

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

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The present Development Strategy in the Field of Tourism was carried out within the project "Tales of Culture, History and Nature" (ROBG-413, financed under the INTERREG V-A Programme) and aims to identify the medium and long-term tourism development potential in the city of Videle, as well as in the partner city of Lyaskovets in Bulgaria.



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GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

Tourism represents one of the economic sectors that is directly related to the major objectives of territorial development: sustainable development (climate changes, preservation of resources), economic competitiveness at all levels (national, regional, local), social cohesion (interaction of local communities with tourists, access to tourism for disadvantaged categories), the development of new technologies, etc. Last but not least, tourism contributes decisively to the reduction of urban/rural disparities, to the economic growth of areas in economic decline (mountainous areas, peripheral areas), contributing to the increase of territorial cohesion.

Over time, there have been many changes in the rural area, which is why the traditional image of the countryside has experienced profound transformations. In response to two phenomena, urbanization and industrialization respectively, Europe of the 20th century experienced a change of direction, in the sense that the interest in the rural space began to grow, the rural potential starting to be exploited.

Eastern European countries experienced a slightly atypical evolution regarding the urbanization process (Neamțu, 2012). The communist regime



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and the historical legacy are two important factors that contributed to shaping the urban space (Hamilton apud Neamțu, 2012). Central and Eastern Europe represented a peripheral area, where the urbanization process was characterized by significant stagnation (Neamțu, 2012). In this context, Romania's case is a particular one, the urbanization process started before the transition period, but nevertheless, the effects were not as visible as in Hungary or Poland. The conditions in which the Eastern European countries found themselves in the 1990s required the operation of some changes, rural regeneration being imperatively necessary (Holland, Burian and Dixey, 2003) as a solution to problems such as: the industrialization process, the collapse of markets, weak agricultural sector performing, low standard of living. In addition, rural areas faced high rates of unemployment due to the large-scale privatization of agricultural cooperatives and the possibility of migration to urban centers. All these changes had an impact on rural areas, which were severely depopulated. In the same key, we can state that, during the transition period, agriculture played an essential role, acting as an "occupational buffer" against the socio-economic effects of the transition, but this role condemned the rural to stagnation, low performance, thus contributing to the thickening of the ranks of poverty in the countryside. In this context, a vicious circle was created , subsistence generating poverty, poverty which in turn perpetuates subsistence, a fact for which this vicious circle must be broken. For a long time, rural development policies aimed exclusively at measures to improve



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agricultural practices, considering that the countryside was only seen as a favorable place for farming.

The expansion of the European Union has changed the map of the rural area, so the methods of approach must be diversified. Rural areas cover 90% of the entire surface of the European Union, 60% of the total population living in rural areas (Muhi and Jovanović, 2012). According to the OECD (2007), the rural area represents approximately 87% of the entire surface of the country, while 45% of the total population lives in rural areas, double the average recorded at the European level. In 2011, Romania registered one of the lowest urbanization rates in Europe (Mursa and Paraschiv, 2013). On the other hand, the least developed regions are extremely ruralized – 6 of the 15 poorest regions at European level are regions in Romania, considering that Romania is divided into 8 regions, 6 of which are among the most poor regions of the EU.

ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION

1. Trends of the world tourism market

The next decades will bring significant changes in the demographic structure of the world (average age, share of ethnic and religious groups). The main **trends** that will directly influence tourist traffic worldwide are predicted :



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1. ***The world population will double in the next 50 years*** . *Life expectancy and implicitly the average age of the population of the countries of the world will increase and retirees will have time and resources to travel.* The general image of tourist destinations, personal security and the quality of medical assistance are and will remain extremely important aspects. The demand for tourism products will be elastic depending on the price, but the potential of this market segment to mitigate seasonality should not be ignored.
2. ***The Internet will be used by more and more tourists and potential visitors both for obtaining vacation information and for purchasing tourist products and travel arrangements.*** Access to information, to tourists' opinions about their travel experiences and the attractiveness of tourist destinations (blogs) will be free and universal.
3. ***The development of air transport, the diversification and increase in the speed of land transport means will allow relatively easy and cheap access to tourist destinations located at great distances.*** One of the direct effects of these phenomena will probably be the decrease in the length of stay at a certain destination/accommodation facility.



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4. **Increasing interest in tourist programs/vacations** that combine relaxation and entertainment with the possibilities of learning about the culture and history of the peoples of the world "**Edutainment**". The areas that will manage to preserve their character and authenticity, the traditional way of life will be of interest to more and more segments of tourists and potential visitors.

5. **The effects of globalization** will be evident on all meridians of the world. Most accommodation and relaxation facilities will offer uniform conditions, they will be similar but probably not identical. In these conditions, the individualization of services and the preservation/highlighting of the character of the destination become extremely important.

6. **The quality of the environment**, the lack of pollution, the cleanliness and the attitude of the local population will be more important for potential tourists than the variety of possibilities for entertainment and shopping.

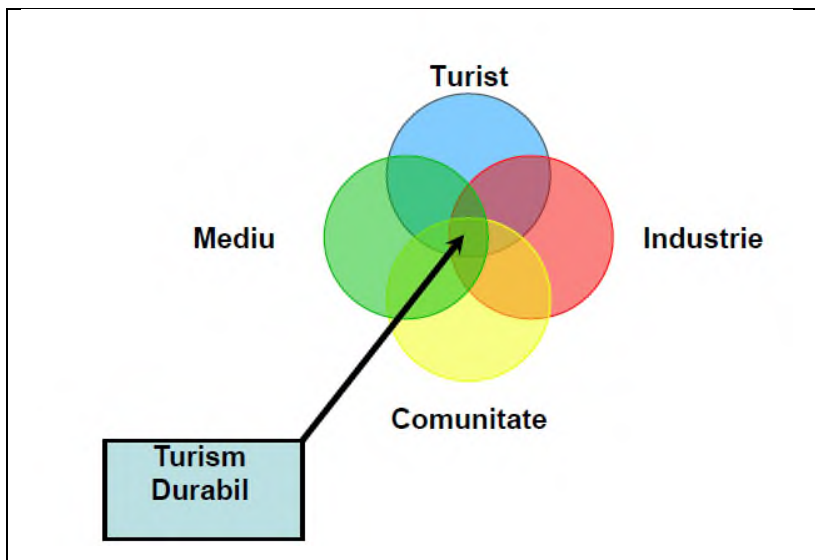
Although they will be interested in unique experiences, most of the potential tourists will want to be able to continue their healthy lifestyle when they travel. Facilities for sports, food and access to information will remain important motivational elements.



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An important direction of action in the tourism sector is to offer truly sustainable tourism , according to the VICE (Visitor, Tourist, Industry, Community, Environment) principle, tourism being well balanced and integrated into a full range of activities that affect society and the environment.¹



¹ According to Ernest – European Research Network on Sustainable Tourism



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2. Tourism in Romania

The general characterization indicators of the tourist activity in Romania

On a global level, the tourism industry, one of the most dynamic sectors of activity on the rise and, at the same time, the most important generator of jobs, is, from an economic point of view, the main source of recovery for national economies of those countries that have important tourist resources and exploit them properly. Starting from this reality, the concentration of all Romania's efforts in order to capitalize on optimal conditions of its own tourist potential by diversifying, modernizing and permanently adapting the offers to the level of demands on the international market is fully justified. Romania has a valuable and varied natural tourism potential that constitutes the country's richest resource, offering the possibility of developing this sector of activity.

