



## AGROTOURISM AND THE RESILIENCE OF RURAL COMMUNITIES IN ROMANIA: AN INTEGRATED PERSPECTIVE

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**Abstract:** In the context of economic, demographic and structural vulnerabilities specific to the rural environment in Romania, agritourism is increasingly recognized as a relevant tool for increasing the resilience of local communities. The relevance of the theme derives from the need to identify sustainable mechanisms for adapting to external shocks (economic crises, pandemics, climate change), by capitalizing on local resources and diversifying economic activities. The results indicate that agritourism contributes to diversifying income sources, creating jobs and stimulating the local economy, reducing dependence on traditional agricultural activities. At the same time, it favors the consolidation of social capital and the valorization of local heritage, essential elements for increasing community resilience. The conclusions emphasize the importance of integrating agritourism into rural development strategies and the need to support it through coherent public policies and investments in infrastructure and promotion.

### • Introduction

In the context of the structural vulnerabilities of the Romanian rural environment – characterized by dependence on agriculture, labor migration and limited economic opportunities – increasing the resilience of local communities becomes a strategic priority.

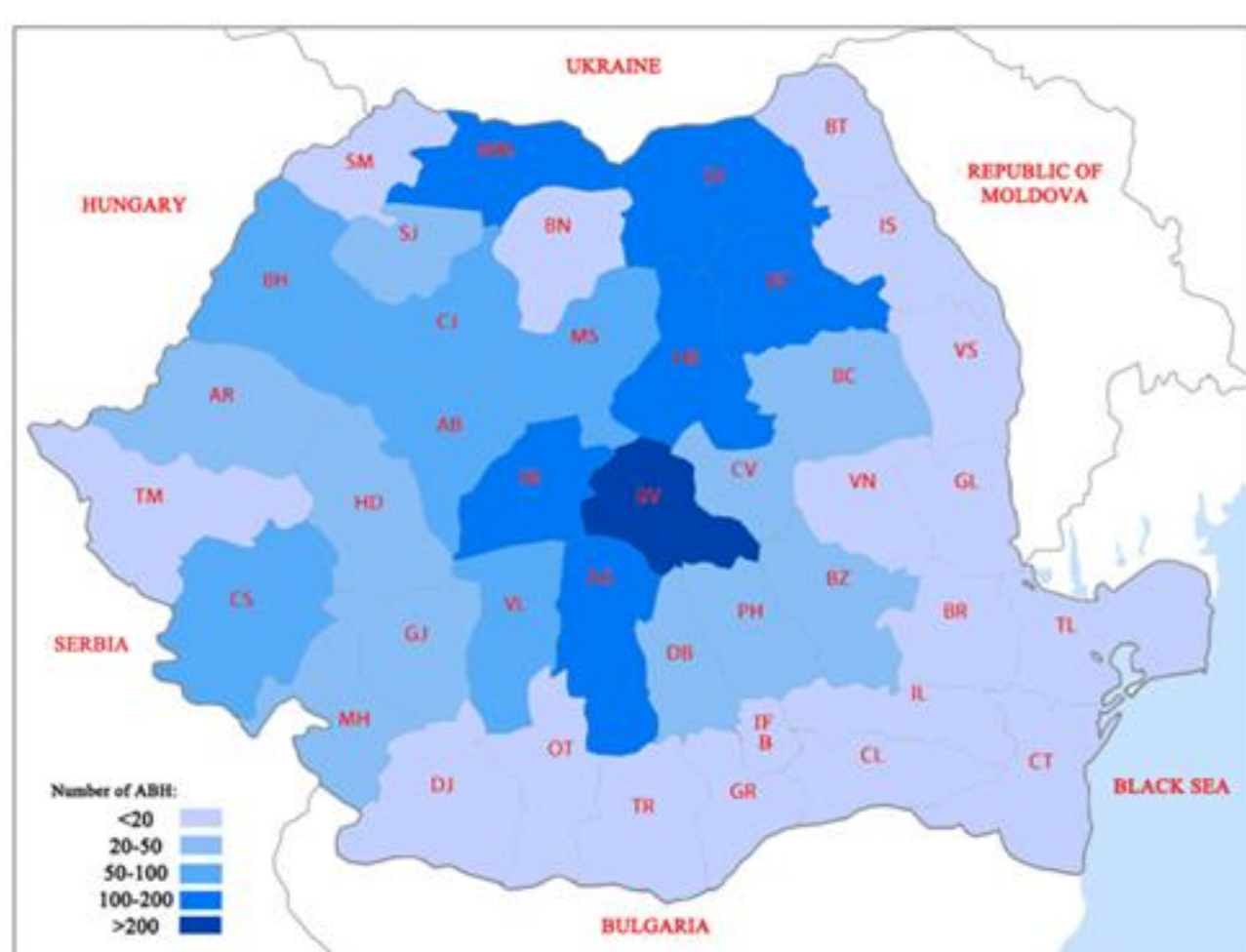
In this context, agritourism is emerging as an integrated solution, capable of capitalizing on local resources and contributing to economic diversification. Unlike traditional models, it combines agricultural activities with tourist services, generating economic, social and cultural effects. Thus, analyzing the role of agritourism in strengthening the resilience of rural communities is essential both from a theoretical perspective and for underpinning public policies.

