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COOPERATION PROGRAMS REGARDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF TURNOVER IN RURAL AREA

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Abstract: *This paper aims to analyze the data regarding the cooperation programs supporting the development of agro-tourism of Romania. The data were taken from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and were processed according to the objectives of the paper, namely the allocation of European funds for the period 2007-2013 for Measure 3.1.3. - "Encouraging tourism activities. To achieve this it was necessary to analyze the projects submitted, the projects selected and contracted. The aim of the paper is to develop tourism activities in rural areas that will help to increase the number of jobs and alternative incomes, as well as to increase the attractiveness of the rural area. This measure aimed at investing in rural areas, namely: investing in infrastructure in areas with tourism potential, investing in recreational activities, investing in infrastructure, investing in information centers, investing in tourist marking development, development and marketing of tourist services as a part an integral part of rural tourism.*

Keywords: *agritourism, cooperation programs, investments*

Classification JEL: *O11, Q13*

INTRODUCTION

Achieving the strategic objectives of agro-tourism development required the analysis of some elements considered essential, but based on two-dimensional relations such as: identifying the opportunities for rural tourism services demand, analyzing the material, financial, technical and managerial resources of the rural pension. These resources illustrate the qualitative side of the strategic objectives, which concerns the modernization of the existing accommodation capacity, the system of values and the aspirations regarding the attractiveness of the rural tourism unit and the development of the rural community, as well as the protection of the natural environment. The strategies adopted by the rural tourism boarding house will have to follow the correlation with the territorial set of alternative activities that will result in a harmonious development of the rural area in the analyzed region. The tourist will know the man (the peasant), his everyday life, rural culture. Therefore, the rural tourism arrangements must exclusively serve the rural community, the only one able to keep the rural space unaltered.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The dates presented in this article was taken over from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development and were centralized and interpreted to highlight the allocation of European funds for tourism activities.

The research method used is the qualitative analysis by studying, processed and processed data from MADR and the specialized literature, which will put into development and modernization of rural areas and especially agrotourism. The information has been centralized and processed in order to carry out an analysis that highlights the situation of accessing European funds for encouraging agrotourism activities in the period 2008 – 2012.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

It was found that there is a close link between the accommodation offer and the degree of modernization of the respective household, which leads to the development of rural areas and especially of rural tourism and agritourism in European countries. Financial instruments used by the European Community for the use of its rural development policies are: the European Regional

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Development Fund (ERDF), the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) and the European Social Fund (ESF). Among the associations with rural tourism activities, the World Tourism Training Association (AMFORT), which is based in Madrid, has been valued for its work. Romania is represented in AMFORT by the Institute of Management and Tourism "EDEN". Another association with rural tourism activity is "EUROTER", a member of the Romanian Federation for Mountain Development (FRDM). In EUROGUTES, Romania is represented by ANTREC. The EU Commission adopted in 1990 an initiative for rural development, called LEADER, which, through its initiative, gives rise to a network of 100 groups in rural areas (Figure 1).

Fig.1 The LEADER Initiative "Links between Actions for Rural Development"