The engines of the Romanian tourism industry are, in fact, several segments that work well: agritourism, spa and mountain tourism, circuit and event tourism. The regions have significant tourist potential from the point of view of the natural, cultural and historical framework. The differences from one region to another in terms of exploiting their tourist potential are determined both by the historical conditions of their development and by the general



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infrastructure of the country, a fact that has often prevented the development of highly attractive areas, but with low degree of accessibility and facilitated the development of others. An example in this direction is the evolution of the Prahova Valley, compared to the Rucar-Bran corridor, as well as to the upper Buzău Valley.

Romania has a diversified and balanced tourist potential, concentrated especially in the area of the Carpathian Mountains (including mountain, spa and balneoclimatic resorts), the Black Sea as well as areas with old cultural traditions (Bucovina, Moldova, Transylvania, Banat, Dobrogea). An important characteristic is given by the fact that the undeveloped areas concentrate the most important tourist objectives and attractions. These areas can be revitalized by exploiting their touristic, natural and cultural potential. Two categories of tourist potential were identified: areas with complex and high-value tourist potential (24% of the country's surface), which include National Parks and Biosphere Reserves, natural monuments, protected natural areas, cultural heritage values of national interest, resources spas, museums and memorial houses and areas with high tourist potential (34% of the country's surface), which include at least one of the following categories: nature reserves and monuments of national interest, cultural heritage values of national interest, spa resources, museums and memorial houses.



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The accommodation capacity (number of places) by Region highlights significant differences between regions. The South-East Region has the highest accommodation capacity (47%), being followed, at a great distance, by the Center Region (12.5%) and the North-West Region (9.2%). It can be appreciated that, in the next period, the distribution of accommodation capacity by development regions will be balanced, thanks to the interest shown by the entities involved in tourism, but also to the support given by the local authorities. However, it is expected that in the next period the coastal area of the Black Sea and the Danube Delta, as well as the Carpathian and Sub-Carpathian areas, will continue to develop tourism.

The tourist reception structures and especially the leisure offer are outdated, uncompetitive, the tourist services and tourist programs are stereotyped and of modest quality, and the quality-price ratio is inconclusive . That is why, in the last 20 years, there has been a continuous decrease in external tourist demand for Romania. Thus, the modernization, relaunch and development of Romanian tourism and the creation of modern and competitive tourist products on the tourist market are necessary. **Thus, the development of the highly attractive leisure and entertainment offer is required, through the creation of theme and entertainment parks, water parks, offers present in countries with a tourist tradition in the world.** The main tourism indicators reflect disparities at the regional level,



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both in terms of the number of tourists and the degree of use of the accommodation capacity.

Starting from this reality, Romania proposes to concentrate all its efforts in order to capitalize in optimal conditions of its tourist potential by diversifying, modernizing and permanently adapting the offers to the qualitative level of the demand on the international market.

The National Strategy for Regional Development, elaborated on the basis of the Regional Development Plans and the National Strategic Reference Framework 2007-2013 identified **the development of tourism as a regional development priority** due to the tourism potential existing in the 8 development regions.

The main directions of action are the rehabilitation of the infrastructure of the tourist areas, the valorization of the natural, historical and cultural heritage, for their inclusion in the tourist circuit and their promotion in order to attract tourists. These directions aim **to improve the attractiveness of the regions and to create new jobs.**

In particular, it is necessary to increase the degree of attractiveness of tourism in seaside resorts, all the more so since the advantages given by the climate,



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location and possibilities to diversify the offer give the Romanian coast unique characteristics.

Of great importance are **the capitalization of tourist attractions , improving the degree of attractiveness** among tourists, **increasing the added value of the tourism sector** . It is necessary to modernize tourist structures, tourist resorts, and create new tourist products, resorts, original, attractive and original programs that, through a sustained promotion activity on the international market, direct important tourist flows to Romania.

Considering the global developments of the tourist market, it is **necessary to increase the quality standards of accommodation spaces** such as hotels, motels and campsites, cabins and hotels for youth, accommodation structures on ships/pontoons. In addition, the same attributes characterize **the tourist leisure structures** , which provide leisure facilities.

Along with the modernization and development of the diversified and competitive tourist offer, measures to **improve and develop the marketing and promotion activity, to integrate into world tourism, to ensure the legislative framework and the stimulating and stable financial-fiscal environment** are also necessary .



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Other **needs of the Romanian tourism sector** are the following:

- training of human resources employed in the tourism sector;
- the development of destination marketing;
- the need for a solid statistical base for planned development analysis and for marketing;
- improving the infrastructure of tourist areas;
- development of leisure services;
- sustained promotion of Romania's image on the domestic and international level;
- increasing the competitiveness of Romanian tourist services;
- obtaining the attractive quality-price ratio of tourist services;
- the use of modern technologies for information and reservations;
- development of the internal network of tourist information offices at locality level;
- 100% harmonization of legislation in the field of tourism with community legislation;

By 2020, Romania must transform itself into a quality tourist destination based on its natural and cultural heritage that **meets European Union standards regarding the provision of tourist products and services**



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through an environmentally sustainable development of the tourism sector in a rate of development higher than other tourist destinations in Europe.

The perception of the Romanian offer on foreign markets



tourist

The studies developed within the UNWTO (World Tourism Organization), based on the information and market analyzes carried out in the large countries generating tourist flows in Europe, as well as the surveys undertaken among foreign tourists visiting Romania, characterize the Romanian tourist offer through **the following aspects** :

- All types of programs offered by Romania meet fierce competition on the Western European markets;
- Competing destinations offer a varied range of facilities for all categories of tourists;
- The Romanian offer is relatively limited, limited to a few resorts, and within them, only a few hotels;
- The services are inferior to those on competing destinations such as Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece or Cyprus;



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- **The leisure does not rise to the level of the offer from other destinations ;**
- **Event tourism is poorly developed ;**
- The road technical infrastructure is inadequate;
- Lack of superior comfort hotels in big cities and in tourist resorts of international interest;
- From the point of view of the quality-price ratio, Romania has ceased to be an attractive tourist market.

3. RURAL TOURISM

In developing countries, practices targeting the rural sector have focused more on diversification at the expense of rural economic regeneration (Holland, Burian and Dixey, 2003). Taking this into account, the major problem in the rural sector was not necessarily the collapse of agriculture, but the difficulty of finding new opportunities for development. Agricultural activities are no longer the only possibility for the development of rural areas. For a long time, rural areas were considered synonymous with decline (OECD, 2007). The discrepancy between rural and urban is very pronounced, the rural environment does not enjoy the advantages of economies of scale characteristic of urban areas, in terms of increased costs in terms of



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transactions, services and facilities, economic diversity, infrastructure, many rural localities do not are connected to transport and communication networks, which translates into restricted access to information, technology, innovation – 60% of rural localities cannot be accessed through direct access routes (Mursa and Paraschiv, 2013), all of which can significantly affect the quality of life of the inhabitants of those areas.

In Romania, the quality of land is very good. Despite this fact, the lack of investment makes them poorly performing. The average size of an individual plot, 3.7 ha/farm – the EU average is 12 ha – makes it very difficult, even impossible, to implement high-performance technologies and coherent and efficient strategic plans in terms of the development of the agricultural sector. That is why, in Romania, most agricultural holdings practice subsistence agriculture, which is non-competitive and inconsistent with market conditions. Another pressing problem facing rural areas is the quality of human resources . Even if half of the active population of the country lives in the countryside, the quality of the labor force is relatively low. This fact could be explained through the prism of the accelerated aging phenomenon, characteristic of rural areas, but also due to educational deficiencies - the level of training is significantly lower in rural areas, only 38.5% of the population between the ages of 25 and 64 have secondary education: primary and secondary school (PNDR 2014-2020); and medical – access to medical services is a constant



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problem in the rural environment, the doctor/patient ratio (PNDR 2014-2020) being 1/1,722, approximately 7 times lower compared to the situation encountered in the urban environment.