### • Material and method

Methodologically, the research proposes a mixed approach. The quantitative component includes the analysis of statistical data on the evolution of agritourism activities (accommodation capacity, tourist arrivals, overnight stays), correlated with local development indicators. The qualitative component is based on semi-structured interviews conducted with agritourism operators and representatives of the local administration, aiming to identify perceptions on the role of agritourism in strengthening community resilience. In addition, comparative methods and correlation analyses are used to highlight the relationships between agritourism development and the adaptive capacity of rural communities.

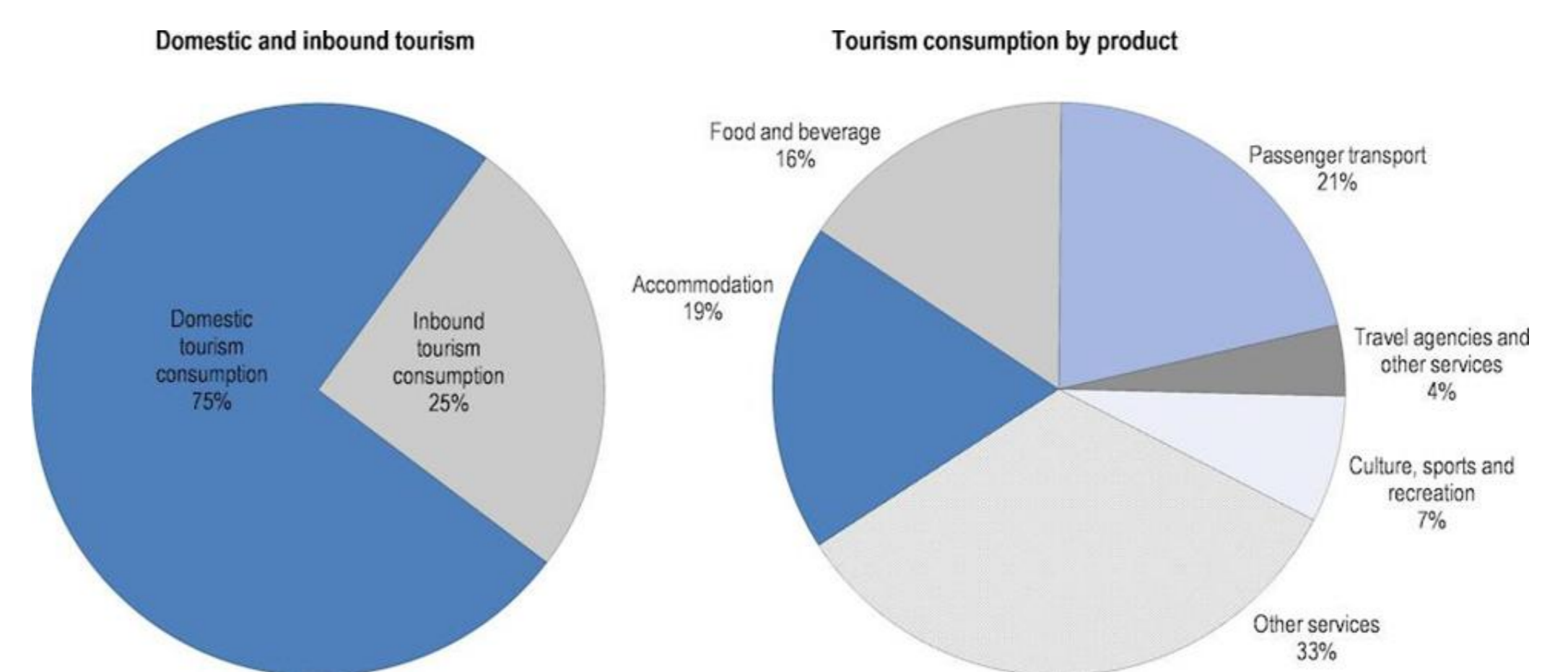
### • Results and discussions

The results highlight a positive relationship between the development of agritourism and the adaptive capacity of rural communities. The analysis of statistical data indicates a constant growth of agritourism activities, reflected in the dynamics of accommodation capacity and tourist flows.



