

SWOT ANALYSIS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE VILLAGE SÂNMARTIN

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Abstract

Sustainable development, as a step to finding a balance between social, economical and environmental areas, can be translated according to the existing features in each area and to the objectives of each "actor's" involvement and responsibility.

Regarding the operational realization of sustainable development, we can talk about three key areas of intervention, which are: education, investment environment and public administration.

The force of expression of the territorial cohesion of the village Sînmartin lies in ensuring administrative and financial priorities which, without neglecting other identified actions that cover the needs in local and regional areas, are oriented mainly on these "pillars" of intervention.

In this study I started from a common existing economic situation, I conducted a SWOT analysis to find out the strengths and weaknesses, and the opportunities for village Sînmartin

In conclusion I made suggestions for the economical development in this area.

Key words: thermal water, accredited touristic resort, guesthouses.

INTRODUCTION

Sînmartin village represents 3.32% from the "pre-town area" of Oradea City, being located in South East of Oradea, on Route 76, towards Deva.

Sînmartin Village is composed of the following small villages:

- Sînmartin, with 2700 inhabitants;
- Băile Felix, with 700 inhabitants;
- Băile 1 Mai, with 200 inhabitants;
- Cihei, with 950 inhabitants;
- Cordău, with 1330 inhabitants;
- Rontău, with 950 inhabitants;
- Haieu, with 700 inhabitants;
- Betfia, with 470 inhabitants.

The village covers an area of 6,175 ha, of which 2,188 ha of agricultural land. To ensure horizontal development, due to the many requests that have been submitted last year only, over 450 ha of agricultural land have been changed into building land, enabling the construction of houses. The area is recognized both nationally and internationally for the potential that the existing thermal water resources give to tourism. These underlie the potential of the spa area, which involved the major part of the

local population in developing tourist and medical services that are specific to Băile Felix.

There are 425 companies and 375 small developers in the village, of which 784 have private funds. The economical agents embrace a large area of activities such as:

- 29 tourism units
- 345 agro-tourism units
- 9 entertainment units
- 43 food units
- 7 clothing and footwear production units
- 18 furniture and wood processing units
- 37 building and services units
- 5 bread and pasta units
- 296 transport, logistic and trade units
- 7 units specialized in agricultural works and services
- 4 units specialized in spa treatment and medical rehabilitation

From an economic perspective, in what regards the local budget, Sânmartin village ranks on the second place in Bihor County. In the recent years, the economic development of the village is characterized in terms of transition from state ownership to a market economy. Gradually, small businesses have entered the field of provision of services, giving a positive boost to the local budget. As a result, new offers in health tourism and leisure, this once private, have emerged. Simultaneously, part of the former touristic resorts owned by the state are leased or managed by local businesses that make efforts to modernize and bring them to western standards.

The private tourism has taken a clearer outline, following the pattern of European guesthouses, offering everything for a pleasant stay, starting with food and ending with clear water in the pool.

Gradually, the idea of agro-tourism finds a fertile ground in the villages around Sânmartin. The most open-minded entrepreneurs among the local people feel that this is one of the development paths for the village. They already own smart beautiful houses and ensure, from their own resources, full services for the tourists that look for quiet and withdrawn areas.

However, all these things, including the evolution of the resorts, would not be possible without the biggest attraction of the area, and that is the thermal water. The hot springs, transformed into bathing pools, represent the development source for the two resorts: Băile Felix and Băile 1 Mai.

The bathing pools in the resorts attract tourists from all over the country and from abroad every year, the spa treatments in Băile Felix being worldwide recognized.

The active population of the village rises up to 4.793 people while the unemployment rate is lower than 3%, which is the national average, i.e. 150 unemployed people.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

In terms of agricultural economy, the SWOT analysis provides a complete image of the agricultural production units and systems by studying simultaneously the internal characteristics and external influences upon them, taking into account both positive and negative variables.

The SWOT analysis is used primarily to assess the situation on the ground and it is the fundamental step in drafting the development programs.

The research was made between 2008 and 2010 in the town hall of Sânmartin commune and this analysis will be used for planning the rural developmental strategy of the commune.

RESULTS AND DISSCUSIONS

The SWOT analysis of Sânmartin village includes:

Positive aspects

- Economically developed field recognized in main areas – Băile Felix as internationally accredited touristic resort
- Social and economical diversity (33% health, 30% trade and commerce, 22% industry), related to the thermal sources
- Regional Pool resorts for recreation and treatment (Felix and 1 Mai), with diversification in terms of specific services;
- More specific units (rehabilitation services, thalassotherapy, training center for athletes, equestrian center, small recreational clubs, etc.)
- The local budget is the largest among Bihor county municipalities.
- Good road positioning (E76) and best service with public transport;
- High population density (129 people/km²)
- Relatively young population (36% of the inhabitants is less than 20 years old, while the metropolitan range is 36)

- Rising comfort living conditions (68% of the houses are connected to the sewerage system and all have running water)
- Ethnical diversity, with positive effects on the cultural and educational level of the population
- Rural area urbanized at high standards, with attractive and valuable houses
- Connection facilities to all major projects of the metropolitan area – institutional, infrastructure facilities.

Weak points

- Advanced urbanization but insufficiently planned, which can contribute, in the long run, to the increase of the differences in the establishment of the village territory
- The fragmentation and the indifference to the protected natural area, which can make the occupation of building space chaotic and lacking urban planning;
- Uneven infrastructure equipment mostly directed towards the administrative and residential core of the village;
- Streets with no territorial continuity – for example Cordau and Betfia
- Baile Felix resort has an uncertain rate of modernization and development (without an efficient program), which diminishes the role of major touristic pole.

Opportunities

- Switch to a high standard urbanization
- Ability to attract direct investment in health tourism and maintain brand image;
- Residential development with high added value;
- Deepening the role of service pole and encouraging the diffusion of the development towards other members of the commune villages
- Development of the integrated water and sanitation network on the metropolitan area schedule;
- Expansion of the public transport system according to the Metropolitan area project;
- Creating an integrated metropolitan waste management system, ensuring the regulation of this area.

Dangers

- Urbanization and suburbanization without being in compliance with landscaping plans or with standards;

- Diminishing the natural environment due to new residents without due compliance to environmental quality standards;
- Non-application of quality and environmental standards, as they have been earned from the certification that was provided to all locations in the metropolitan area.

CONCLUSIONS

The social and economic development strategy of Sânmartin commune aims to value the potential, opportunities and the real possibilities for development, including creating a stimulating and competitive business environment, designed to attract significant private investment from the country and abroad.

The economic development of the village gradually began after 1990, based on the changes in the people's perceptions about income and on the touristic potential of the area.

The joint development plan is to be achieved for sightseeing and sports. Some of these will ensure the junction between Băile Felix and Băile 1 Mai. It is intended to introduce the other communes of the commune into the touristic and spa circuit, by leasing land to companies able to do so.

The investments significantly increased the opportunities that the potential is exploited at maximum, following the model of the tourist resorts in neighbor country Hungary.

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