In this context, alternative measures are required in order to develop the rural economy; problems arising in the rural environment, as well as development initiatives, must be addressed in an integrated manner. The diversification of rural activities, the creation of new jobs in the countryside, the sustainable development of agriculture, as well as investments in infrastructure and services, encouraging civic participation, but also increasing awareness of the potential of this sector are just as many measures that must be addressed. in order to develop the rural environment.

For the next programming period, attention is directed towards the following areas of action: the development of the Romanian village and farms; support for the processing of agricultural products; resettling young people in rural areas; development of activities in the tourism sector; the creation of SMEs in rural areas and the strengthening of local action groups.



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For a long time, agriculture played an essential role in the development of rural areas. However, it was not enough, "agriculture is no longer the backbone of rural economies" (OECD, 2007). Rural development involves more than the simple development of the agricultural sector. Measures taken to develop the rural sector have so far focused on supporting agricultural farms, but despite subsidies, these policies have failed to significantly improve the lot of the rural environment. In these conditions, new rural recovery measures are needed, with an emphasis on local specifics, and not on sectors of activity, investments that will take the place of subsidies. Rural tourism seems to be a viable alternative (Bogan, 2012), in recent decades, the policies promoted at the European level in terms of regional development, together with the national policies of the member states, have encouraged the orientation of rural areas towards tourism, taking into account positive social effects and implications.

4. TOURISM IN THE CROSS-BORDER REGION

4.1. Empty area



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The city of Videle is a geographical area strongly anchored in rural space. Affirming this, we also assume the traditionalist mentality of the inhabitants, resistant to changes, but also the concerns of the inhabitants, still focused on agricultural activities at the individual level. Similar is the situation of the city of Lyaskovets in Bulgaria. These two small towns, although located in different countries, have in common the fact that they are located, on a socio-economic level, in the bordering area between rural and small urban, with all the disadvantages, but also the advantages that arise from this. Therefore, we will consider the two localities as potential providers of rural tourism.

tourism – a alternative for development AREAS rural?

A trend of increasing the number of tourists among EU countries was recorded, especially after their accession, as is the case of countries such as Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia (Scutariu, 2011), which exploited this opportunity more than Romania. Among the disadvantages that are still present in the Romanian space regarding the tourist infrastructure are: the poor quality, but also the limited range of services, even if the number of accommodation structures has increased more than the number of tourists. In Central and Eastern European countries , rural tourism has high potential for development (Scutariu, 2011) due to cultural heritage and natural attractions.



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If in other countries the number of foreign tourists increased significantly as a result of joining the EU, in Romania this did not happen immediately due to the poor quality of services and insufficient promotion.

The improvement of these aspects must become a priority for Romanian tourism to register substantial progress. Rural tourism has a competitive advantage, due to the authenticity that seems to be appreciated among foreign tourists. In Romania, rural tourism has been practiced "always", but in most cases it is practiced "spontaneously, randomly and unorganized" (Galvan apud Bogan, 2012). According to the Report of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (2004), organized rural tourism started after 1989.

After 1990, considerable progress was registered in the field of tourism and agro-tourism, both at local and national level, this trend registering an accelerated evolution after 2001, the highest value being recorded after 2006. The projects implemented in the space rural have determined a significant increase in the number of accommodation structures. For example, compared to 2010, 2011 represented a positive year in the evolution of tourism in Romania, registering increases for all indicators. Thus, in 2011 we witness a 13% increase in the number of arrivals in tourist accommodation units, but also in the case of the number of overnight stays, also in terms of accommodation capacity, an upward trend can be observed again. It can be argued that in Romania, the development of rural tourism in recent years has been uncoordinated, in the absence of a coherent and strategic vision. Weak



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activity in the field of rural tourism can be due to the following aspects: inadequate infrastructure and communication systems; poor systematic planning; and poor collaboration between local actors and national authorities. Also, the obligation to adapt to the requirements imposed by the European Union regarding agriculture and food production in hygienic conditions must be emphasized. These rules may prove to be far too rigid and difficult to enforce, requiring additional investment. However, with the accession to the EU, private initiatives in the rural environment will enjoy greater support, thus contributing to the development of rural tourism (Scutariu, 2011).

The development of tourism in rural areas is considered to have both positive and negative effects (Obonyo and Fwaya, 2012), whether we are talking about the environment, way of life or exploitation of resources. The impact of tourism can be classified into 7 categories (Kreag, 2000): economic impact; on the environment; social and cultural; on employment; on services; on local taxes; and on the attitude and perception of local people. If we talk about the positive influences of tourism (Keanne and Quinn, 1990), we should mention: efficient management of resources, in terms of efficient and sustainable use of land, labor force, natural and cultural attractions, financial capital, socio-economic changes, encouraging civic participation. The negative aspects are related to the fact that the development of tourism in rural areas changes or



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degrades rural landscapes; local, natural and cultural values; the local specificity; reorganize social structures; it changes the authentic and traditional rhythm of life.

The development of tourism will act as an integrative force, able to train the development of other sectors, thus improving the standard of living. The development of tourism will mean encouraging the development of other dimensions. Using tourism as a resource for local economic development means also investing in infrastructure or education, because the development of tourism will generate that synergistic effect, having an important role in increasing employment and is also a support for development business and services sector. Rural tourism can also represent an occupational sector, creating jobs for local people. In many cases employment in this sector can be complementary to another sector of the economy (Fotiadis, 2009), such as agriculture, which will ultimately generate increases in family income. Investments in rural tourism will lead to an increase in local income (Fotiadis, 2009). The development of the tourism sector implies an increase in employment, investments, the productive base of the local economy, thus improving the standard of living and the quality of life. Rural communities turn to rural tourism as an alternative means of sustainable development, by restructuring and diversifying local economic activities; tourism appears as a means by which rural areas can regulate themselves economically, socially



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and politically and adapt to the new global environment (Sillinakis, 2001). On the other hand, it often creates inflationary pressures that result in an increase in the cost of living at the local level.



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A. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH. METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS. INTERPRETATION

The market research carried out is the basis of this study, aiming to establish the premises for the development of tourism activities in the cross-border region Videle - Teleorman, as well as Lyaskovets - Veliko Tarnovo, by using the potential offered by the diversity of the territories (geodiversity, biodiversity), for a balanced development and sustainable development of the cross-border territory, on the one hand, and for the consolidation of the national identity of each of the two countries, on the other.

The issue of the study will evaluate tourism as a sustainable resource of territorial development, especially in the cross-border area of Videle, Teleorman – Lyaskovets, Veliko Tarnovo, with the emphasis on the city of Videle and specify the study directions: infrastructure quality and territorial distribution; business tourism and national infrastructure; determining the areas with tourist potential, where the organized development of the infrastructure is necessary; competitiveness of services and their promotion.

