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EVALUATION OF THE TOURIST AND AGRO-TOURIST POTENTIAL OF VRANCEA COUNTY

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Abstract

Vrancea, the land of natural wonders, the land of old stories, the land of ancestral song and poetry unsurpassed by any Romanian land, is the most beautiful part of the Carpathian depression. This blessed land is a miniature Romania. Vrancea County has an extremely varied relief that is suitable for practicing tourist activities. The paper aims at an analysis of the tourist and agrotourism potential in Vrancea county using the following indicators: the evolution of agrotourism pensions, tourist reception structures, accommodation capacity, etc. The analysis highlighted the fact that the county has vast natural and anthropic resources that are poorly exploited for the development of tourism and agrotourism.

Keywords: tourist and agrotourism potential, tourist activity, accommodation capacity

JEL Classification: L83

INTRODUCTION

Vrancea is the "country" of legend and history, the "cradle of Miorița", it is the old land of Răsăș, with a troubled past and a unique identity of Romania. Located outside the Curvature Carpathians with an area of 4,857 km². The county is located at the intersection of the borders of three "Romanian countries": Moldova, Muntenia and Transylvania.

It has a tourist potential closely related to the cultural heritage, which includes historical vestiges, religious structures and cultural buildings, monuments, museums. The values of this heritage represent a capacity for social and economic development of the provinces, and highlights the tourist potential it constitutes.

With a significant architectural value are historical monuments, places of worship (churches, monasteries, religious ensembles, hermitages and bell towers, chapels, crosses), old settlements from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the first half of the twentieth century, buildings with a particularly important architectural aspect. and as locations of social and administrative interest - Victoriei Monument from Tișița, Focșani Theater - "Maier Gheorghe Pastia", Unirii Obelisk from Focșani, Museum of Natural Sciences - Focșani. (Vrancea County Council, 2019)

MATERIALS AND METHODS

As a method of analyzing the evolution of agrotourism in Vrancea County, we used statistical data taken from the website of the National Institute of Statistics, respectively statistics performed over a period of 10 years, statistics containing the number of agrotourism pensions and the number of tourists who used as leisure spaces in the years studied.

The indicators used in the analysis are: arithmetic mean, standard deviation, growth index, percentage changes, annual growth rate, regression function and correlation coefficient that measures the relationship between the dependent and the independent variable.

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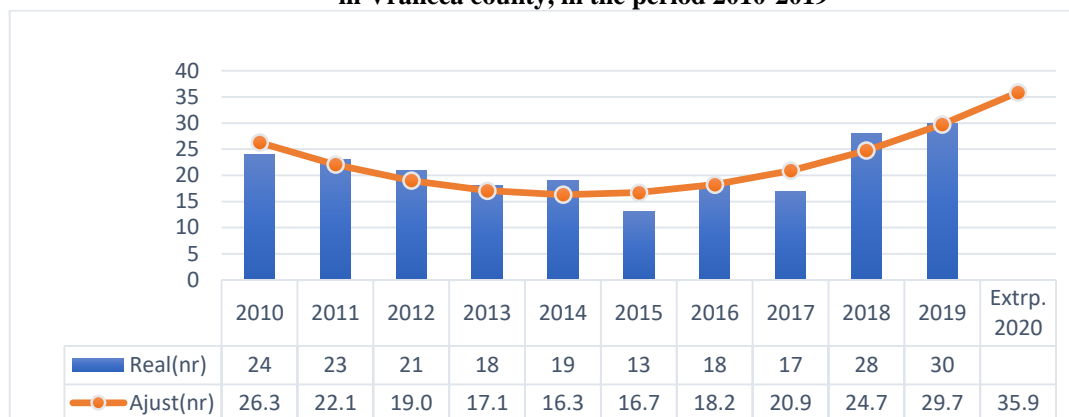
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RESULTS AND DISSCUSION

The development of Vrancea County, from an agrotourism point of view, is highlighted in the detailed analysis of the infrastructure and the tourist circulation in the agrotourism pensions for a period of 10 years.

The following graph shows the evolution of the number of agritourism pensions in Vrancea County for the period 2010-2019.

Figure 1. Calculation of the trend equation of the number of agritourism pensions in Vrancea county, in the period 2010-2019



