop because of the need that urbanized peasants find their origins, their roots, to find themselves, city world being the cause of the spiritual alienation.

Moreover, this type of tourism has extended between the wars when living in a city wasn't at all a pleasant thing because of the political and military factors, or of the pressure of some states against others, experienced by the townsman especially through media.

We talk about a novelty, started in the Alps zone which was going to extend all over Western Europe. As Jan Ozdzinski says, in this historical period, the visits to modern rural zones were associated to the attractive landscapes.

Beyond the historical deeds, interesting and far from being neglected, there is a series of facts that generated the development of the tourism as a domain of activity, like a basic economic branch, when goods production, or resources selling, aren't viable and also the development of recreational rural tourism when all the other types of tourism don't satisfy

certain needs or expectations of the customers.

The requirement of the tourist, to see what has been preserved, what is traditional, what is naturally and clean, prove that recreational rural tourism hasn't become something out of date, but on the contrary, it is the era of its affirmation in touristic options and as a form of tourism.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The recreational rural touristic product consists in the biggest diversity, generated particularly by the historic, cultural and of mentality diversity of the Europeans.

The great number of cultural families the variety within each family, the intention and the expectation of each folk-traditional or educational culture of imposing itself against others, determines that any touristic customer have where to choose from and mainly what to choose.

As for the recreational tourism, on an European level, its intesifying has been achieved through a conjugated state effort by national policies or local activities, but also of the private initiative to respond to the needs of some people, suffocated by urbanism and industrialization. Beyond the inherent differences, specific to every country and within any region or community, we can notice a few similar aspects of the touristic product, offered by the European recreational rural tourism.

- **The relief** - regardless the geographic zone, the European relief is an extremely attractive one, rural environment being spread on the entire continent and on every forms of relieves.
- **Climate -** Europe has got the advantage of covering almost all types of climate: from the Polar to the Mediterranean ones. Therefore, any weather preference of a tourist can be satisfied, rural places being on the top list of such a diversity.
- **Hydrographs –** a serious advantage of the rural environment is that it has been being settled from the very beginning of the historical process near or along water sources. This is a worth being studied aspect because local communities use the hydrographical system not only for the water, but also for recreational activities like water ski, rafting, boat escapades, fishing or swimming.

- **Fauna and flora –** by their diversity they attract and tempt the tourist to find himself, to lose himself in the richness of colours and perfumes, in the wild or domestic world, where one always feels "at home". The one who knows how to highlights the treasures of the nature, the one who can tame the wildness and make it comfortable and enjoyable without ruining it, that will be the best friend of the plants, animals and tourists.
- **Protected nature –** Europe is filled with lots of parks and naturally reserves. There still exist virgin places like the Carpathian forests of Romania, but also zones protected by law, which have become European, or even international patrimony.
- **The cultural, historical potential –** beyond all doubt there is history through-out Europe. We are talking about millennial communities, about events and famous people who left their mark on what we call the destiny of a community. We agree that, on the whole, the cultural, historical legacy has been preserved all over the continent from the most famous capitals, to the smallest hamlets. Besides, there, where times have been rough, the community didn't entirely abandoned its heritance. People have protected it, rebuild it whenever that was necessary.
- **The technical, economical potential –** European rural space is extremely diverse from this technical, economic potential. Villages are different even within the borders of the same country. The more so as differences exist when we talk about far away rural environments. As some of the villages are attractive due to their technical, economic status, similar to urban realities, others attract by their lack of technology, by their picturesque, similar to another space, world and time.
- **The social, demographic potential –** human diversity of rural inhabitants, the charm of most of them, the way you're welcome to their homes and families, the feeling you have amongst them, being part of their world, here are a few elements of the recreational rural tourism product that can be refused by anybody but, on the contrary, makes it searched by the tourists.

Let's remember that recreational rural tourism has all the more chances to fulfil, as then are taken into account the particularities of the communities and of the environment that is going to be developed.

France – West Europe

How? Through the associations of services suppliers and touristic products, specific for the rural environment, there exists a tradition of hundreds of years in this matter. The state gets involved in helping the investors while preferential credits, equipments approvals, or in well organized promotional campaigns. It is in the top of the countries that excel in recreational rural tourism.

What? French cuisine, the wine yards, the champagne, French can-can, various kind of cheese, the style of the hosts who can be malicious, undisciplined but also perfect hosts when they want to.

Finland – North Europe

How? Accommodation rooms are built in order to give the impression of a "fairy-tale world", the tourists having the possibility of living alone on farms, rustic households or wooden castles. Sometimes they can participate directly and actively at the village life.

What? Beyond natural environment coming from the story lands, or from Santa's location, unforgettable experiences of fishing in fiords, practicing equitation and ski are offer

Italy – Southern Europe

How? The organization of the Italian recreational rural tourism is beyond any reasonable doubt. Guide books, which are published periodically, underline the vivid interest in offering their tourists high class services. One can see that, from the annual waves of tourists that are going to Italy.

What? Besides the historical and cultural inheritance, this country offers a specific cuisine, dances, popular music, the legends of every monument, the wines and cult music.

Austria – Central Europe

How? Rustic boarding houses, inns, touristic forms especially in Tyrol region, increased in number even if this zone has been hard tried between the two world wars.

What? Besides the family atmosphere and the quality of every equipment they use, Austrian recreational rural tourism provides equitation services, the possibility of practicing no matter what sports.

Ukraine – East Europe

How? They experience the first forms of recreational rural tourism by peasant houses, especially in the Carpathian highlights.

What? Along with the natural environment, low budget tourists are offered ecological products, small prices, the renascence of the old traditions.

Serbia – Balkan Europe

How? She has been developing its recreational rural tourism for the last thirty years. Accommodation varies from rent-rooms to complex houses at tourist's disposal. Public and private organizations, special clubs made o goal from developing this type of tourism.

What? Tourists are offered the possibility to get involved in everyday life of Serbian peasants, cultural and historical visits, nature expeditions, fishing and hunting, practicing team or individual different sports.

CONCLUSSIONS

Because of its important role in the economy of lots of European countries, members of European Union, or not, due to the contribution brought to PIB, tourism enjoys a special attention by direct or indirect authorities interest, knowing an ample progress in its development.

The competition in the domain of recreational rural tourism, actual European programmes and the encouraging policies of this kind of tourism have generated the rise of the competitiveness on this market. Nevertheless there's still enough place left on the market for the interested investors. Europe is a space of diversity and alternation of regions with specific, and zones within regions which have their own recommendations for visiting and practicing recreational rural tourism.

The XXth century is for certain the century of the drawing attention towards rural environment, because of the more often requirement, both of the population – by leaving urban for rural, and of the tourism "consumer", who wanting to run away from increasingly industrialized urban zones, choose recreation and rural environment – enjoying everything that this can offer.

Drawing not only the European's attention towards a zone of interest much closer to the need of returning to nature, finding a refuge against everything that urban environment is implying, of the time and social whirl where they feel caught almost the entire year.

Each of the European countries and not only has got extremely

attractive places, with traditions fauna and flora, architecture and history, popular costumes and traditions of the region, food particularities which they capitalize at the most to tempt as many tourists as possible, playing a port in promoting the area, the zone and even the country, culturally and economically.

To guarantee the success of recreational rural tourism, from the distribution prospective it's necessary that the product be offered permanently beyond the needs of the costumer, he must be addicted to this product. Besides, within the European space, one can see that there isn't just a presentation of what it is offered, but also an extension and a diversification of the same domain products, thing that needs an efficient and effective policy, conscious and focused of the competent authorities, local communities, investors to make out recreational rural tourism from anywhere a mark or a brand.

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