The empirical research was carried out by applying a set of questionnaires and interviews on a sample of 150 people from the city of Videle, locals but and



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visiting tourists, of both sexes, regardless of the level of study, profession or income. The questions covered several levels, namely:

- Tourism activity: How can demand and supply be characterized in this sector? What are the local trends? What are the areas in the locality where the tourist activity is concentrated?
- Tourist potential: In which areas are there natural and cultural resources that favor the development of tourism? What are the key elements of the development of tourism activity, in the context of the objectives of sustainable development, conservation of natural and cultural resources?
- Tourist infrastructure: What are the tourist, accommodation and sports infrastructures? In which areas are these infrastructures developed and what is their condition? What are the areas where the development or improvement of the tourist infrastructure is necessary (defunct tourist areas)? What are the priorities in modernizing the transport infrastructure to the main tourist areas?
- Investments and economic potential: What is the current state of tourism revenues, in a local territorial context? How should the policies and programs necessary to expand tourism infrastructures be defined? In which areas should priority be acted upon through planning and concentration of investments? To what extent should encouraging and promoting tourism represent a strategic objective?



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The empirical research had the following objectives:

Basic aspects	Research objectives
The degree of knowledge of the existing tourist services and facilities in the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of the current situation
What are the problems that characterize the local tourism sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of the current situation
The characteristics of tourism practiced at the local level	Knowing the extent to which the population of Videle City has knowledge about tourist products
What are the trends in local tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identification of opportunities for the development of the field of tourism - Identification of the methods and tools for ensuring the sustainability of the activities supported by the Financing Agreement



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Methods of promotion	- Identifying the most effective ways of promoting tourism
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The researched population is represented by the residents of the city of Videle, as well as visiting tourists, of both sexes, regardless of the level of study, profession or income.

Out of the total of 150 surveyed subjects, 20 do not have a permanent residence in the City of Videle, while the remaining 130 live in Videle.

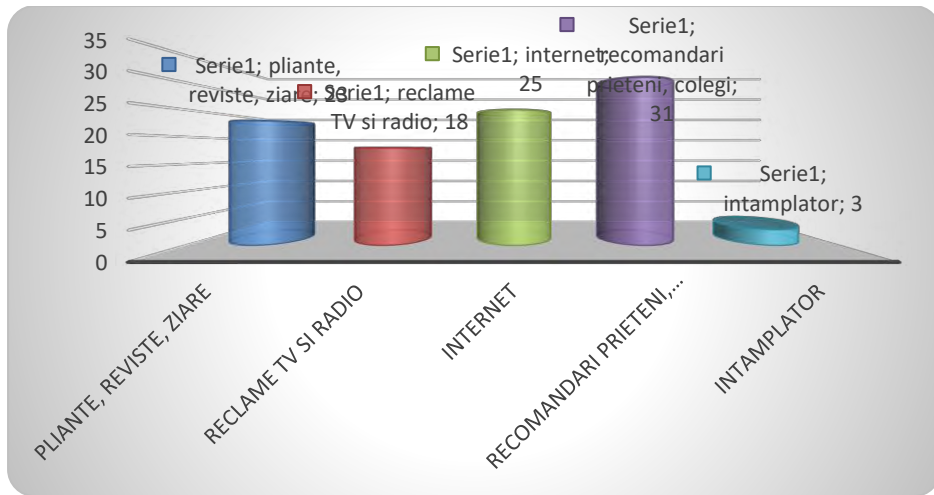
Although, from a tourist point of view, the city of Videle is not an offer for vacation tourism (relief of ses, without notable tourist attractions), surprisingly 95% of the people interviewed considered that the city of Videle and Teleorman county are areas with tourist potential .

Of all the respondents, 31% considered that the best way to disseminate information is interpersonal, 25% see the Internet as an efficient way, while only 3% saw travel agencies as effective promoters.



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Among the tourists and potential tourists of Videle City, 4% would stay less than 2 days in the locality, 10% would stay between 3 and 5 days, 22% would be willing to stay for a longer stay, between 6-10 days, 28% of respondents are willing to stay between 11-15 days, and another 22% - more than 15 days.

The people interviewed, in their vast majority, have not heard of actions to promote the area (16.5% - unlikely and 41.8% - likely) and also do not intend to promote the area themselves to other interested persons (11.7% - unlikely and 42.9% - likely). There is still a percentage of 27% of the respondents who are very sure that they have heard of promotional actions and are categorically willing to promote the area to other interested people .



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The main accommodation facilities named by the study respondents were:

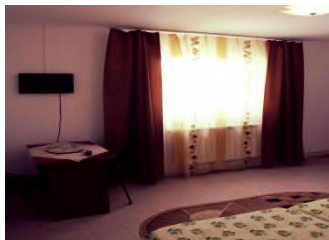
- **MARINESCU House – 98%**



Casa Marinescu is located in Videle and has barbecue facilities, a garden and a terrace. Guests can relax in the shared lounge.

At the guest house, the rooms are fitted with a wardrobe, a flat-screen TV and a private bathroom. All guests have free WiFi and some rooms have a balcony.

- **House EMERIO – 85%**



Casa Emerio is located in Videle and features a barbecue and a garden. The guesthouse has a terrace and garden view.

At the guest house, all rooms include a wardrobe, a flat-screen TV and a private bathroom



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- **Pension DARIA – 89%**



Accommodation Services Pension DARIA, Videle

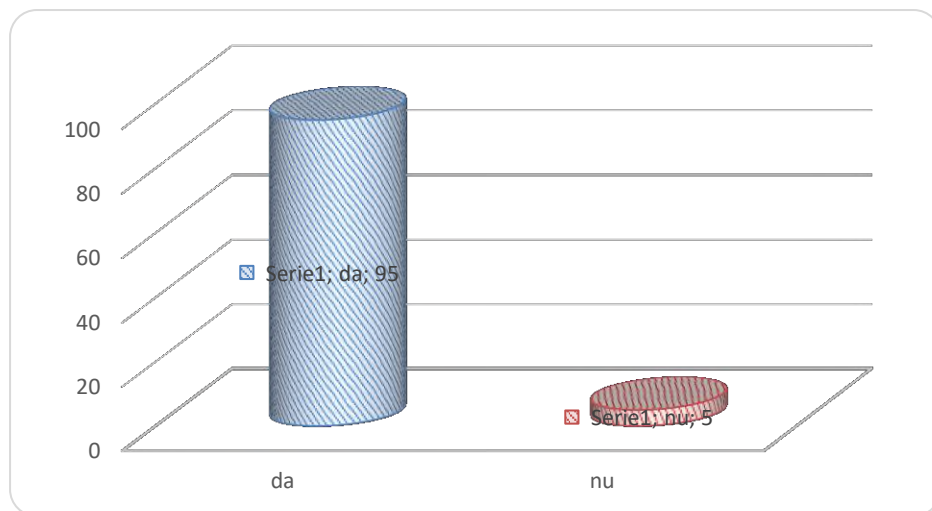
- LED TV in the room
- Wireless internet
- Barbeque
- Terrace / courtyard
- Dining room
- Bathroom in the room
- Glass shower cabin
- MDF bathroom furniture
- Heavy equipment parking
- Office spaces
- Video monitoring



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The respondents of the study have, in a proportion of 95%, knowledge about the plans and initiatives of the local authorities in order to develop tourism in the area. This can also be explained by the popularization, on a large scale, of the "Tales of Culture, History and Nature" project, of which this contract is a part.



