

## **SWOT ANALYSIS OF BIHOR COUNTY REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RURAL TOURISM IN THIS AREA.**

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### ***Abstract***

*This paper examines the development potential of tourism and more precisely of rural tourism in Bihor county. In that direction we realized a SWOT analysis meaning that we have presented here strengths in rural tourism from Bihor county and weaknesses as internal environment characteristics; on the other side we have marked out the opportunities and the threats of the external environment for the Bihor's rural tourism. Pointing out the results of the analysis we can affirm that, though some parts of the Bihor's rural tourism segments are dealing with a series of problems, still the main conclusion of the study is that Bihor county has a remarkable potential in developing its rural tourism.*

**Key words:** rural tourism, Bihor county, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The capacity of a certain community to use its potential, is easily perceptible through its direct and indirect effects. Any community has a potential that is fixed for, it is only a matter of whether or if they know how to use it.

Bihor county presents a multiple and various gamut of touristic resources and attractions, which are generally bounded by the natural environment, by Bihor's cultural and historical heritage, by the constructed patrimony and the specific infrastructure.

Bihor county has some national interests resorts such as Baile Felix, Tinca, Baile 1 mai and Stana de Vale. The especially natural patrimony is marked by the presence of a great forestry and by a great number of caves that have national and international value.

In Bihor we can distinguish some ethno-folkloric subzones delimited by the valleys of some mainstreams such as: Black River, Fast River, Barcaul and Ierul. The traditional handicrafts contribute to the customization of the ethnographic zones. Once they have contributed at the consecration of a complementary economy which brings an additional income for a lot of rural community from Bihor.

Bihor county is well known for its beautiful fairs, festivals and its specific musical folklor.

This unprecedented combination between nature, natural patrimony and an important cultural heritage, respectively geographic and ethnographic variety, offers Bihor county the chance of developing as an important rural touristic destination from Romania's N-W zone.

## **MATERIAL AND METHODS**

In this paper we realized a SWOT analysis meaning that we have presented here strengths in rural tourism from Bihor county and weaknesses as internal environment characteristics; on the other side we have marked out the opportunities and the threats of the external environment for the Bihor's rural tourism.

SWOT analysis is a technic used to settle the position of the rural tourism and agrotourism from Bihor county, for example, on the national and international market, as well as for settling the actions that must be undertaken, in order to maintain and to increase the competitiveness. This analysis represents a method of audit for the organization and for its environment, being considered a first step for a strategical planning. The method helps the specialists to concentrate on the most important aspects, and once they are identified these are transforming into marketing objectives.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1

### SWOT ANALYSIS OF RURAL TOURISM IN BIHOR COUNTY

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p><b>Accessibility:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A good network of railroads and driveways, better than the national average.</li> <li>• The biggest no. of border points with Hungaria in this region(4driveway bp and 3on the railroad)</li> <li>• The biggest and the most modernized driveway border point with Hungaria in Bors</li> <li>• The national airport with the possibility of becoming an international one(because it exists a project in that direction)</li> </ul> <p><b>Touristic resources:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A great no. of nature reserves, protected areas and Apuseni Mountaints National Park</li> <li>• Active practicing of traditional arts and handicrafts</li> <li>• Local traditions in raising the animals</li> <li>• The ethnic and confessional variety in the county</li> <li>• Attractive rural architecture</li> <li>• The variety of the natural and</li> </ul>	<p><b>Accessibility:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The relatively quality of some county roads</li> <li>• The lack of transit for some localities</li> <li>• The lack of transit public network to the touristic areas</li> <li>• Railroads with an overdued viability</li> <li>• A very low quality of the national driveways, especially the roads which lead to the touristic zones</li> </ul> <p><b>Touristic resources management:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality degraded water mainstreams</li> <li>• A lot of pollution sources for the water</li> <li>• Soil pollution by some industrial units</li> <li>• The pollution of subterranean waters by some waste products deposits</li> <li>• Air pollution by some industrial units in the county</li> <li>• Historical monuments, protected</li> </ul>

