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HUNEDOARA COUNTY - A REGION THAT CAN BE VALUED THROUGH AGRITOURISM

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Abstract: *The Hunedoara region has a high agritourism potential, determined by the diversity of the natural setting, the richness of the cultural heritage and the existence of an infrastructure favorable to the development of rural tourism. The varied relief, which includes the Retezat, Șureanu and Poiana Ruscă massifs, as well as the Hațegului and Petroșanilor depressions, offers optimal conditions for the exploitation of natural resources and traditional agricultural activities.*

Culturally, the county stands out for the authenticity of its villages, vernacular architecture, folk crafts and traditions, elements that can be coherently integrated into sustainable tourism products. At the same time, the proximity of the urban centers of Deva and Hunedoara facilitates access to financial and logistical resources necessary for the development of this sector.

Through the coordinated exploitation of the natural, cultural and economic heritage, Hunedoara has the potential to become a regional model of sustainable agritourism development, capable of combining the preservation of traditions with the modernization of rural area.

• Introduction

• Due to its geographical location, the Hunedoara area falls into the category of intra-Carpathian depressions with a convergent character, being a space of interference and continuity both for the identity values of Romanian culture and for the demographic and economic flows that define its cohesion and functionality. It has numerous advantages, among which the following stand out:

- the special historical prestige that gives it a distinct image;
- the high quality of the natural and social environment;
- the solid reputation and favorable image of a recognized destination;
- the strategic position in the central-southwestern area of Romania.

• Material and method

• The specific objectives are:

1. Identify and classify the local resources of Hunedoara County – natural, cultural and traditional – relevant for agritourism.
2. Analyze the potential for tourism exploitation of each category of resources, highlighting their opportunities and limitations.
3. Evaluate the relevance and attractiveness of the resources for tourists, based on the specialized literature and existing theoretical studies.
4. Propose theoretical strategic directions for the development of sustainable agritourism in Hunedoara County, based on the identified resources.

• Results and discussions

The main agritourism areas with significant potential to support the development of rural areas in Hunedoara County are taking shape around regions with relevant economic, cultural and natural resources. The development prospects of the localities in the analyzed area are closely linked to a series of measures and initiatives aimed at stimulating the tourism potential of the area, such as:

- Support of promotional activities and tools, such as brochures, online platforms, maps and tourist guides;
- Participation in tourism fairs and organization, at regional level, of an annual salon dedicated to promoting tourism products specific to the county;
- Organization, in various locations of the county, of international tourism fairs and seminars;
- Supporting family associations, guesthouse owners and rural micro-enterprises to diversify tourist services that highlight local specifics — folklore shows, traditional craft workshops, accommodation in authentic households, ethnographic museums, etc.;
- Valorizing through tourism the tangible and intangible cultural heritage — handicrafts, crafts, traditional architecture, customs and popular events;
- Rehabilitating and preserving traditional buildings in rural areas, with the aim of protecting cultural heritage and integrating it into the tourist circuit;
- Carrying out information and promotion campaigns dedicated to agrotourism and rural tourism, to increase the attractiveness of the area among visitors.