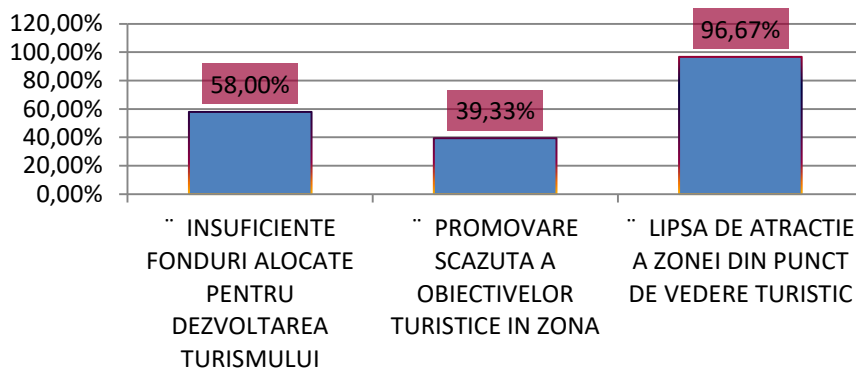
At the same time, 96.67% of the respondents of the study consider that the main problem facing the tourism sector at the local level is related to the lack of attractiveness of the area from a tourist point of view. 58% of the respondents believe that the development of the tourism sector is limited by the insufficient funds allocated in this regard.



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The main problems related to the development of the tourism sector



The most important Videle tourist attractions identified by the respondents to the study are:

- The wooden church on Malul Glavaciocului - Casa Necula Rada (1910) – 54% of respondents
- Blejesti - Voinea Mansion - 72% of respondents
- Blejesti - Secular oak - natural monument - 37.5% of respondents

Regarding tourism and the types of tourism that can be practiced at the local level, the respondents consider in the largest majority (78%) that rest/relaxation tourism is in the first place, followed by event tourism (67.05%)



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and leisure tourism (43.29%). Spa tourism is in last place, being chosen by only 21.30% of respondents.

Regarding the events that could be organized to be of interest to tourists, they were considered to be:

1. Sports events - contests - 82% of respondents
2. Cultural and artistic events - 75% of respondents
3. Events that promote traditions (Town Days, holiday traditions) - 72% of respondents
4. Events for the business environment - 45% of respondents

The most important measure for the development of tourism considered by 39.2% of the respondents is the rehabilitation of the road infrastructure and the access infrastructure, followed by the allocation of funds for various tourism promotion actions (27%).

Most of the people interviewed considered that the modernization of accommodation spaces and restaurants are on the top of the list of actions that hotel owners should undertake in order to increase the number of tourists.



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The results of the questionnaire revealed the fact that, in order to develop tourism in the area, the producers of traditional products could be stimulated by:

- Providing facilities for exhibiting products at various events (free stands, invitations to participate, motivations for participation);
- Providing a space outside the events where they can exhibit their products;
- Their promotion through various ways by the Public Authorities.

B. DOCUMENTARY ANALYSIS

This document also analyzed the strategic documents of national interest, respectively: **the National Strategy for the Development of Ecotourism in Romania 2016 - 2020, the National Rural Development Plan , the Development Plan of the South-Muntenia Region , the sustainable development strategy of Teleorman County for the period 2010 -2020 .**

Regarding the subject of this analysis, rural development measures, especially measures aimed at encouraging the development of tourism, the National Plan promotes at the level of a general strategic objective rural restructuring, the competitiveness of the agri-food sector and balanced rural development through the diversification of economic activities, the creation of new job opportunities. Moving to the level of priorities, measures, respectively sub-



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measures, the diversification of the rural economy is promoted by promoting the development of SMEs in non-agricultural sectors in the rural environment: the production and marketing of local non-agricultural products, crafts, investments in services, infrastructure and recreational activities, rural tourism.

As a general observation, agriculture is no longer the only source of economic growth in rural areas, and this can be seen at the level of policies developed. In addition to actions that support the development of agricultural activities, measures that directly support non-agricultural activities are encouraged, in order to support rural development. The National Plan does not directly promote the idea of tourism as a pillar for rural development, but rather suggests this idea through proposals to diversify economic activities, supporting non-agricultural practices.

The second level analyzed was the regional one. Like the National Plan, the regional plan does not explicitly promote the development of the rural environment through tourism. Among the strategic objectives aimed at rural development, respectively rural tourism, we can mention the need to make the rural economy more efficient in the context of protecting the environment and cultural heritage. The quality of life of residents can be improved by investing in the sustainable development of tourism. **However, we support the idea that in an area with no offer from a geographical point of view, in terms of environmental conditions and**



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relief, the development of the tourism sector represents an important challenge. The existing heritage, of tourist interest, is a narrow palette, and practically the only way to create and develop this sector, in the case of the city of Videle, is represented by event tourism. In the following chapters we will see that, in the case of the city of Lyaskovets, things are different. The local tourist potential can be encouraged and promoted through innovative events, strongly anchored in traditions.

As far as the county level is concerned, the penciled vision mentions the following: " Although the specifics of the natural setting of Teleorman county are less expressive, limiting the possibilities of tourism development, there are several areas with potential for the organization of recreational areas: Lunca Dunării, with lake Suhaia and the lake complex in the area of the confluence of the Vedea river with the Danube, the sedge forests of Lunca Oltului, Vedea and Teleormanului, as well as the oak forests near the municipality of Roșiorii de Vede (less affected by the deforestation process at the level of the entire county)." The strategy also specifies the following: " the characteristics of the relief do not allow the development of tourism except in the form of the creation of agreement bases". Surprisingly, "The largest number of active companies, more than half of the total (58.00 % in 2009 compared to 57.57% in 2008), were in the field of trade and tourism." This is notable



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because the existence of an important segment of players on the tourism market can represent an excellent way to promote event tourism. In the SWOT analysis, the County-level Strategy mentions **"encouraging cultural tourism on the border with Bulgaria" as opportunities**. An extremely important point of the same strategy can become the key to the development of tourism in the Videle city area, namely: "As for local services, they are not sufficiently developed and diversified according to world trends in the field (cultural tourism, ecotourism, agrotourism, wine, fishing, hunting, walks on the Danube, etc.). Also, there is no concern for the promotion and capitalization of the popular traditions specific to the place. " The approach promoted in terms of rural development aims at diversifying the rural economy. Diversification of the rural economy can be done by encouraging the establishment and development of SME activity in rural areas, increasing the involvement of residents, as well as encouraging collaboration and partnerships. Another priority supports the idea of harmonious and competitive integration of tourism in the regional, national and European context by creating a complex and competitive tourist offer.

The analysis showed that rural development is an important pillar for economic development. Regarding the congruence between rural development activities and tourism, the formulated policies and strategies have shown an interest in this regard. One thing is certain, in rural areas



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other forms of activities , complementary to agriculture , are strongly encouraged .

Analyzing the local situation, regarding the development of tourism in the Videle area, a series of objectives, measures and priorities formulated at the local level are in line with those promoted at the county, regional or national level regarding rural development. The regeneration of tourism is considered to be an important tool for development, a fact attested including through the vision and strategic objectives formulated - the development of tourism by promoting local potential and the efficient use of resources, as the predominant economic activity. A series of measures, respectively specific objectives were formulated in this sense: the development and modernization of the tourism infrastructure; the development of consulting services for the development of tourism; increasing investment in tourism; promoting event tourism, which can be born together with the European project "Tales of Culture, History and Nature".

