Sustainability through Rural Tourism in Moieciu Area-Development Analysis and Future Proposals

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Abstract: In our days consumers are interested and visibly reoriented towards natural/local/organic products. Starting from this specificity, the development of rural tourism can come as a possible sustainable response to be implemented in many of the rural areas, such an example being the Moieciu area subject to our analysis. The main objective of this paper is to achieve an analysis of rural tourism activity’s development stage from Moieciu area, from the tourist’s perspective, using case study method and as “main tool of research” the questionnaire. Thus, several research-oriented goals followed are: establishing the arguments for practicing tourism in rural areas; describing the development of Bran-Moieciu area from economic, agricultural and tourist point of view; identifying the reasons for which Moieciu area is a place where tourism can ensure sustainable development. The measure of appreciation of this area by the tourist is analyzed through a face-to-face questionnaire, having as purpose to identify: the capitalization level of local resources through rural tourism activities; the extent to which local resources are present in the product consumed by tourists; the satisfaction degree and expectations regarding the tourist product; the connection between tourism and area development in terms of satisfaction. Based on the information obtained some proposals/possible directions will be proposed to transform the area into “a possible model of sustainable rural tourism development”.

Keywords: rural development; tourism sustainable; authenticity; tradition; Moieciu; Romania

1. Introduction

One of the current orientations of the tourism industry development is the return to nature, manifested more and more often in all countries the causes being multiple, and the trend being more accentuated there where post-industrial civilizations determined the desire to withdraw from the city (for a short period of a few days). The special potential of rural areas, as it is the case of Moieciu area taken in research in this study, can be considered a possible advantage. All the resources from the rural area can be used to create attractive tourist offers with multiple beneficial perspectives: for the tourists, because they will receive natural, original authentic products and for the inhabitants of the villages who will receive supplementary incomes. A well-known “secret/effect” of this type of rural activity is that, in addition to relaxing in a natural, clean environment, the consumer who comes to rest in rural area participates with great pleasure to local habits, tradition, crafts, that gives “the specific of life at the country”, and pay for this aspects [1–4]. Rural tourism is generally seen as an ensemble of a wide variety of activities,
events, accommodation services, public catering, and leisure, developed in an area defined as being a rural one [5–7]. This form of tourism, so suitable in the situation of non-existence of huge money quantities, refs. [8,9] will offer the chance of financial accumulations for the owners of local tourist structures, money that will be reinvested to improve the tourist offer.

There where are localities with “a large baggage of real/sustainable resources”, their engagement in tourism [10–12] is not only desirable but necessary, if it is possible with the possibility of conservation and perpetuation of representative elements (in appropriate forms). Moieciu area is one of these areas, being part of one of the oldest areas of rural tourism activity from Romania, the Bran-Moieciu area. Three communes are part of this area: first is Bran Commune, consisting of the villages Bran, Predelut, Sohodol, Shimon and Poarta; second is Moeciu Commune, consisting of the villages Moeciu de Jos, Moeciu de Sus, Cheia, Magura and Pestera; and third is Fundata Commune with the villages Drumul Carului, Fundata, Fundatica and Sirnea. Having until not long ago focused their main occupation on agriculture, in particular animal husbandry, the inhabitants have discovered rural tourism activity starting from their location, near Bran Castle (Dracula Castle). Thus as consequence Moieciu area has gone in last years through unprecedented development, rural tourism becoming an important economic activity.

The development of rural tourism as an element of diversification of the rural economy on the background of diminishing the central role of agriculture and forestry has been successful in many European countries [13–17] and in this area too. Combining several factors [18–20] specific for rural areas and for Moieciu too, such as: small guest houses, interesting landscapes, it can appear multiple effects [21–23], generating possible changes in the lifestyle of the locals (some beneficial and some negative). The direct and sustainable impact of developing rural tourism activity [24–25] on village, and in particular on the area discussed, can be quantified in: improving the general infrastructure by arranging farms, boarding houses, tourist households as model, [26] organization of the activity, but with the respect of the local architecture and traditions. In order to remain a sustainable form of tourism for rural area, must be followed certain principles:

− the tourist activity must be initiated with the own means of the local community
− it must maintain its control over the tourist development
− tourism must provide residents with jobs that will improve the quality of life of local communities
− a balance must be achieved between the economic activities already existing in the area and tourism activities
− educational programs and training must be carried out in order to improve management in the field of protection of natural and cultural resources.

