

Timisoara, 25-26 May

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR DEVELOPING TOURISM IN AREAS WITH TOURISM POTENTIAL IN THE WEST DEVELOPMENT REGION OF ROMANIA**

**MATEOC-SIRB NICOLETA<sup>1,2</sup>, CIOLAC RAMONA<sup>1</sup>, PEEV-OTMAN PAULA-DIANA<sup>1</sup>, MĂNESCU CAMELIA<sup>1</sup>, ALBU SIMONA<sup>1</sup>, RAICOV MIROSLAV<sup>2</sup>, MATEOC TEODOR<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> University of Life Sciences, "King Michael I" from Timisoara, Faculty of Management and Rural Tourism

<sup>2</sup> Academia Română, Filiala Timișoara, Centrul de Cercetare pentru Dezvoltarea Rurală Durabilă a României

**Abstract:** *The territory of the West Region can be divided into two sub-regions, confronted with distinct structural problems and different degrees of development. The first area includes the territories of Caraș-Severin and Hunedoara counties, to which is added the city of Nădrag in Timiș County, whose adjacent area has the biggest economic issues. This large area of the region faced a strong decline after 1990, and the restructuring process, slow and with great difficulties, generated a very high unemployment rate, increased poverty in the area and, subsequently, a marked decrease of the population because of emigration. In this context, the authors of this paper present the opportunities for development of the area through tourism, because the West Region has a rich tourist potential. All these tourist resources can contribute especially to the development of rural areas in the region being, at the same time, an alternative to solving problems in rural communities; on the other hand, they could solve the problems of the urban population.*

**• Introduction**

Knowledge, research, improvement, and development of rural area are complex activities of vital importance for each country, both through the dimension of the rural area expressed by its area and by the share of the occupied population, as well as by the major importance of the rural economy consisting in productive, services, cultural-social, habitat, and tourism activities.

**• Material and method**

To analyze the opportunities of developing tourism in areas with tourist potential in the West Development Region of Romania, a whole range of methods, such as study of literature, field research, observation, synthesis, and generalization was used. The sources of statistical data are represented by the A.T.U. (communes), territorial structures of some offices and agencies (APIA, AFIR, agricultural directorates, associations and cooperatives, local territorial banks, etc.).

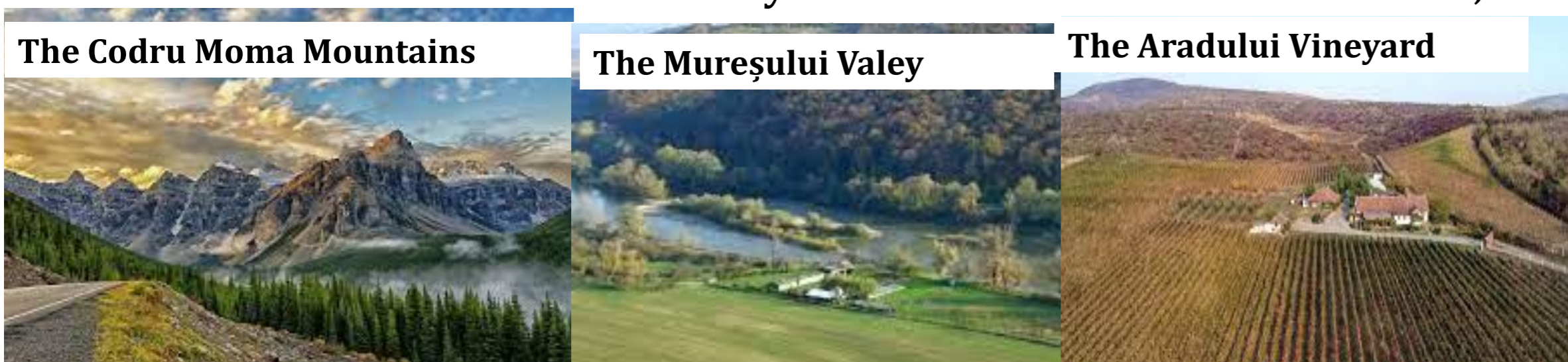
**• Results and discussions**

The West Development Region of Romania contains four counties: Arad, Timiș, Caraș-Severin, and Hunedoara, with a total area of 32,034 km<sup>2</sup> representing 13.4% of the country's area.

The West Development Region has a rich tourist potential which is, unfortunately, not enough valorise by local authorities.

The authors of the article highlight the main forms of tourism that can develop in the western area, concluding that the social effects of tourism development could benefit both the rural population through the economic effects produced, and tourists who enjoy cheaper tourism and high-quality agri-food produce in the rural area.

The main tourist areas of the county are the Codru Moma Mountains,



The main types of tourism that can be practiced in the Caraș-Severin county are sports and adventure tourism, balneo-climate tourism, but also those related to anthropic resources: cultural tourism, rural tourism, event tourism, and transit tourism. The main tourist areas of the county are: the Țarcu – Muntele Mic – Godeanu – Retezat mountain area, Cernei Valley – Cernei Mountains – Mehedinți Mountains, the Danube Gorges, the Banat Mountains, Timiș – Cernei Mountains.



The types of tourism practiced in the Hunedoara county are related to nature, namely mountain, sports, and adventure tourism, spa and recreation tourism, as well as to cultural-historical and economic activities – cultural-historical tourism, rural tourism, industrial tourism, transit tourism. The main tourist areas of the county are represented by the Retezat area – the Hațeg Depression, the Orăștiei Mountains, the Mureș corridor including Deva and its surroundings (Hunedoara, Simeria), Parâng Mountains – Vâlcan – Șureanu, Metaliferi Mountains.



The types of tourism practiced in the county are transit and business tourism, urban tourism, cultural-historical tourism, medical tourism, as well as spa and recreational tourism and hunting and fishing tourism. The main tourist areas of the county include the municipality of Timișoara and its surroundings, the Piedmont area of the Poiana Ruscă Mountains and the Buziaș – Recaș – Lugoj area.



**•Conclusions**

The West Development Region of Romania has an extraordinary natural tourist potential and real opportunities for development of tourism only if important economic investments in the tourist infrastructure and in the transport infrastructure are made, which facilitate and support tourist activities. In turn, tourism, through its activities, generates important jobs and incomes, thus contributing to general economic development of the region.