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THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURIST ACTIVITIES IN THE RURAL SPACE ON THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF THE INHABITANTS

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Abstract: The development of tourism activities in the rural area has multiple implications on the quality of life of the inhabitants of these communities, influencing both the economic and the social and cultural aspects. To maximize the benefits of rural tourism on the quality of life, it is essential that its development is planned and managed strategically, with the involvement of local communities and with a focus on sustainability and conservation. This balance supports the idea that tourism serves as an engine of rural development, improving the lives of residents without compromising values, culture or the natural environment.

• Introduction

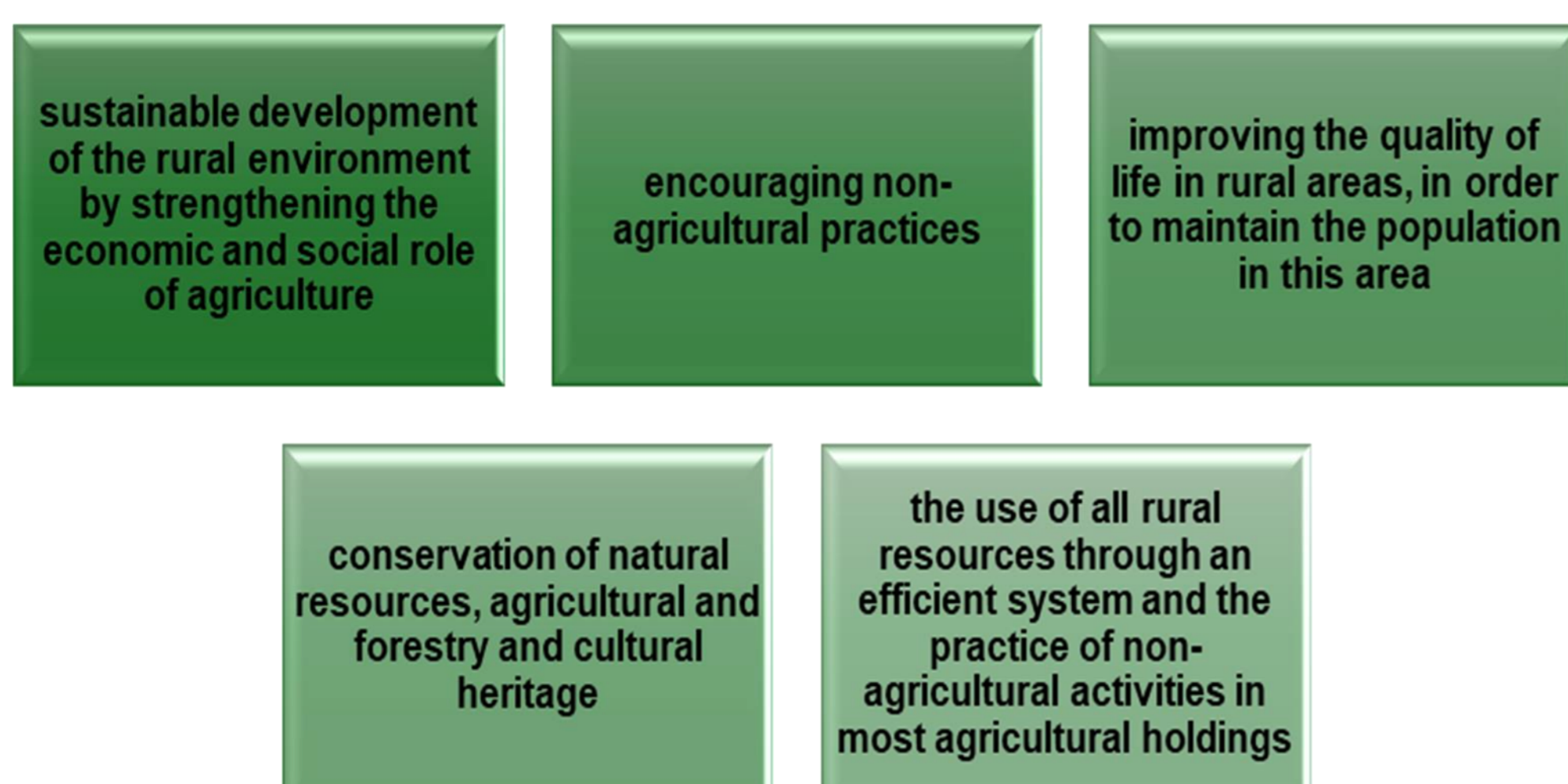
Rural areas will have to define new functions, more ecological and recreational, increasingly important, being new developmental alternatives for those involved in agricultural field. In this context a major role will be played by the development of a multitude of tourism activities in rural areas. Specifically for European economies, rural tourism brings an essential contribution to the integration process. Rural tourism, in recent times, has a strong evolution and enjoys greater attention. The reason? The authenticity of rural areas is a growing quality d more and more demanded, in the conditions of the present life. Many governments in the European Union recognize that rural tourism is an alternative that can save agriculture and that "over the next 20 years tourism will be the core component of the rural economy, and rural tourism will become tourism of the future."