The aim of the paper is to bring into study the region with the longest seniority, the one in which this type of activity began, in which appeared the first rural tourist boarding house, and quantitatively it has a high number of tourist units. Since the tourist is the consumer of the product “rural tourism in Moieciu” the purpose of the paper is to identify the measure of appreciation of this area by the tourist, using as identification tool the questionnaire, with closed and open questions, aimed at identifying:

− the suitability of the Moieciu area for rural tourist activity and tourist motivation,
− tourist’s expectations and satisfaction degree regarding the tourist product,
− identifying the extent to which products/elements local resources are capitalized through rural tourism activities,
− the extent to which the tourist identifies the links between the development of tourism and concrete pillars of development, and
− possible measures, considered opportune, by the tourist, to support the sustainable development of the studied area.

Based on the information obtained, proposals/possible directions will be identified so as transform the area into a “future model of sustainable rural tourism development”.
2. Literature Review

Generally the rural environment has a number of characteristics which give it individuality, specificity and authenticity compared to other areas [27] (see Table 1), and territories, this being the situation of Moieciu area too; the administrative communities are created from relatively few members and have mutual relations; the relative fragmentation of the population leads to a relative dispersion of collective services; agriculture is the “backbone” of the countryside, the predominant activity, although in some areas such as mountains and foothills, forestry and forestry-related activities predominate from a territorial and occupational point of view or in mountainous and coastal areas predominant activities oriented through tourism and leisure. However, the rural area remains predominantly an agricultural area.

Table 1. Comparative analysis of the characteristics of rural and urban communities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small community</td>
<td>Large community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family/friends/close relationships</td>
<td>distance relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simple economy</td>
<td>Diversified economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduced division of labor</td>
<td>Strong specialization of the labor force</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education closely connected with nature</td>
<td>Economic education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tightly/friendly connected networks</td>
<td>Cosmopolitan networks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local orientation</td>
<td>Economic orientation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic classes are one of several divisions</td>
<td>Economic classes are multiple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connection with work environment</td>
<td>Separation from the work environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ own interpretation.

Rural from Europe, and from the researched area, is in a process of profound change, with many problems (see Figure 1), which will most likely accelerate in the coming years, giving an increasing importance to achieving sustainable development, thus responding to the demands of ecological services. In most part, in countries found in the process of economic development, the rural economy is predominantly primary, with a share of agriculture of about 60% in its structure (compared to about 14–15% in developed EU countries), with negative effects on employment of active rural population, low level of agricultural raw materials processing and, as a consequence, the formation of added value and insignificant taxation of agricultural and food production [28]. At these aspects are added the decline of traditional activities, the exodus from rural areas and the aging population, the remote position of some areas, the poor quality of infrastructure and poor services, and to solve them the European Union has focused on implementing its rural development policy [29–31]. Structural changes in the economy are causing severe constraints on rural areas, especially those heavily dependent on agriculture. Such areas exist in most European countries. In these areas the profits of the farms [32,33] are decreasing, the increase of unemployment leads to an exodus of the productive force and therefore to the demographic imbalance. Local leaders and authorities are looking for innovative actions to solve the problems of these areas and thus support the well-being of the rural population. In the situation of Moieciu area, the good part is that the area has tourist resources, thus there was the possibility of orientation towards tourist activities.