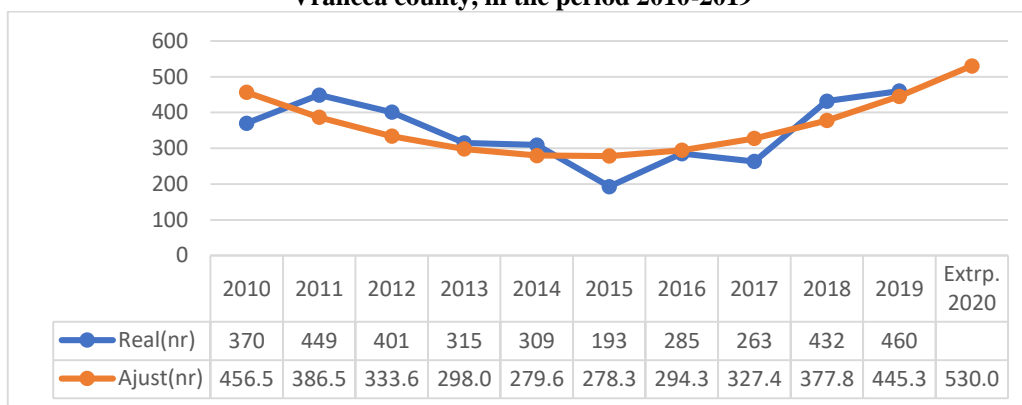
Source: vrancea.insse.ro

Following the analysis of statistical data, it is found that their number has a decreasing trend until 2015 and then increase in the next period to a number of 30 pensions in 2019, with an annual rate of 2.5%. The trend equation of the number of agritourism pensions, for the analyzed period ($Y = 8.59x^2 - 95.8x + 543.7$) predicts that in 2020 their number will reach 36 units.

There is a strong link between the two variables (correlation ratio $r = 0.87$), so that the variation in the number of pensions from year to year can be explained in proportion of 76.4%, the rest being the influence of other factors.

Regarding the accommodation capacity, the same trend is observed as in the case of the number of pensions, decreasing until 2015 when a number of 193 places were registered, so that in the next period it will increase reaching 460 places in 2019. average growth for the analyzed period was 2.4%, with an average period of 347.7 accommodation places. (Figure 2.) The equation of the tendency of the accommodation capacity in the agro-tourist boarding houses expects that in 2020 they will increase to 530 places. The correlation ratio between the accommodation capacity and the analyzed time period, $r = 0.74$, shows a significant connection between the two variables.

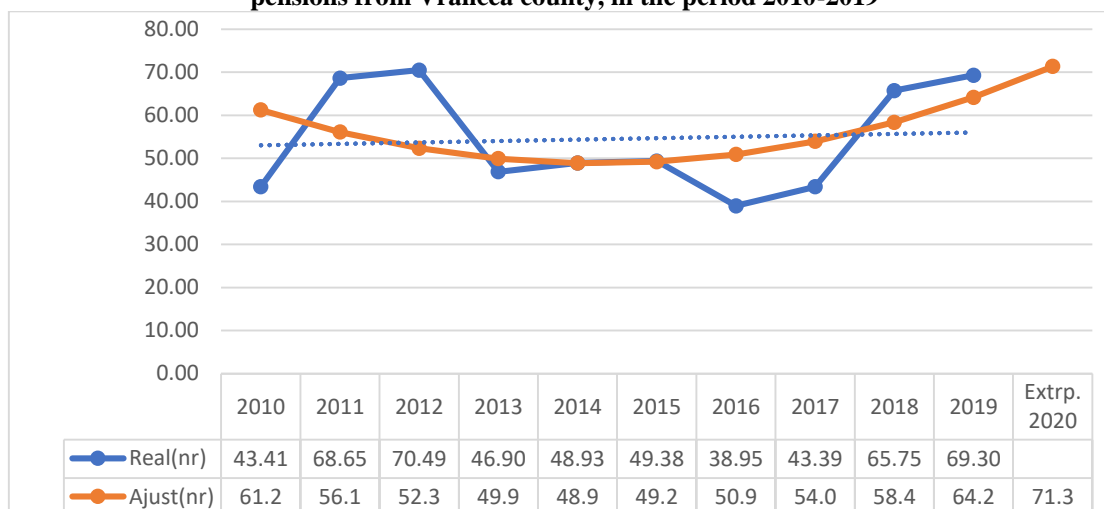
Figure 2. Calculation of the trend equation of accommodation capacity in agritourism pensions in Vrancea county, in the period 2010-2019



Source: vrancea.insse.ro

In 2020, by calculating the trend equation, $y = 0.6835x^2 - 7.1919x + 67.757$, an increase to 71.3 thousand places-days is expected. The analysis of the regression and correlation equation shows a significant connection between the two variables, the correlation ratio having the value of 0.74.

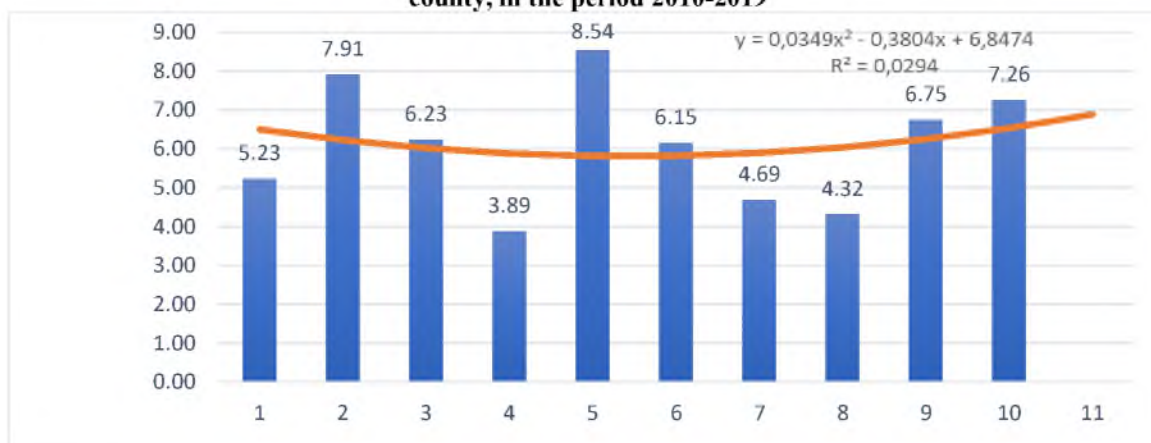
Figure 3. Calculation of the trend equation of the accommodation capacity in operation in agrotourism pensions from Vrancea county, in the period 2010-2019