The National Strategy for the Development of Ecotourism in Romania 2016-2020 is a document of strategic relevance, in the context of this project, which is why we will analyze it more extensively in the following



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The strategy mentions very strongly the fact that ecotourism can have a contribution at the level of local communities, a contribution unanimously accepted worldwide. Through the UN resolution of December 21, 2012, "Promoting Ecotourism for Poverty Eradication and Environmental Protection", members are asked to adopt policies that promote ecotourism, emphasizing "the positive impact on income generation, job creation and education, and , thus, for the fight against poverty". The resolution further recognizes that "ecotourism creates significant opportunities for the conservation, protection and sustainable use of biodiversity and natural areas by encouraging both host communities and tourists to conserve and respect natural and cultural heritage".

The development of ecotourism activities within local communities and within protected natural areas involves a series of socio-economic benefits, respectively:

- ❖ generate jobs at the local level (directly in the tourism sector or in related sectors). By raising incomes and living standards for the local population, younger generations are encouraged to stay within the community;
- ❖ of infrastructure and tourist services (accommodation services, food, transport, recreational facilities, handicraft products and guide services, souvenirs);



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- ❖ stimulates the rural economy by creating or increasing the demand for agricultural products necessary to ensure tourist services;
- ❖ it boosts the development of the infrastructure, which brings benefits to the local population as well;
- ❖ stimulates the development of peripheral regions through capital injections;
- ❖ it stimulates the improvement of intercultural relations in a region. Often tourists seek to know the traditions and customs specific to an ethnographic region, and the host community is thus stimulated to revive popular traditions;
- ❖ under conditions of normal development, tourism can lead to the self-financing of development mechanisms that can benefit the administrators of protected natural areas as a tool for their conservation;
- ❖ supports conservation activities by convincing governments and the public about the importance of natural areas.

According to UNWTO, "sustainable tourism development meets the needs of the present tourists and the host regions, while protecting and increasing chances and opportunities for the future. It is seen as a way of managing all resources so that economic, social and aesthetic needs are



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fully satisfied, maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological dimensions, biological diversity and life system." According to the same organization, the notion of sustainable tourism has 3 important aspects in mind:

- ❖ quality - sustainable tourism requires a valuable experience for visitors, while improving the quality of life of the host community, its cultural identity, reducing poverty, and protecting the environment;
- ❖ continuity - sustainable tourism ensures the optimal exploitation, the continuity of the natural resources on which they are based and the preservation of the culture of the host community, with satisfactory experiences for visitors;
- ❖ balance - sustainable tourism ensures a balance between the needs of the tourism industry, the environmentalists and the local community, with economic and social benefits, fairly distributed, to all the actors involved. Sustainable tourism covers all forms and activities in the hospitality industry, including conventional mass tourism, cultural tourism, mountain tourism, seaside tourism, spa tourism, business tourism, rural tourism, etc. Sustainable development in tourism is a must, and the link between tourism and the environment is much stronger than in the case of other industries. Many times tourism has created negative



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economic, social or ecological effects, and their countermeasure can only be achieved through professional management, which involves in the decision-making process all the factors involved in the development of tourism . Collaboration between authorities (who have legislative, economic, social instruments), economic agents (who initiate development projects and tourist services), those who campaign for environmental protection and the preservation of cultural heritage, local providers of tourist services, tour operators and travel agencies and, last but not least, tourists, as beneficiaries, is absolutely necessary for the sustainable development of tourism.

Lately, the tendency of the development of the tourism industry, through its return to nature and authentic cultural values, has manifested itself more and more.

According to the UNWTO, ecotourism can be defined as: the form of tourism that meets the following characteristics:

- ❖ tourists is observing and appreciating nature and traditional culture dominant in natural areas.
- ❖ includes educational and interpretation activities.
- ❖ as a rule, but not exclusively, it addresses small groups organized by local tour operators or small profile businesses in the area.



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- ❖ minimizes the negative impact on the natural and socio-cultural environment.

Ecotourism is a form of tourism that respects the principles of sustainable tourism regarding economic, social and environmental impact, but also includes a series of specific principles that differentiate it:

- ❖ ecotourism actively contributes to the preservation of natural and cultural heritage;
- ❖ ecotourism includes local communities in planning, development and operation activities and contributes to their well-being;
- ❖ ecotourism involves interpreting the destination's natural and cultural heritage for visitors;
- ❖ ecotourism is intended, in particular, for individual visitors, but also for small organized groups.

Ecotourists cover a wide spectrum of travelers who are increasingly motivated to experience, being interested in the natural environment of the places they visit, as well as in the process of learning about local communities. They are especially attracted to rural areas where there is a mix of landscapes and traditional villages. They are in constant search for diverse experiences that cannot be provided through mass tourism vacations. In general, ecotourists want "holidays with content", i.e.



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vacations that help them to discover new skills and talents, to experience new emotions, through various lived experiences . They expect unique experiences in the respective destination and the accumulation of information regarding its distinct specificity. They respect environmental factors, prefer to visit intact natural and cultural environments, and expect tourism product providers to demonstrate that they respect the local environment and that they operate in accordance with environmental principles.

Along with the natural setting, the Romanian space also benefits from an ethnographic and folkloric potential of great originality and authenticity. This spiritual endowment represented by popular architectural values, popular installations and techniques, traditional crafts, folklore and ancestral customs, popular holidays, etc., to which are added numerous historical and artistic monuments, archaeological remains, museums, happily amplifies and completes the ecotourism potential of the country.



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The SWOT analysis

The SWOT analysis on tourism in the city of Videle highlights the following:

Strong points	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific customs • Folkloric and culinary traditions still well preserved • the existence of some rural areas (traditional ethnofolklore), where you can experience the local lifestyle; • the existence of a still viable rural economy that keeps traditional local products on the market; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficiently developed basic infrastructure • Reduced investments in the tourism sector • Lack/reduced number of restaurants with local specifics • Insufficient accommodation units • Lack of a coherent tourism development strategy • Lack of a local brand • Weak motivation and lack of confidence of the population in relation to the tourist potential of the area



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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quality of services in the tourism sector and standards in Romania.
timely	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The possibility of accessing European funds • Investments in accommodation and recreation structures • Increased interest in practicing active forms of tourism • Increased interest in the traditional lifestyle • development of niche tourism (business, leisure, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fluctuating number of tourists • tourist competition of neighboring counties; • inefficient use of funds intended for the development of local tourism; • labor force exodus and staff turnover in the tourism sector; • the high cost of investments for a quality tourist infrastructure; • the exploitation of the tourist potential to a small extent, the



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<p>agritourism);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promotion of festivals and cultural activities at the level of the two partner localities; • the partnership with the town of Lyaskovets in Bulgaria, which has already accumulated an important experience in the field 	<p>reduced involvement of the tourism agencies in the promotion of the tourist potential;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the inability to start a massive process of increasing accommodation standards and the quality of services in the tourism sector.
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4.2. Lyaskovets area – Bulgaria

The data related to the partner area in Bulgaria were taken from an extensive study recently carried out within another project.

Unlike the region with the Romanian city of Videle as its central point, tourism in the Lyaskovets region of Bulgaria is not in its infancy. Tourists come to Lyaskovets, both attracted by the organized events and by the natural environment it offers.

The study we are referring to specifies the following requirements as the basis for the practice of ecological tourism in the Lyaskovets area of Bulgaria:



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" First of all, intervention on the inhabitants of wild nature should not be allowed . Tourists should not isolate animals from their natural environment; to separate children from their mother; to isolate the animals that come out of the water or the land; to move birds from their nests, animals from their holes, hollows and other habitats; to remove branches, leaves and the like near the habitat of animals and birds; to remain for a long period of time close to animals; to disturb and touch the animals. Bird watching must take place from a distance - by means of special binoculars for this purpose; to exercise control over noise that would disturb the birds; to speak slowly.