In contemporary society, in the conditions of an increasingly stressful activity the attention was directed to another way of spending free time, generating a form of turism, known as “rural tourism”, which harmoniously combines natural resources (geographical location, relief, climate, hydrography, landscape, hunting and fishing grounds, vineyards and orchards) with the social ones (cultural-historical objectives, monuments, museums, hospitality, language, mentality, customs and traditions, ethnography and folklore, art and culture, etc.), all these resources being found in Moieciu rural area.
Following the defining way of rural tourism activity (presented in succinct manner in Figure 2), [34–36] and applying the definition to the analyzed area, it is found that the capitalization of specific resources of the area [37,38] can support its sustainability in time [39–42]:

1. the development of the tourist activity in the natural rural environment that supposes rural landscapes with agrarian character and the contact with the environment;
2. the tourist offer implies the presence of the three elements: accommodation, food and leisure, focused on the local rural specifics with emphasis on traditions, crafts, customs, gastronomy;
3. interrelating with the local society, involving the development of a special tourist-host relationship and participation in the life of the local community.

The Moieciu area can sustain the development of various possibilities and forms of tourism in rural environment (see Table 2), taking in consideration its natural or entropic resources and the local general attitude [43].
Table 2. Various possibilities and forms of tourism with rural character.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forms of Tourism in Rural Area</th>
<th>Possibilities and Specific</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agritourism</td>
<td>Combining agricultural activities with tourist activities having as main purpose to obtain additional income;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural tourism</td>
<td>Capitalizing the “specific rural way of life” and resources through tourism with specific management could sustain the future benefits for local small communities in a word having the capacity to ensure sustainability; [44,45]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecotourism</td>
<td>The form of tourism targeting natural resources and their use through tourist activities, highlighting the ecologic benefits for local communities;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural tourism</td>
<td>Establishing connection and special relation between tourist and local cultural patrimony with accent on historical resources and values of the community;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ processing by various bibliographic sources processing after [46–48].

In general, the forms of rural tourism should come in the way of saving the authentic rural household, then by introducing it and other resources in the tourist circuit to be the premise of ensuring socio-economic development. However, it is true that rural tourism does not always ensure the sustainability of a place, the destructive actions manifesting themselves, through the brutal intervention of man on the landscape and natural resources, physical, sound, visual, architectural pollution, etc. In the case of our research area, the uniqueness of rural tourism, the existing conditions, the culture and purity of people, doubled by hospitality, interest, motivation and aspiration for better, can consecrate rural tourism and contribute to the sustainable and responsible development of the village, [49,50] of the rural area as a whole, [51] If this type of activity is developed with responsibility, as a well-managed process, it will be possible to ensure in time sustainability of the rural area. This possible sustainability could be appreciated through economic and social benefits [52–55]:

- The development perspective on a long-term period of rural community, taking in consideration some particular field, such as agriculture, infrastructure, or environmental protection.
- The possibility to become support for new businesses and jobs that will determine local development. Thus, it acts primarily on the economic development of the locality, by increasing the income of the population, which determines changes in the structure of expenditures, significant increase of investments, development and arrangement of transport and communications, expansion of economic activity by appearance of new branches complementary to rural tourism activity (local industry).
- Rural tourism also acts on the social factors from the rural environment, first of all by restricting the rural exodus and by stabilizing the population in rural area. This phenomenon is achieved by offering decent living possibilities in this environment, by occupational diversification of the population, especially for the young, which are usually the most vulnerable on the labor market, most affected by crises and economic recessions;
- The third area on which rural tourism acts, positively influencing it, concerns the civilizational, educational and cultural factors. Through the permanent contract with cultured and civilized social categories, through repetition, norms of civilization and culture. In addition, friendships can be established with the inhabitants of other lands, countries. On the other hand, the other category, the one of tourists, is influenced by the knowledge of the popular, original customs and traditions, of the
real history, of the authentic life of the respective people. It can be appreciated that a favorable image of the respective country in the world is created, the rural tourism being therefore the most efficient and pacifist ambassador of a country, the basis being the innocence and simplicity of the rural inhabitant;

− Rural tourism can also act on the managerial system of the respective locality, on the local organizational factors, mobilizing them, increasing their preoccupations for the arrangement of the rural area in terms of infrastructure, forcing them indirectly to find funding sources to achieve modernization objectives such as: access roads, restoration of some tourist objectives, repair of some functional buildings, etc.