**Figure 1. Distribution by counties of the number of agrotourism guesthouses**

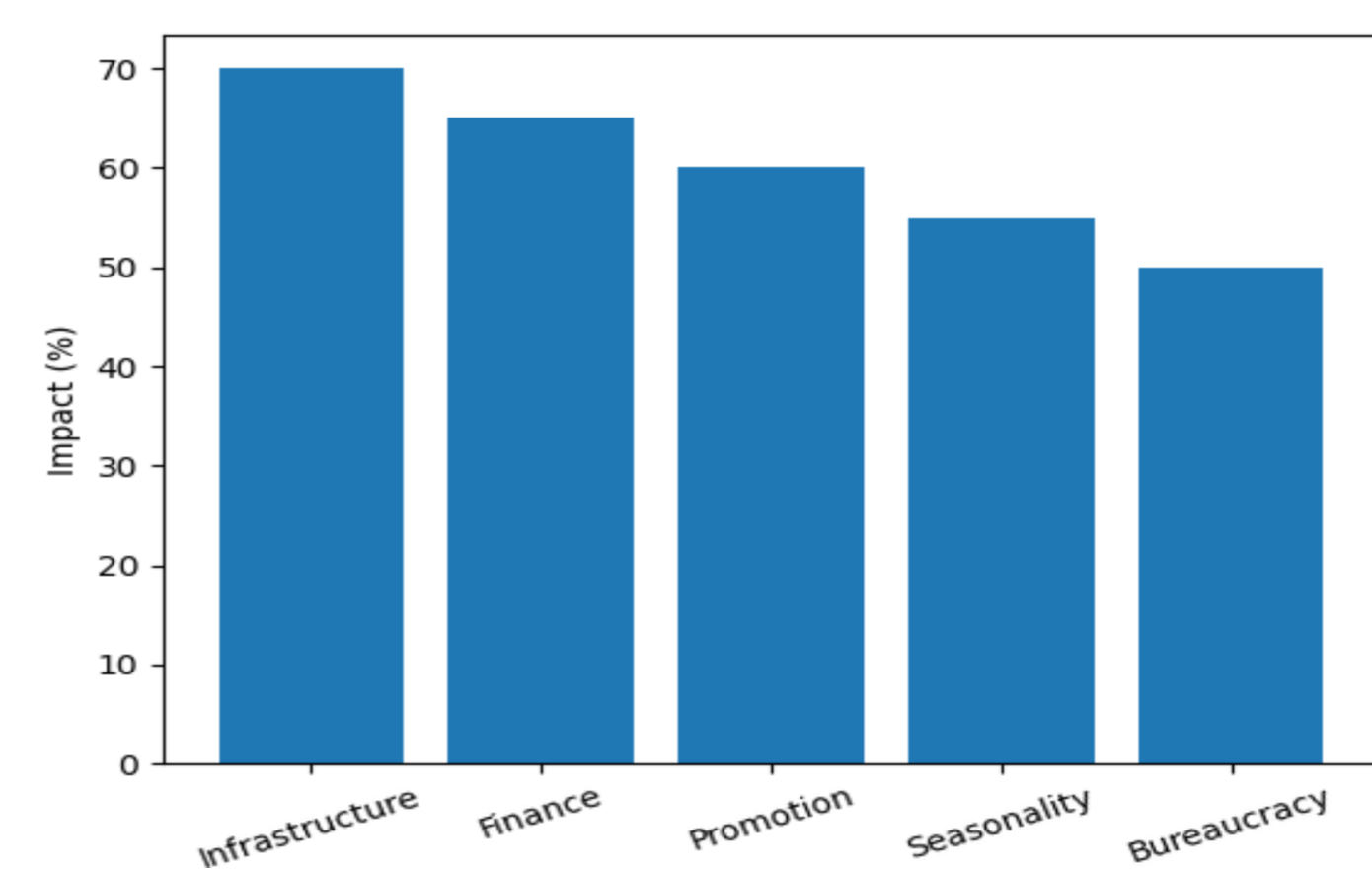
Agrotourism contributes significantly to diversifying income sources, reducing dependence on traditional agricultural activities. In the communities analyzed, income from tourism complements agricultural income, increasing economic stability.



**Figure 2. OECD Tourism Trends and Policies 2020**

From a social perspective, the results highlight a significant impact on social capital and community cohesion.

The qualitative analysis confirms these results, highlighting the fact that agritourism operators contribute to: developing local networks, promoting cultural heritage and increasing community involvement.



**Figure 3. Barriers to agritourism development**

The identified barriers, such as poor infrastructure, limited access to financing and insufficient promotion, significantly restrict the development of agritourism, reducing the ability of rural communities to fully capitalize on their economic potential and strengthen their resilience.

### • Conclusions

The study confirms that agritourism is an effective tool for increasing the resilience of rural communities in Romania. By diversifying income, creating jobs and capitalizing on local resources, it contributes to reducing economic vulnerabilities and strengthening adaptive capacity.

At the same time, agritourism plays an essential role in developing social capital and strengthening community cohesion, facilitating cooperation between actors and involving the population in local initiatives.

However, its impact is conditional on the existence of a favorable framework, including adequate infrastructure, access to financing and coherent public policies. In this regard, integrating agritourism into rural development strategies and supporting it through investments and promotional measures become essential.

In conclusion, agritourism is not just an economic alternative, but a pillar of sustainable rural development and increasing the resilience of local communities.