<p>anthropical sights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over 6000 caves ,of which 50 with a remarkable touristic value</li> <li>• Mineral and thermal waters and a relatively well developed infrastructure(important resorts:Baile Felix, Stana de Vale)</li> <li>• Water resources of surface and subterranean</li> <li>• Various relief –a good potential for practicing a lot of tourism forms- and a specially natural landscape</li> </ul> <p><b>Specific infrastructure:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accommodation spaces of 3,4 flowers in all the county(Baile Felix, Remeti, Stana de Vale, Boga, Baile 1 Mai ,Vartop)</li> <li>• A good no. of touristic agencies and tour-operators who work in Bihor county</li> </ul> <p><b>Legislation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A legislation from touristic domain harmonized with the EU legislation</li> </ul> <p><b>Others:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The existence of some various projects of ecological tourism and of environment protection (made by decentralized authorities and by various environment ONG</li> <li>• Valuable human resources for tourism in many communities from the county</li> </ul>	<p>areas and some nature's monuments all unkept and degraded</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representatives traditions , handicrafts and habits on their slow way of dissapearance</li> <li>• A relatively slight gamut of touristic products and the low quality of the touristic services</li> </ul> <p><b>Specific and connected infrastructure:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Badly maintained touristic routes, unadapted to the european ones.</li> <li>• Too few youth hostels and rural boarding houses in the mountain area</li> <li>• Too few accommodation spaces in this areas</li> <li>• In some rural zones there are very bad kept accommodation spaces</li> <li>• Wrong development without some planning action and environment counsels</li> <li>• A low developped infrastructure regarding the :extreme sports, water sports</li> <li>• The lowest grade of having a telephone (2,88 tel at 100 residents)</li> <li>• Very little usage of the methan gas for warming and other purposes.</li> <li>• Slight no.of the localities where the gas is distributed</li> <li>• Unappropriated storage and the lack of recicling the waste products.</li> </ul> <p><b>Promotion :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A bad promotion of the touristic</li> </ul>
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	<p>potential of the county</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A partial promotion of the touristic destination with an out of date instrumentality (deficient use of the internet)</li> <li>• The lack of some touristic informing points and offices in the county</li> <li>• Unsufficient qualified personal( especially confirmed touristic guides , connoisseur of foreign languages</li> <li>• The lack of some training and development centres for human resources in tourism and teritorial planning domain</li> <li>• The lack of some norms to applicate the 5/2000 Low regarding the protected areas</li> <li>• The uncorrelation of the efforts between decentralized authorities and the political factors, with discretion at central level, regarding the promotion of some utile projects in the county</li> <li>• Unsufficient initiative for the promotion of the development of the infrastructure</li> <li>• The microclimate of some touristic zone can negatively affect the visitors (Padis, Beius)</li> <li>• The lack of some participatory local plans for intagrated touristic development</li> <li>• The lack of relevant statistical datas</li> </ul>
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OPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The existance of a tourism strategy in the hungarian part of the euroregion Haidu-Bihar and a national strategy for tourism development , as well as a strategy for the development of 6 N-W Region</li> <li>• The existence of some active financial instruments (from EU and other organisms)</li> <li>• Governmental financial programs for professional conversion</li> <li>• The increase of touristic traffic to Est and Central Europe and a bigger request for some types of tourism based on nature and untainted landscape</li> <li>• The direct vicinity with EU (Hungaria) and the approch of the county to EU and its market</li> <li>• The Romanian integration in EU</li> <li>• The running of Europe Fond Program in 2005</li> <li>• Programs of the county and central authorities for the development of the rural environment</li> <li>• The future achievement of a highway from Budapest to Bucharest which pass through Oradea</li> <li>• Many active partenerships between institutions and business people from the Haidu Bihar-Bihor euroregion</li> <li>• Economical development quite</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The bad economic reform from Romania and keeping the standard of liviging at a low level for the most people in Romania</li> <li>• The great competition that exists on the touristic market of european destinations, zone in which Romania tries to find her one way</li> <li>• The great increase of EU coin in front of the dollar which leads to a euro price rises for touristic services</li> <li>• International regression and economical stagnation at worldwidelevel</li> <li>• Potential natural calamities in some areas of the county</li> <li>• Negative dynamics of county's population( the aging of the population, the migration of the active population toward urban and abroad, the migration of the labor force especially of the qualified one to other countries.</li> <li>• Taxation and bureaucracy</li> <li>• People's generally mentality towards changing and especially towards proffesional conversion</li> <li>• Superficial ecological education</li> <li>• The high level of the pollution of the natural environment and much bigger intervention of</li> </ul>

<p>good, low unemployment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The introduction of methan gas in the county</li> <li>• The institution of Apuseni Mountains Natural Park</li> <li>• The existence of some touristic asociations and ONG in the county (ANTREC, The River Country, Rivers Valey Natural Park)</li> </ul>	<p>human being on the nature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An opening of a mining plant of gold in Apuseni Mountains (Rosia Montana)</li> <li>• The youth lack of interest ragarding the keeping of popular traditions and handicrafts and of the local culture</li> </ul>
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## CONCLUSIONS

SWOT analysis reflects the “delicated” situation which characterize Bihor county nowadays. There are a lot of negative aspects which rural tourism from Bihor must deal with but in spite of these ones we have here in Bihor a lot of positive aspects too.

The rural toursim from this county has a valuable and varieted natural potential , but is polluted in some areas because of the bad implementation of the environment lows in the county, and though the county has a great cultural patrimony it is dealing on the other side with a lot of degraded buildings and historical monuments.

Bihor county is dealing as well with some infrastructure problems such as bad driveways, the lack of a highway a bad communication network all of these limiting the access of potential tourist in some attractive zones.

Talking about human resource we have a lot of hospitable people in the county but they must realize that they are unsufficient trained and too little employed in tourist units.

Bihor county has a great potential to develop as a rural touristic destination , but it must increase its own level of marketing by inlarging the promotion image .

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