3. Materials and Methods

The location area for this current research is represented by the Romanian rural area, Moieciu area in particular. Moieciu area has managed to be known at national and international level, for its specific resources capitalized through rural tourism activities. The reason for choosing this area derives from its “seniority in carrying out rural tourism activity”, but also its geographical location in a certain favorable position (near Bran Castle, and at the confluence of sea-mountain tourist routes). The tourist traffic in this area is high, during the peak seasons, the tourist potential is high, and therefore the possibility of supporting the application of the study is high.

3.1. Research Methods and Steps Used

The case study method [56,57] has been used as general method of study in this research, and in addition was pursued several steps (see Figure 3): data collection, processing, analysis, observation, mathematical calculation and their interpretation. We chose this particular method [58,59] because we consider it appropriate to the purpose proposed: conducting exploratory and explanatory study, starting from the current context of life in Moieciu rural environment, and reaching the identification of answers to certain questions. In this type of research, the emphasis is put on the case studies, not necessarily on the methodology used [59].

![Figure 3. Research steps and objectives.](image)

In order to implement the objectives proposed in the study, a number of 858 tourists were interviewed on the basis of a questionnaire. In this study were taken into account, as valid question, those who completed all the questions from the questionnaire, mean-
ing with valid answers. Starting from the statistical data mentioned in the Local Development Strategy, that in the area were accommodated for around 3500 tourists in the local structures, the percentage of those who provided complete answers to all the questions from the questionnaire are 24%. The application of the questionnaires was carried out during August of 2021, the interval in which this activity was possible from the point of view of the COVID-19 regulations.

The applied questionnaire had a number of ten questions organized according to those five objectives pursued in the paper:

− Highlighting the characteristics of tourists visiting the area;
− Highlighting the suitability of the Moieciu area for rural tourism activity was the first aspect pursued, through two questions: the suitability of the Moieciu area for rural tourism activity (a) and identifying the respondent’s opinion regarding tourist favorability of this area (b);
− Scoring the satisfaction degree and expectations of the tourist regarding the tourist product in the studied area is the second direction followed by two questions: indicating the degree of satisfaction of the tourist product (a), presentation of tourist expectations regarding the tourist product (b);
− Identifying the capitalization level of local resources through rural tourism activities is the third aspect investigated by the two questions placed in the questionnaire related to: identifying the capitalization level of local resources through rural tourism activities (a) and the extent to which products/elements of local origin were found in the tourist product (b)—with a specific mention of the elements of local origin found in the tourist product;
− Highlighting the link between tourism and the development of the area through two aspects: identifying a possible link between the development of rural tourism and the degree of development in the Moieciu area (a)—with justification of positive answers and marking concrete pillars (b);
− It was wanted to identify possible concrete measures in the form of proposals from the tourist, therefore the last question in the questionnaire referred to this aspect.

The main information collected was analyzed using different computer software: EXCELL, Paint, hi-square test (Chi-Square Goodness of fit test), R, then findings were presented using tables and figures for interpretation.

The limitations of the study consisted precisely in the possibility of not being able to apply a representative number of questionnaires, which would allow the possibility of formulating realistic conclusions, but this shortcoming was removed. At the start of the study another possible limitation was related to the impossibility of practical implementation of the questionnaires due to specific regulations generated by the COVID-19 situation, but this shortcoming was removed.

3.2. Research Objectives

The idea of this paper starts from the idea that rural area from Europe is in a process of profound change, with many problems, improving the life quality of local communities being a necessity. The development of rural tourism as an element of diversification of the local rural economy can come as a possible sustainable response to be implemented in many of Europe’s rural areas. The main objective of this paper is to achieve an analysis of rural tourism activity’s development stage from Moieciu area, from the tourist’s perspective, and based on the information obtained in order to come with future proposals. Thus research-oriented goals followed are:

− Going through the specialized literature in order to determine the general characteristics of the rural environment and rural tourism from Moieciu area;
− Describing Bran-Moieciu area as a place of research from the perspective of existing resources, the current degree of rural tourism development and in terms of economic and agricultural degree of development;
Highlighting the reasons why Moieciu area is a place where tourism can ensure sustainable development, through an inventory from tourist’s perspective, taking in consideration:

1. The main motivations that substantiated the choice of the area as a holiday destination and at the same time support the suitability of the Moieciu area for the rural tourist activity;
2. Pointing the degree of satisfaction and the expectations of the tourist regarding the tourist product from the studied area;
3. Identifying the capitalization level of local resources through rural tourism activities, the extent in which products/elements of local origin were found in the tourist product;
4. Highlighting the connection between tourism and the development of the area;
5. Pointing some measures necessary to be taken in order to support the future sustainable development of tourism.