Source: vrancea.insse.ro

Regarding the evolution of arrivals in agritourism pensions, we can see from Figure 4. that the number of tourists oscillated in the period 2010-2019, with a minimum in 2013 of 3.89 thousand arrivals, so that in the next year to increase to 8.54 thousand arrivals, representing also the maximum number of persons arriving in the agritourism pensions from Vrancea during this period.

Figure 4. Calculation of the trend equation of tourist arrivals in agrotourism pensions in Vrancea county, in the period 2010-2019



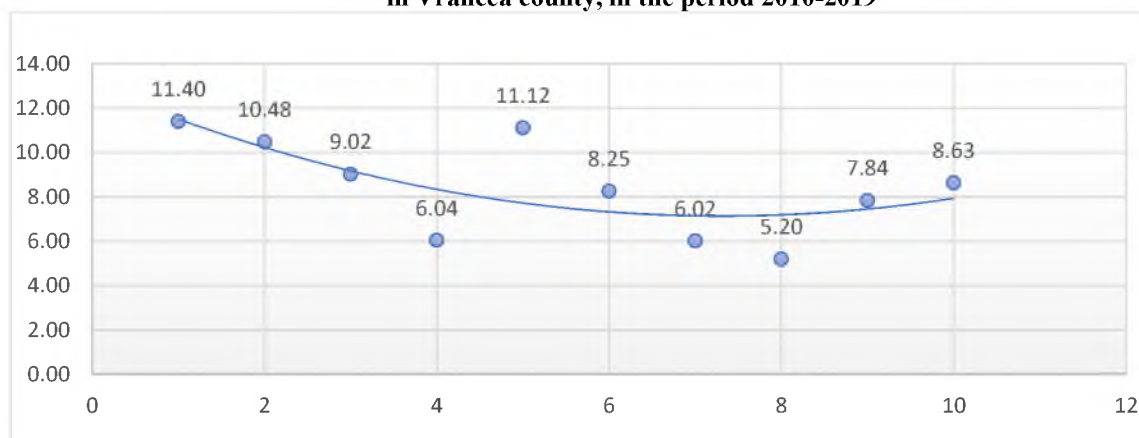
Source: vrancea.insse.ro

By calculating the trend equation $y = 0.0349x^2 - 0.3804x + 6.8474$, it is estimated that the number of arrivals will decrease in 2020 to 6.89 thousand people. The correlation ratio, $r = 0.17$, between the number of arrivals and the time period, shows that there is no connection between the two variables, other factors influencing the arrivals of tourists in the county.

Another analysis of the overnight stays in the agritourism pensions in Vrancea County (Figure 5), for the period 2010-2019, highlighted the fact that they reached a minimum point in 2107 (5201 overnight stays) and then increased until 2019 at 8631 overnight stays, of which 99.2% were Romanian tourists.

The decrease in the number of overnight stays in the county had an annual rate of about -3.1%. The difference compared to 2010 was 2772 overnight stays representing a decrease of -24.3%.

Figure 5. Calculation of the trend equation of overnight stays in agrotourism pensions in Vrancea county, in the period 2010-2019



Source: vrancea.insse.ro

The trend equation, $y = 0.1097x^2 - 1.6039x + 12.997$, predicts for 2020 a stagnation in the number of overnight stays in 2019. Also, the correlation ratio, $r = 0.67$, does not indicate a strong link between the analyzed time period and the number of overnight stays.

CONCLUSIONS

In the current situation, tourism and agrotourism are supported exclusively by natural resources and historical heritage, and the contribution to infrastructure is minimal.

It is also necessary to modernize tourism products to develop the offer and increase competitiveness on the national and international market.

That is why investments are needed for the development and modernization of territorial infrastructure. If the measures in the Strategy are respected, a priority result will be the increase in the medium and long term of the economic competition in the tourism sector.

Through multiple methods, plans can be developed for the conservation of heritage, historical monuments and their capitalization. Creating partnerships between Vrancea County and neighboring areas to develop programs that can promote local culture, national and even international partnerships.

The strengths of the county are the extensive wine and hunting fund, attractive landscapes, diversified tourist objectives and the weak ones: the accommodation units are unevenly distributed, are insufficient, non-existent in some localities, the infrastructure is not at present standards, insufficient tourist promotion, tourist services low quality.

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