Second, waste should not have a negative impact on the environment - neither ecologically nor aesthetically. Tour operators must: explain to tourists the sensitivity of nature to waste; to ensure the collection and removal of all waste during the tourists' stay in the natural area they visit; to promote the maintenance of cleanliness in the region. Vessels (boats, ships, etc.), which transport tourists to ecological zones and reserves, must have waste collection or recycling systems.

Third, it is necessary to strengthen the sustainable development of ecotourism in the area in question by establishing local guides, landowner associations and representatives of public environmental agencies and organizations to create region-specific norms and measures protection of natural resources. The experience gained by a tourist while visiting a natural area should enrich his knowledge and appreciation of the natural environment,



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its sustainable development and conservation. This is done by training guides (nature lovers) to accompany tourists every time they visit the natural area. Guides must be very knowledgeable about the diversity of animals and plants in the region; to have information to provide tourists and their behavior to encourage a friendly attitude towards nature and the desire for conservation. The maximum number of people visiting a particular area should not be more than 25 people in a group, but depending on the sensitivity of the tourist attraction, it can be up to 5-10 people.

Fourth, tourist visits should integrally stimulate the objectives and regions visited. In ecotourism destinations there are flora, fauna, unique culture and beautiful natural scenery that must be preserved. In the destination, local ownership of the services provided should be encouraged. Ecotourism activities should allow the creation of an economic benefit for the local population and the promotion of the sustainable development of the natural environment, the preservation or extension of biodiversity; conservation, maintenance or enrichment of natural and cultural systems.

With the greatest potential for development, the following ecotourism activities were evaluated by experts: the provision of additional thematically oriented tourist services in the fields of culture, spa, wellness, rural, wine, ecological, congress, children and youth, adventure, sports , hunting, golf and other types of tourism; and providing guided tour services, mountain and nature tourists and sports services .



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As a whole, the respondents to the two types of questionnaires (the one applied in Videle, but also the questionnaire referred to in the study identified as the main pillar of the analysis for the situation in Bulgaria) are aware of the content of the concept of ecotourism. In the case of respondents from Bulgaria, approximately half do not know of any successful project or business initiative in the field of ecotourism or organic agriculture in the Veliko Tarnovo region. The proportion of respondents (76%) from Teleorman county who do not know about such initiatives is much higher. Some of the respondents from the Veliko Tarnovo region mention guest houses, beekeeping in the mountain area of Elena, strawberry growing, Xilifor Tourism Center, construction of ecological trails and pedestrian paths near/in protected areas as possible pillars of tourism development.

[Identifying the best alternatives for the development of the tourism field](#)

A. Empty area

Considering the lack of a particularly attractive natural setting (the sea area), as well as the precariousness of some high-impact tourist attractions for the public, a realistic vision of the tourist development potential of the city of Videle implies the generation and support of decision-making factors from the public administration of the following types of tourism:



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- a. **rural tourism** – motivational form of tourism oriented towards the use of local tourist resources (ethno-cultural, etc.), knowledge of local customs and traditions, of peasant households, etc. Rural tourism targets tourists who benefit from the following services: accommodation in agro-tourism guesthouses, food with pure ecological products grown and prepared in the area, leisure. Also, depending on the season, tourists can be involved in agricultural activities and village life. Tourists could also stay in the village in order to explore the surroundings. Rural tourism can bring important benefits to the community and the natives;
- b. **cultural tourism** – motivational form of tourism, which capitalizes on the cultural potential, is based on visiting museums and interesting places from an archaeological, historical and religious point of view, as well as on the knowledge of local art and folklore: music, dance, folk crafts, folk theatre, national port, which presents cognitive and cultural interest. The town of Videle has an important series of elements that form the foundation for the development of cultural tourism.
- c. **gastronomic tourism** – motivational form of tourism, intended for people who love to discover the specific secrets of traditional cuisines. Hospitality, traditions and culinary customs are the basis of the development of this form of tourism. The gustatory qualities, the specifics of the dishes can serve as an important motivation for tourists who aim to feed themselves with select dishes characteristic of the visited tourist area;



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- d. **nostalgic tourism** – motivational form of tourism that includes visiting places of heritage by people who have emigrated to various countries. Nostalgic tourism involves people visiting places of their childhood or ancestors and is quite popular. A large number of residents of the city of Videle who emigrated over time, want to return to the country to visit their families, friends, places of origin, the graves of relatives;
- e. **ecological tourism** – a motivational form of tourism oriented towards knowing nature, protecting and preserving the environment. Ecotourism or nature-based tourism involves tourists who practice hiking or traveling for the purpose of observing flora and fauna, studying the ecology of the area and staying near protected areas, in places that are not harmful to nature.
- f. **Cross-border tourism** – the development of a cross-border tourism package, attractive for the city of Videle and the partner city in Bulgaria, Lyaskovets.

Therefore, the tourism **of weekend events** (cultural, gastronomic, folklore) is a form of tourism that can contribute in an important and immediate way to the tourist development of the city of Videle, but also of the city of Lyaskovets .

The events organized by the local authorities will be designed in a way that will give them uniqueness and sustainability in the medium term, and thus, in themselves, become traditions.

The municipality can also develop a series of other projects, the



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implementation of which can contribute to the development of the tourism sector. These are presented below.

B. Lyaskovets area, Bulgaria

Knowledge trail: Historical heritage

Local experts will present the historical artifacts and introduce you to other valuable and interesting discoveries of the Veliko Tarnovo region; you will learn how to find artifacts, local legends and mysterious events related to their discovery.

Suitable for groups of students and all history lovers.

Knowledge trail: Let 's rediscover history

For those looking for new knowledge and encounters with strange and unpopular historical facts, the cross-border area is a real hidden treasure.

In the area there are hidden remains of ancient settlements, Roman fortresses, fortresses from the period of the second Bulgarian kingdom . Many places have names related to historical events or settlements. This can be used to organize quest routes.

With local guides, remains of ancient settlements, interesting objects can be visited, including picnic time and opportunities for great views and pictures from convenient vantage points.

Suitable for groups of students and friendly companies.



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Green weekends

It's Friday evening ... get away from the noise of the city, come to the village - comfortable and hospitable guest houses await you here.

The people of the villages of the cross-border region Veliko Tarnovo - Teleorman await you, offering you warm and friendly company. Guest houses in the villages receive tourists throughout the year.

There are options to cook or order delicious local food made by your hosts (chicken, rabbit or lamb in the oven, banitsa, baklava, homemade bread, pickles and salads, homemade rolls, etc.).

The houses can accommodate between 6 and 10 people. The owners offer additional attractions and walks in the area.

Culinary adventures

Demonstrations and tastings of traditional local food can be organized at the leisure attractions. With the help of the local community, you can get recipes, take part in practical classes and try:

- Lamb baked on a stick or in an oven;
- Preparation of homemade bread and cakes;
- Preparation of banita and baklava;
- Preparation of jam, lutenița, pickles and other types of winter food.

Attractions are organized upon prior request and depending on the season and weather conditions.



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Available for groups of 5 to 50 people.

Folklore Tour - Instruction in folk songs and dances from the Northern Folk Region

Attractions are organized upon prior request and depending on the season and weather conditions.

Place of training: A music teacher, a popular dance coach and an accompanist are provided.

Duration: from 2 hours to 3 days x 5 hours.