4. Results
4.1. Describing Bran-Moieciu Area as a Place of Research and Important Romanian Resources

Moieciu area is one of the richest areas from Romania in tourist resources, both natural and especially cultural and ecological. Moieciu commune is located in the center of the country, at the southern part of Brasov County, between the Piatra Craiului and Bucegi massifs, in Rucar-Bran corridor. Located at an altitude between 800 and 1200 m, it occupies an area of 103.4 km. The commune was founded as administrative-territorial entity in 1968.

It consists of six villages, being the commune with the most villages from Bran area, as follows (see Figure 4): Moieciu de Sus, Cheia, Moieciu de Jos, Drumul Carului, Pestera, Magura. Until recently, the main occupation of the inhabitants of Moieciu commune was agriculture, in particular animal husbandry. In last years, rural tourism has taken an unprecedented development, which tends to become the main economic activity from the whole area. In fact, within the commune area there are some of the most famous rural tourist guesthouses from the whole area. What brings tourists here? An answer could be a rich and particularly attractive natural tourist potential. The rural values from Moieciu commune on which the rural tourism activity can be based, worthy of mention could be:

- Moieciu commune preserves a traditional installation for wool processing, a mill, these being among the few original pieces left in Romania. Pestera village represents another point of attraction due to the existence of the “Cave with with bats”. Magura village attracts tourists through the traditional Runceanu house, built entirely of wood, while the Simon village is a town known for its folk costumes, weaving, wool weaving and the art of fur.
- The vicinity of Bran Castle, as well as all these cultural and historical values is attractive destinations for tourists visiting the Bran area. Since 1994 this form of tourism was developed in an organized manner with the support of the National Association of Rural, Ecological and Cultural Tourism, in the Moeciu-Bran area, activating the main branch of the association.
- The open-air ethnographic museum from Bran is located in the park next to Bran Castle. In this museum were brought and reconstructed some of the oldest and most typical constructions from the area. Opened for the public in 1961, the museum counted in 1981 14 peasant households and technical installations. The monuments were selected and grouped on the basis of research from 1958–1960.
- The Customs Museum, supervised the passage that connects Transylvania and Muntenia. From 1377–1382 when it was built, until today, it has witnessed to events from the history of this places, through its position and rank.
− Down in the valley, at the base of the rock, the heart of Queen Maria rests symbolically, a sign of the appreciation that Bran and the people of Bran enjoyed in the glory years of the Romanian monarchy.

− More and more tourists are attracted to the area by Romanian traditions. In Moieciu some of the oldest are still preserved. One of these refers to the “agricultural agreement” regarding the land, the customs related to shepherding, or “working in the forest”.

− In Moieciu the ancient crafts are still preserved, and for tourists can be organized even ethnographic itineraries. The old shepherds’ settlements offer a unique view of the Piatra Craiului ridge and the Bucegi massif. It is the first tourist village from Romania, with multiple folk events specific to the area. Well-represented crafts in the commune are: decorating Easter eggs; wood carving; creating masks and dolls; painting icons on glass.

− In the life of rural communities, but not only, the fair is, along with holidays and gastronomy, one of the most important events. We therefore consider that rural fairs could be one of the possible products to be exploited through rural tourism, with advantages for both producers and tourists. The main fairs in the area, possible to be capitalized through rural tourist activities, are: January 1—the custom walking with the specific carol “Sorcova”; March, April—customs related to the feast of the Lord’s Resurrection; March—climbing sheep in the mountains; April 25—milk measurement, choosing the best breeder; July 20—Santilie; July 25—Moieciu Summer Fair; August 9—St. Pantelimon; August—Mountains fest (Fundata); October 25—Sumedru’s Fire; October—the tumult of the sheep; November 8—the fair of St. Archangels Michael and Gabriel. Family customs are still preserved: customs related to birth, related to marriage, death; winter habits, habits related to spring (leaving the century, Easter).