• Material and method

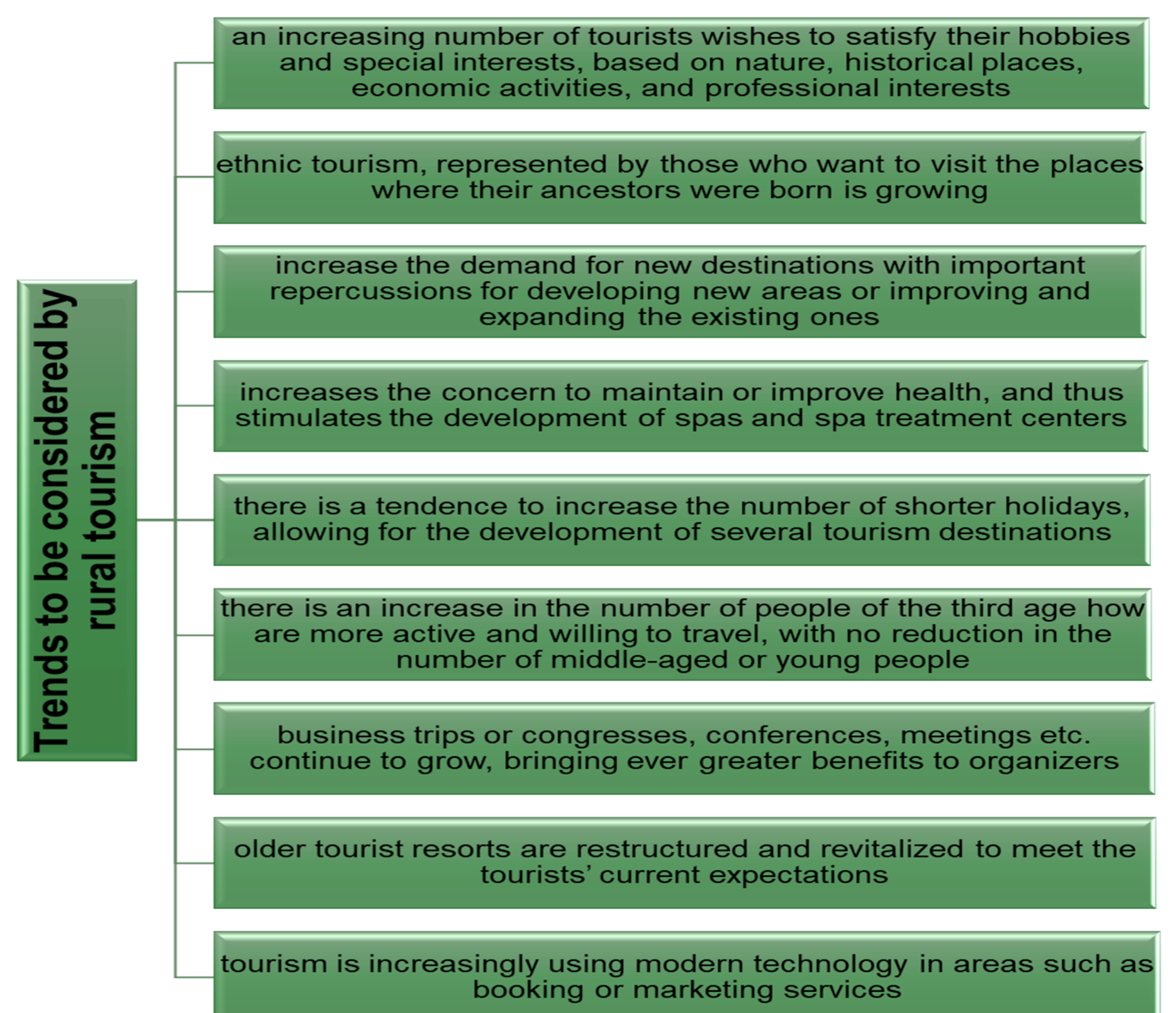
This paper has as purpose to highlight the role that tourism activity has in the economic development of rural areas. Being an activity that combines very well the capitalization of agricultural production with the enhancement of the natural and anthropic tourist heritage of the Romanian state, agrotourism is a real alternative source of income for the inhabitants of these areas. The documentation for conducting this study is based on important bibliographic sources in the field and the existing statistical information on this activity.

• Results and discussions

The development and intensification of the tourist activity requires investments in the modernization and development of the technical-material base of accommodation, food and leisure of agritourism guesthouses, as well as improving the quality of services provided to customers, increasing the qualification of the workforce, thus increasing the number of tourists and the average length of stay. Future rural development programs in Romania will have to target, among others:



The development of agritourism depends on the innovative solutions introduced in this field. Innovation in the agritourism field starts from the creation of the tourist product, which starts from scratch and involves the combination of several resources, which creates a professional marketing environment for natural and cultural values in a rural community, thus being a sustainable innovation activity for the rural environment.



• Conclusions

The development of rural tourism is imposed in rural areas, both economically and socially. Thus, it contributes to the village's economic life through the following:

- Stabilizing the population by setting up the labor force is an extremely important problem for most rural areas, generally confronted with the phenomenon of depopulation.
- Creating new jobs is possible given that the local implementation of agrotourism is realized with success.
- The vast majority of their rural areas have a poor diversity in the use of labor, almost entirely occupied in the agricultural sector.
- Pluriactivity is another beneficial consequence of agrotourism. It designates the situation where, at the individual or family level, the assurance of existence is accomplished by carrying out additional activities (at least one) in addition to the basic activity.
- Promoting and developing services is an essential aspect, as more as since many rural communities are still increasingly struggling with the lack of appropriate service facilities.

In addition to the economic benefits that can encourage farmers to engage in tourism activities, social benefits can not be ignored.

- Promoting and supporting the folk art, the local handicraft industry. Art and rural crafts occupy an important place in the cultural heritage of each country.
- The rehabilitation of the urban heritage is achieved under the conditions of a tourist flow, mainly in two ways.
- Rural tourism has the advantage of acting in the direction of opening new investment perspectives.