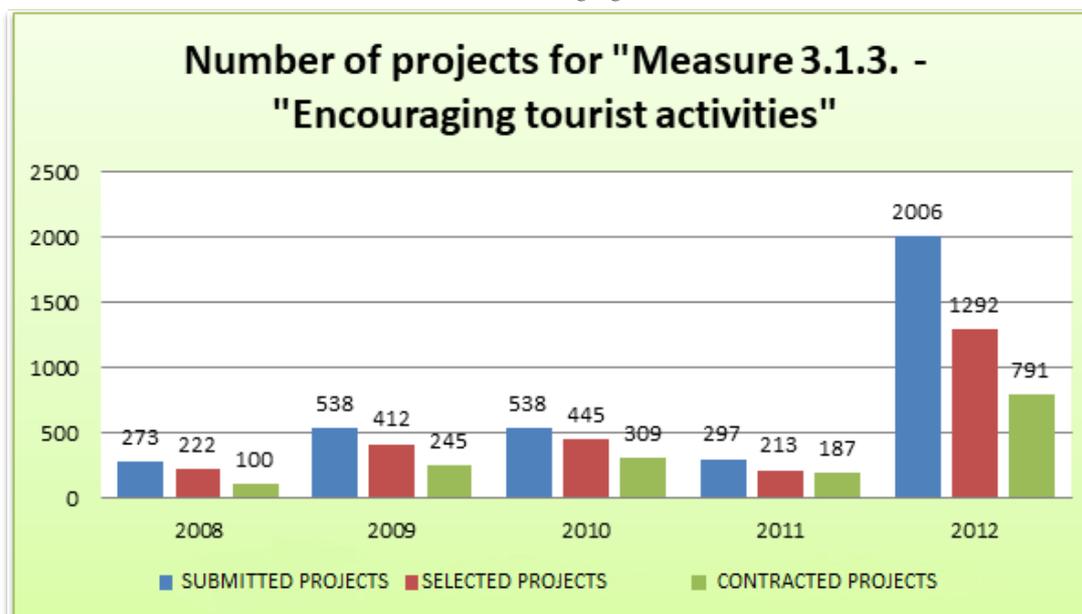


Source: <http://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/rur/leader2/rural-en/euro/p1-1.htm>

The National Rural Development Program (NRDP) is a program of measures developed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in collaboration with the European Community, measures to help the development of agriculture in Romania. The measures aim at developing and defining agriculture and, above all, the transition from a fragile, unprofitable agriculture to a modern agriculture. This program is funded by the European Fund for Agriculture and Rural Development (EAFRD), which is a financing instrument developed by the European Union to help Member States implement the Common Agricultural Policy. This is a complex set of rules and mechanisms that support the production, processing and marketing of all agricultural products in the European Union and give great attention to rural development.

Rural development policy can not be seen as an option for the future. This is a necessity, taking into account the problems of the development of agriculture and the rural environment, it has important connotations at the national level, being still a topical issue in Romania. In Chart no. 1, entitled "Allocation of European funds for the period 2007-2013 for Measure 3.1.3. - "Encouraging tourist activities for the period 2008 - 2012 is the number of submitted projects, the number of selected projects and the contracted ones.

Chart no. 1. - Allocation of European funds for the period 2007-2013
Measure 3.1.3. - "Encouraging tourist activities"



Source: MADR data processing

Measure 313 "Encouraging tourism activities" aimed at developing tourism activities in rural areas that would help to increase the number of jobs and alternative incomes and increase the attractiveness of rural areas. The support through this measure aimed at investing in rural areas, namely:

- Invest in infrastructure in areas with tourism potential,
- invest in recreational activities,
- investing in infrastructure,
- invest in information centers,
- investing in the development of tourist markings, development and marketing of tourism services as an integral part of rural tourism.

It is noted that in 2008 out of the total of 273 submitted projects 81.32% were selected, out of which only 45.05% were approved. In 2009, the share of selected projects decreased to 76.58% and that of contracted projects to 59.47%. By 2012, the share of selected projects continued to decline, reaching 64.41%, while the share of contracted projects was 61.22%. We can conclude that as time passed, the projects submitted improved because in 2012 the share of selected projects is approximately equal to that of approved projects (Chart no. 1).

Table no. 1. - The value of European funds for the 2007-2013 period
Measure 3.1.3. - "Encouraging tourist activities"

Thousands of euros

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	TOTAL
Value of submitted projects	49.415,76	93.385,65	96.166,32	45.274,97	285.648,05	569.890,75
Value of selected projects	43.308,60	72.208,94	70.663,46	31.385,66	174.523,22	392.089,88
Value of contracted projects	17.823,85	39.942,58	47.670,14	27.543,82	97.391,68	230.372,07

Source: MADR data processing

It is noted that during the period 2008 - 2012 (Table no. 1) from the total of 569.890,75 (thousands euro) submitted projects were selected projects totaling 392.089,88 (thousand euros) out of which 230.372,07 (thousands of euros) were contracted, more than half of the projects submitted. The large number of projects that have been submitted and subsequently approved for funding increasingly motivate the rural population to access European funds for investment and the development of agri-tourism activities.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Rural tourism stimulates domestic food and handicraft production, representing the perfect opportunity by which business can be valued and known to the public, and product marketing is a complementary source of income. The local population is the active component of the tourism product, with a high entrepreneurial potential.

Launching programs for "Encouraging tourist activities" contributes to promoting tourism in rural areas. Under these circumstances, rural tourism is less dependent on the attractiveness of the region, with particular emphasis on prices, but through this form of tourism the existing seasonality is attenuated and satisfaction is guaranteed both for the consumer and the entrepreneur tourism.

In conclusion, from the analysis of the allocation of European funds in the period 2007 - 2013, it appears that the investments in tourist activity have increased and the rural space continues to turn positive. The main motivation for increasing the financial value of rural tourism can be synthesized by the fact that agricultural income has increased, the difficulty of selling agricultural products provided by peasant farms is on the verge of disappearing, the prices of products have increased and the surplus of agricultural products is no longer a problem.

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