Available for groups of 5 to 25 people.

Eco-tea for winter

The Transnistrian region of Veliko Tarnovo - Teleorman is rich in herbs and medicinal plants. Gathered in the right season and dried, these herbs and berries can be combined into countless tasty teas and useful potions to save you from colds in winter.

Take advantage of the suggestions of the guests in the lodging houses - they know where the herbs are and will gladly take you to collect them.

Eco-walks to collect herbs and berries depending on the season.

Duration: from 3 to 5 hours

You need comfortable shoes, a hat, sunscreen, a water bottle, fruit and herb containers.

Suitable for groups of 5 to 25 people - students, retirees, friends.



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Through forests and meadows on two wheels

If mountain bikes are available, bike tours to geographic and historical sites can be arranged.

If necessary, it is possible to add the possibility of organizing a campsite (overnight in tents).

On prior request, it must be possible to rent a bicycle, tent, scarf and sleeping bag and a driver, and if necessary an all-terrain vehicle for the transport of luggage and food.

Food for that period is provided by the participants themselves.

Duration from 2 to 8 hours, with the possibility of camping with tents.

Suitable for older students, youth, groups of friends from 5 to 15 people.

STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM

<i>Vision</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Tourism can become a new sector of economic and social activity in the City of Videle; in the case of the city of Lyaskovets, it can be substantially developed- The development of tourism will center around a vision that combines traditions, folklore, culture, nature, resulting in events of regional and national interest
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Strategic directions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promotion of event tourism - Promotion of events within integrated tourism products that will be developed from the conceptual level - Promotion of local specifics
Strategic objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exploitation and sustainable exploitation of tourist resources - Stimulating the development of tourist reception structures - Development of a management system for the tourist phenomenon in Videle - Promotion of the cross-border area as a tourist destination for events, well defined conceptually
Specific objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creating the necessary conditions for the organization and development of event tourism - Increasing the quality of services in accommodation units - Facilitation and development of new types of leisure structures - Promotion of local specifics - Knowledge transfer between relevant actors - Creation of a local brand for tourist destinations Videle and Lyaskovets - Establishing partnerships between local authorities, tourism companies and NGOs



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priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The development and modernization of the tourist infrastructure - Exploitation of the natural environment for tourist purposes - Promotion of local traditions and customs - Encouraging local investments - Actions to promote the area
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Operational programs:

1. Development of tourist infrastructure

Project description:

- Building the necessary infrastructure for an adventure park
- Modernization of existing accommodation spaces and construction of new ones structure
- Arrangement, renovation of the intended tourist reception structures the youth
- Accommodation spaces offered in the regime host
- Development of specific food functions local

Actors involved/responsible: Teleorman County Council, Videle City Hall

Possible funding sources: FEDR-POR, the local budget

Completion period: 2025 – 2027

2. Construction of a recreational cycling circuit

Project description:



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- Construction of runways bicycles for making a leisure cycling circuit
- Rehabilitation road which do part FROM circuit,
- Organization of contests, sports events - ATV, cycling, rock climbing
Actors involved/responsible: Teleorman County Council, Videle City Hall, public authorities from neighboring communities, interested sports associations
Possible funding sources: FEADR-LEADER, the local budget
Completion period: 2025 - 2027

3. Traditional, Folkloric and Cultural spaces

Project description:
- Rehabilitation, heritage restoration cultural
- The organization of craft fairs in mod regular
- Actions, events to properly promote events
- Time coordination of cultural events and development of a calendar of events
Actors involved/responsible: Videle City Hall, interested professional associations
Possible funding sources: FEDR-POR, local budget, INTERREG ROBG budget, private sources
Completion period: 2019 - 2025

4. Construction of the village Museum

Project description:
- Identification of artisans, folk craftsmen and promotion of products their
- Organization of popular fairs in order to promote the products specific
- Organizing the necessary logistics: collecting data, photos and stories of the past, highlighting the legends of the city
Actors involved/responsible: Videle City Hall, interested professional associations
Possible sources of funding: Local budget, interested professional associations
Completion period: 2023 - 2025



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5. Supporting operators involved in tourism development activities in the area

Project description:

- Tax reduction to support SMEs, in order to increase the number of operators and diversify the service offer
- Reduction of local taxes for investment in tourism development

Actors involved/responsible: Videle City Hall

Completion period: 2020 - 2025

6. Creation of an integrated tourism product Videle - Lyaskovets

Project description:

- Developing a brand sightseeing
- Creating an image (logo) in accordance with the vision promoted
- Developing a strategy of promotion
- Participation in fairs tourism

Actors involved/responsible: Teleorman County Council, Videle City Hall, Veliko-Tarnovo Region, Lyaskovets City interested associations

Possible funding sources: Local budget, INTERREG Program Romania - Bulgaria

Completion period: 2019 - 2021



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Identifying the most effective ways of integrating tourism into local development

These considerations highlight the specific role of promotional activity in the tourism field, especially since a higher risk is perceived when purchasing a (tourist) service. Thus, considering these two major characteristics of the tourism service (intangibility and high risk), without the information, persuasion and reminder achieved through promotion, the tourist products would not reach the targeted segments. Regarding the importance of promotion, the specialists of the World Tourism Organization state that almost no activity in the world..."needs a more active, ingenious and aggressive promotion than tourism...". This fact is explained by the wide addressability of the hospitality industry (almost 1 billion beneficiaries), who must find out everything and in time about its offer.

The two localities have a unique chance to develop a tourist product through this project. Since, at least in the case of the city of Videle, tourism is a non-existent sector, the promotion will be done in a proactive manner, using:

- ❖ The online environment – the websites of both municipalities, the Teleorman County Council website, Facebook
- ❖ The mobile application to be implemented within the Project
- ❖ For further projects, radio and TV commercials



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❖ Leaflets, brochures

The promotional messages will be carefully constructed, will offer uniqueness and will be aimed at attracting the public. We recommend that the promotional messages be proposed by the organizers of the events to be held and agreed together with the Local Authorities.

Identification of the methods and tools for ensuring the sustainability of the activities supported by the Financing Agreement.



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Findings, conclusions, recommendations

The purpose of this paper was to develop a strategic plan for the development of tourism in the Videle area, Teleorman county, and, adjacently, in the city of Lyaskovets, Veliko Tarnovo region, with the mention that this strategy does not take the place of a general strategy aimed at the comprehensive development of the community. The context in which the present study was drawn up concerns the need to "re-imagine" the countryside with its own resources. In order to stimulate rural development, one of the most important objectives is the exploitation of local resources. In this context, it is important that the perspective on the rural environment undergoes changes: the rural environment is not only a favorable place for practicing agriculture. Investment in tourism also implies investment in other sectors, such as infrastructure, food industry, local production, thus playing a significant role in reducing unemployment, stimulating employment, constituting support for the development of the business sector.

The policies promoted at the national, regional and local level regarding the development of rural areas support the importance of remodeling the rural space by promoting tourism as a modern tool that can create a path to development. The development of tourism is an element that can directly contribute to the development of the Videle community. This plan can provide the basis for a future development of the tourism sector, summarizing the main



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development opportunities for this sector, with the aim of increasing the attractiveness of Videle as a tourist destination.

The strategic plan was developed taking into account the specifics and potential of the community, all of which are included in the development vision: tourism can become a local development factor in Videle for the coming years. The future development of tourism will revolve around a unified vision that promotes a combination of the following variables: traditions - folklore - gastronomy - culture - recreation - nature - culture.

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