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LEVERAGING THE TOURISTIC POTENTIAL OF SIBIU COUNTY THROUGH AN ANALYSIS OF TOURIST FLOWS AND ACCOMMODATION INFRASTRUCTURE

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Abstract: *Sibiu County stands out for its diverse tourism potential, rooted in its cultural and historical heritage, natural resources, and local traditions. A statistical analysis covering the 2001–2025 period highlights the development of accommodation infrastructure and an increase in the number of tourist reception establishments. The expansion of existing accommodation capacity reflects a broadening of the overall tourism offering. This growth is driven by an increase in the number of agritourism guesthouses, standard tourist guesthouses, and rental apartments. A SWOT analysis identifies the richness of tourism resources, accessibility, and the destination's reputation as key advantages, while also pointing to vulnerabilities such as the concentration of tourist flows within the city of Sibiu and territorial disparities. In conclusion, the development and diversification of tourism products are essential strategies for strengthening the county's position within both the national and international tourism markets*

• Introduction

Sibiu County is located in the southwest of Transylvania, in the central part of Romania; it is bordered by the following counties: Mureș to the north and northeast, Brașov to the east, Argeș and Vâlcea to the south, and Vâlcea and Alba to the west.

The natural tourism resources of Sibiu County consist of the various elements of the natural environment—such as geological formations, specific landforms, watercourses and bodies of water, and biogeographical features—that are capable of generating significant tourist flows within the county.

• Material and method

The statistical data analysis focused on interpreting indicators provided by the National Institute of Statistics, the County Directorate of Statistics, and other data sources. The purpose of this analysis was to gain further qualitative insights into the current state of tourism in Sibiu County, as well as to gather perspectives on the key challenges, needs, and development opportunities within this sector.

• Results and discussions

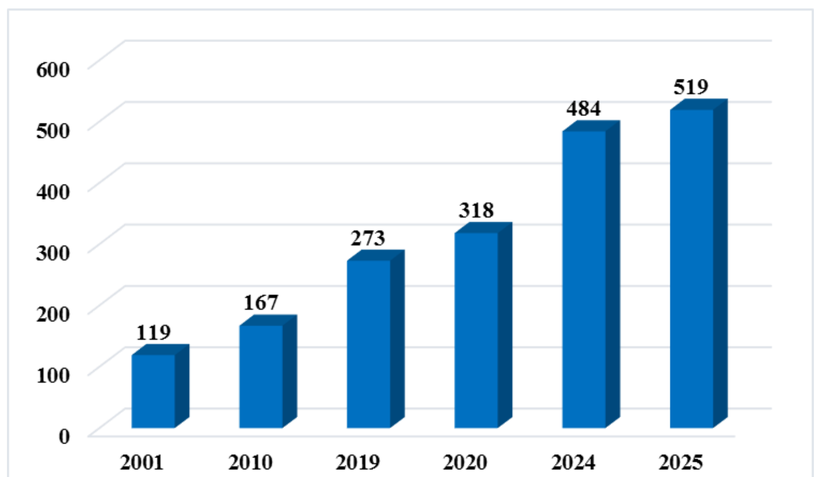


Figure 1. Evolution of the analyzed structures in Sibiu County (total, number)

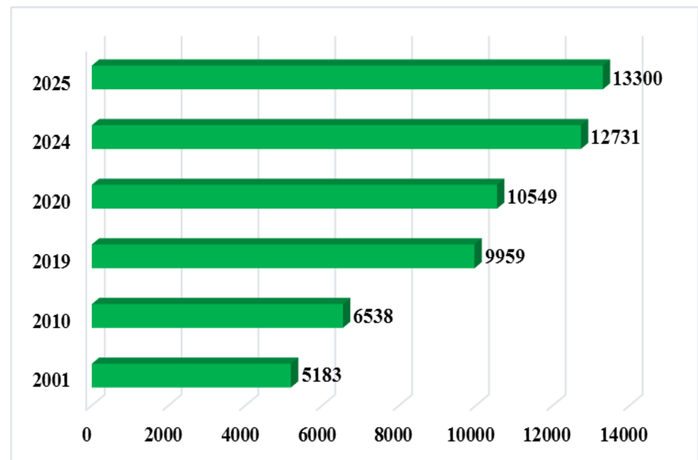


Figure 2. Variation in accommodation capacity in the analyzed county (total, number of beds)

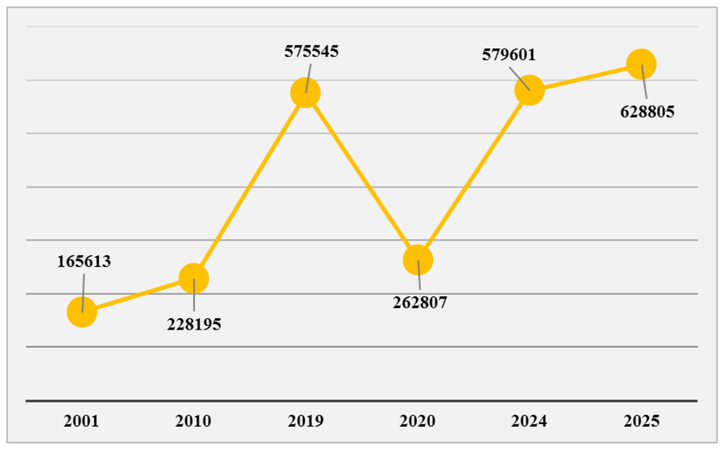


Figure 3. Variation in total arrivals at accommodation establishments in the county

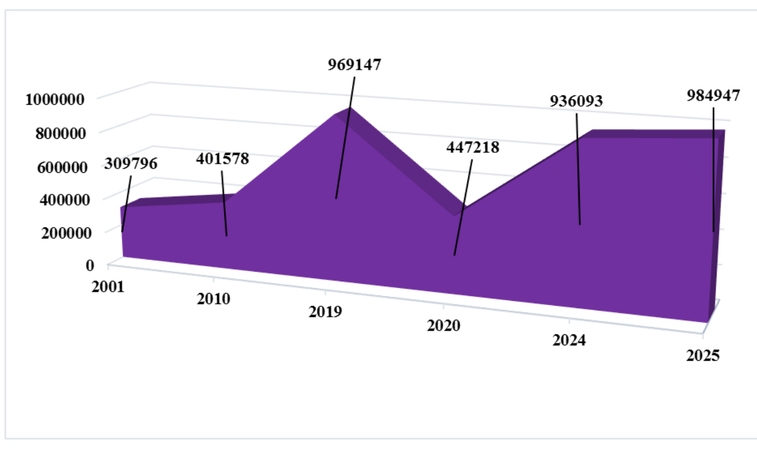


Figure 4. Variation of overnight stays in accommodation structures in the county

Conclusions

Based on an analysis of statistical indicators and a strategic assessment of tourism potential, it can be concluded that Sibiu County has undergone a sustained process of development and consolidation of tourism activity between 2001 and 2025, emerging as one of Romania's prominent tourist destinations.

The marked growth of agritourism guesthouses and alternative forms of lodging reflects a shift toward sustainable tourism models and the leveraging of the county's rural and cultural heritage.

Sibiu County possesses significant tourism potential, supported by valuable natural and man-made resources, infrastructure that is undergoing continuous modernization, and a positive trend in key tourism activity indicators.