![Figure 4. Moieciu area-place on the map. Source: processing after [60].](image-url)

4.2. Description of the Development Stage of the Tourism/Rural Tourism Activity in the Studied Area

According to the data provided by the town hall of Moieciu commune, the area we studied is an area with a very high tourist potential, which is suitable for capitalizing on all forms of tourism. The area is visited monthly by about 9000 tourists, of which over 3500 stay in hotels and guesthouses from the area and the percentage of foreign tourists is about 30%. Among the forms of tourism practiced are distinguished: [61]

− leisure tourism—favored by natural factors, the landscape, the unpolluted environment and a gastronomy specific to the area;

− weekend tourism—has special conditions due to the relatively small distances between the area and large urban concentrations;

− transit tourism—favored by the location of the area near other significant tourist areas;
— hiking practiced especially in summer—this being favored by the presence of the Bucegi and Piatra Craiului Mountain.

In the last 10 years there is seen a doubling of the accommodation structures number from Moieciu commune (see Table 3), a significant increase being observed since 2011, from 81 structures to 132 in 202, so rural tourism has been and continues to be an opportunity for residents because it offers an alternative source of income and the possibility of entrepreneurial development [61].

The most part of households which practice rural tourism, attract a constant number of tourists annually. Foreign tourists arriving in these lands are very excited to learn about country life in a Romanian mountain village, attracted by the famous legend of Dracula. Tourists arriving in this area can make trips on the surrounding routes, in winter they can walk with the “sledge”, on the communal roads in the area and also can directly witness the preparation of milk specialties, cultural and folk events in the area, picking berries.

Table 3. Types of rural tourist reception structures from Moieciu and their evolution degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Tourist Reception Structures</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Number of Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tourist villas</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bungalows</td>
<td>:</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday villages</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist gueshouses</td>
<td>:</td>
<td>:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agritourism guesthouses</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ processing from http://statistici.insse.ro, consulted in 18 January 2022 [62].

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At the level of Moieciu commune there are problems related to the diminution of the implications caused by the seasonal concentration of the tourist activity in certain periods of the year and, respectively, of the extension of the tourist season (also in October-November and February-June), as in other locations from the country. The phenomenon of tourist activity concentration and the need to attenuate the seasonality curve in tourism can be combated by the efforts of providers to extend the season by better promoting tourist offers such as special offers “early booking”, offers at reduced prices for off-season (stay of 3 nights’ accommodation at the price of 2 nights’ accommodation) and by developing leisure activities from the area [61].

4.3. Identifying the Economic and Agricultural Degree of Development from the Area under Study

As a paradox or as an irony of fate, the villages of Moieciu commune, such as all the villages from Bran area, flourished during the communist dictatorship because agriculture could not be cooperated here, although the past regime tried a form of cooperativization under the form companions, but it failed.

Agriculture is considered for most areas from our country, on the foreground in the hierarchy of traditional occupations, but in Moieciu area it occupies a second place due to climate and geographical specificity. Due to these factors, agriculture was more developed in the economy of Sohodol, Poarta, Predelut, Moieciu de Jos villages, the agricultural area being analyzed in Table 4. In this part of the area, the nature of the soil favored
potato cultivation, of fruit trees and in a lesser extent the cultivation of cereals. From the data provided by the Moieciu City Hall, the arable area actually cultivated exploited by individuals for their own consumption, resulting in the commune’s agriculture being one based on subsistence and semi-subistence [61].

Table 4. The way of use of agricultural area-indicator of agricultural development degree from Moieciu area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Use</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UM: Ha</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural</td>
<td>2389</td>
<td>2364</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arable</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pasture</td>
<td>1116</td>
<td>1116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grassland</td>
<td>1034</td>
<td>1009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchards and fruit nurseries</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forests and other forest vegetation</td>
<td>:</td>
<td>5482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degraded and unproductive lands</td>
<td>:</td>
<td>1440</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors’ processing by http://statistici.insse.ro, consulted in 18 January 2022 [62].

