

SUMMARY

PhD Thesis :

RESEARCH ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM AND RURAL TOURISM IN ORDER TO INCREASE THE LIVING STANDARDS OF RURAL RESIDENTS.

CASE STUDY: TULCEA COUNTY

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PhD thesis **Researches on the development of tourism and agritourism in order to increase the living standards of the rural inhabitants. Case Study: Tulcea County** is structured in five chapters, plus the introduction, table of contents, summary, conclusions and recommendations, bibliography and annexes.

Tourism is one of the most important economic activities in the world, an activity that exploits the natural and anthropic potential, resources that are not capitalized in other activities.

Our country can boast a rich, diversified tourist potential, distributed harmoniously in the territory, which has led to the development of this branch of the national economy.

Agrotourism is the most seeking form of tourism in recent years, due to the desire of tourists to spend their free time in nature, away from urban agglomeration and to enjoy a return to their natural origins.

Tulcea County has one of the most important and most beautiful landmarks in our country, the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve. Thus, the opportunities for tourism development and agrotourism of the area are numerous and can lead to an increase in the living standards of the rural inhabitants, who now live on the limit of their existence. Making the most of the tourism potential and creating a competitive tourism and agrotourist product on the market are the priorities of the tourism activity in the area.

Both the European and the national level show a development of the tourism

activity, as seen from the analysis of the number of arrivals, accommodated tourists, the number of overnight stays in the accommodation units and the revenues from the tourism activity during 2010-2018, as well the number of reception facilities in Romania and of the accommodation capacity has increased significantly in the analyzed years.

The paper aims to analyze of these factors, by calculating the weight and the annual growth rate, in order to determine the evolution of the tourism and agrotourism activity, at European and national level, with emphasis on the research area, namely Tulcea County.

The data were collected from the researched and analyzed area with the help of the two types of questionnaires applied to the town halls and tourist and agrotourist pensions, questionnaires applied between August 2017 and August 2018, within the 10 city halls in the county and 60 tourist and agrotourist guesthouses.

In **Chapter I, Studies and research on the analysis of the European and national tourism and agritourism**, by analyzing of the statistical data gathered from public information sources the aim was to see, the evolution of the tourism and agrotourism activity at European and national level and the valorization of the natural and anthropic tourism potential through the tourism activity, the dynamics and weight of the number of accommodation units, the accommodation capacity, the number of tourists arrived, the number of overnight stays in the accommodation units and the amount of the receipts.

In **Chapter II, Research on indicators and methods of research of tourism and agrotourism**, are briefly presented the evolution and development of the tourism concept, the quantification indicators of the tourism and agrotourism development, the methods of research of tourism and agrotourism potential and its capitalization through the activity of tourism.

With the help of the following indicators: the number of tourists, the number of overnight stays, the average duration of the stay, the density of the tourist traffic, the relative preference for tourism, the volume of tourism receipts, the average receipts per tourist / per day were analyzed the data gathered from the site of the "National Institute of Statistics", in order to determine the evolution of the tourism activity and the valorization of the tourism potential, at the national level and at the level of Tulcea County, in the analyzed years.

In addition, some methods of researching the tourist and agrotourist potential and the level of its valorization, respectively the scoring method, which includes the evaluation of the components of the tourist offer according to the methodology developed by the former Ministry of Transport, Constructions and Tourism (MTCT) in 2006, are presented by using the punctuation method in order to establish Romania's tourism potential level, another method with scores given to the basic administrative-

territorial units in Tulcea county - with the score given according to the tourist potential, according to the “criteria set for financing a project submitted under Measure 313, developed by PNDR, Annex 10, common with high tourism potential”, the maximum score obtained by the communes in Tulcea county was 8 points out of 10 maximum available. Also here is the “SWOT analysis” of Tulcea County, from a tourist point of view.

The most important method of analyzing the evolution of the tourism activity and of capitalizing the tourist potential of the researched area is the questionnaire and the analysis of the data gathered from the land, respectively from the Tulcea County's Town Halls and the tourist and agrotourist pensions in the area analysis carried out using the “Hi-square test”. The questionnaire data refer to general data about the commune or boarding house, about tourism potential and the carried out tourist activity, about expenses, receipts and investments.

In **Chapter, III Analysis of the tourist and agrotourist potential of the rural space in Romania and possibilities for its valuation**, were briefly presented the natural and anthropic tourist potential of our country, the technical and material base used in tourism and agrotourism, the emphasis being placed on the agrotourism activity and its evolution. In the years 2010-2018, the evolution of the agrotourism activity was studied, analyzing the data gathered from the website of the “National Institute of Statistics” regarding the number of agrotourist pensions in Romania, the number of arrivals, the number of overnights, the number of employees in the field calculating their average, the annual growth rate, the coefficient of variation and the degree of spreading, in the obtained graphs observing the desired evolution.

In **Chapter IV, Analysis of the tourism and agrotourism potential of Tulcea county's rural area and possibilities of its valuation**, also presented the natural and anthropic tourism potential of the county, the technical and material base used in tourism and agrotourism, with an emphasis on the activity of agrotourism and its evolution. Between 2010-2018, the evolution of agro-tourism activity was also followed, analyzing the data gathered from the “National Institute of Statistics” website, regarding the number of agrotourist pensions in Tulcea County, the number of arrived tourists, the number of overnight stays, the number of employees in the field , calculating the their average, the annual growth rate, the coefficient of variation and the degree of spreading, in the obtained graphs observing the desired evolution in the territory of the analyzed county.

In **Chapter V, Improving the strategies for promoting and capitalizing the tourism and agrotourism potential of Tulcea County**, several strategies were proposed for promoting and capitalizing the tourism potential of our country and of the analyzed county, and we analyzed and interpreted the data from the

questionnaires applied on the territory of Tulcea County, to the town halls and to the tourist and agrotourist hostels, with the help of the “Hi-square test”.

At the end of the thesis are presented the **Conclusions and recommendations**, established taking into account the analysis, for better capitalization of tourism and agrotourist potential in order to increase the living standards of the rural inhabitants of Tulcea County.

The **bibliography** is alphabetically and numerically ordered, quoted and commented in the thesis, along with its analysis and interpretations. Also, part of the data presented in the thesis was disseminated within the International Symposium “AGRARIAN ECONOMY AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT - REALITIES AND PERSPECTIVES FOR ROMANIA” and published in the volumes of the respective events.

The **annexes** include the questionnaire models applied to the town halls and tourist and agrotourist pensions in Tulcea County.

In conclusion, the personal contribution, presented in the thesis and resulting from the analysis of the data collected on the ground, proves the achievement of the proposed objectives at the beginning of the doctoral school.