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ANALYSIS OF TOURIST FLOW IN RURAL AREAS DURING THE SUMMER SEASON. CASE STUDY: LUNCA POGĂNIȘULUI TIMIȘ COUNTY

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Abstract: Tourist flow in rural areas is influenced by seasonality, increasing from early spring and reaching peak values during summer. This study analyzes the tourist dynamics in the Lunca Pogănișului area, Timiș County, emphasizing the role of natural and cultural attractions in rural tourism development.

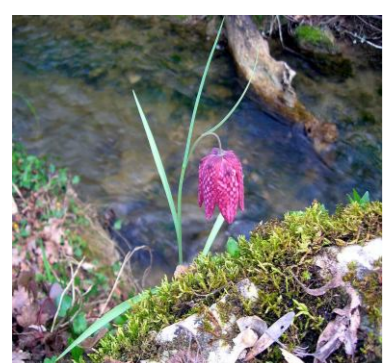
The tourist season begins in spring with the blooming of protected flora such as the fritillary flower (*Fritillaria meleagris*), snowdrops, and crocuses, and continues throughout summer through activities including cycling, nature walks, fishing, relaxation at the Nițchidorf swimming pool, and visits to traditional households and the village museum.

The research is based on direct observation and analysis of tourism activities and local events. The results show that the valorization of local natural and cultural resources, together with community involvement, contributes significantly to sustainable rural tourism and local economic development.

• Introduction

Rural tourism has become an important factor in supporting local economic development and promoting sustainable use of natural and cultural resources. In recent years, rural areas in Romania have attracted an increasing number of visitors due to their authentic landscapes, traditional lifestyle, and recreational opportunities. Seasonal tourism represents a significant component of this development, especially during the spring and summer periods.

The Lunca Pogănișului area, located in Timiș County, benefits from valuable natural resources and local traditions that contribute to its tourism attractiveness. Protected flora, outdoor activities, and traditional rural heritage create favorable conditions for the continuous growth of tourist flow and for the development of sustainable rural tourism.



• Material and method

The research was based on a mixed-method approach focused on the analysis of tourism promotion and recreational activities in the Lunca Pogănișului area, Timiș County. The study used information collected from the official websites and social media pages of tourism associations, local institutions, tourism operators, and local producers involved in organizing events and tourism activities.

The analyzed materials included online promotional content related to rural tourism, cultural events, cycling activities, gastronomic events, local traditions, and leisure activities organized during the spring–summer season. Information regarding tourist attractions, visitor activities, and local events was collected through direct observation, online documentation, and analysis of publicly available promotional materials.

The research also included the evaluation of the role of local stakeholders in increasing tourism attractiveness and supporting sustainable rural development through community involvement and promotion of local resources.



• Results and discussions

The research evaluated five local events organized for the promotion of rural tourism in the Lunca Pogănișului area over a period of three years. The results indicate a continuous increase in tourist interest, with the number of participants doubling from one year to another. This evolution highlights the growing attractiveness of rural destinations and the increasing interest in authentic tourism experiences.

Visitors expressed a high level of satisfaction regarding the rural landscape, cultural heritage, traditional gastronomy, and the peaceful atmosphere specific to the area. The natural scenery, local traditions, and community involvement were considered the main elements contributing to the positive tourist experience.



The findings emphasize that rural tourism events play an important role in promoting local identity and supporting sustainable development. In the context of an increasingly dynamic and stressful lifestyle, tourists are seeking relaxation, authenticity, and contact with nature, resources that are becoming increasingly difficult to find in urban environments.

• Conclusions

The study highlights that rural tourism in the Lunca Pogănișului area has significant development potential due to the valorization of natural landscapes, cultural heritage, and local traditions. The increasing number of participants in local tourism events demonstrates the growing interest in authentic rural experiences and sustainable tourism activities.

The results confirm that community involvement, promotion of local resources, and organization of cultural and recreational events contribute directly to increasing tourism attractiveness and supporting the local economy. Rural areas offer visitors relaxation, authenticity, and contact with nature, elements that are increasingly appreciated in contemporary society.

In conclusion, the sustainable management of tourism resources and the continuous promotion of local identity can support the long-term development of rural tourism in the Lunca Pogănișului area.