From all the basic occupations, it stands out due to the share they had in the economy: shepherding, due to which the Bran area was characterized as one of the main pastoral reservoirs of Romania. Currently, due to the profound changes taking place in the life of Bran villages, the share of pastoral activity has decreased, giving way to a type of multidirectional household in terms of economic activities, profiled on animal husbandry, fruit growing, potato cultivation, and beekeeping. A pastoral life, in the present conditions, leads only the shepherds; sheep and cattle owners have a small herd of animals, defending the “sheepfolds” that gather the animals of small owners in the villages. Shepherding is maintained in its traditional form, as a mountain sheepfold, but as a way of life it has been reduced to a small number of people.

Furthermore, in agricultural work, a significant share has the occupations specific to the craft industry, through which is capitalized the rich heritage of folk art from this part of the country:

- For the inhabitants of the commune, wood processing was a source of livelihood and a means of solving specific problems of life, because with the help of this material were built houses, technical installations and tools, furniture and household items. The wooden constructions and the technical installations (mills, presses), are the expression of the legacy of a long tradition in wood processing, raised to the level of the craft. From the category of work tools, we find many tools and objects used in the field of animal husbandry: milking pots, basket patterns, spoons of various shapes, tablespoons of butter, a few for beating butter, buckets for milking and cheeses for kneading curd. In the field of furniture making, the craft has developed only within the strict limits of meeting the requirements of the area.

- The craft of blacksmithing was practiced in village workshops, in almost all settlements in Bran and developed in correlation with the practice of basic occupations. A workshop that is still operating in Sirnea includes a series of products and objects manufactured in the workshop: series of hammers, anvil, bard, and coal hearth.

- Leather processing was carried out in almost every household. Leather processing has been practiced in the past, especially in Branul de Sus (Fundata and Sirnea). In Sirnea, leather processing in its traditional forms is maintained to this day.

In Moieciu are some of the most rural tourist structures from the whole Bran area (in particular agritourism guesthouses), rural household being a specific and unique resource of the area. The household with a reinforced detour, particular to Bran area, is located in a large quadrangle where all the component elements of the household are
built, life taking place, under the shelter of high wooden walls, in the inner courtyard. Thus we meet: the small house, the big house, the barn and the stable. The construction is made of wood, namely: wood long fir, placed on stone. These types of households were preferably located on mountain slopes, regardless of orientation to the road; the orientation criterion is the position towards the sun, facing east or south. This Bran-specific household is developed horizontally with a single level. Today, these fortresses are quite rare, their place being taken by houses built inside large courtyards. Inside the houses we find: soft goods (which represent specific elements of decoration), icons on glass, ceramics (which is required more by shape than by decoration) and wood carving. Among the village crafts capitalized by the sale of products are: carpentry; blacksmithing; making folk costumes; leather processing; decorating Easter eggs; wood carving; painting icons on glass.

4.4. Moieciu Area—Reasons for Tourism Sustainable Development—An Inventory from Tourist’s Perspective

Moieciu area is an area with potential for capitalization through tourist activities, an aspect highlighted during the previous lines. However, we wanted to highlight how the area is seen in the eyes of tourists, analyzing a series of aspects, detailed below.

Highlighting the characteristics of tourists visiting the area

Analyzing the centralized information following the application of the questionnaire (see Table 5), we can identify a number of primary issues related to the characteristics of tourists visiting the area under analysis. Female respondents predominate (66.08%) to the detriment of male respondents (33.91%).

Table 5. Highlighting the characteristics of tourists visiting the area [in No and %, N = 858].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Unit</th>
<th>Sex (a)</th>
<th>Respondent’s Age (b)</th>
<th>Education Level (c)</th>
<th>Medium of Origin (d)</th>
<th>Income Level (e)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women 18–30 31–50 Over 50</td>
<td>Secondary Education Higher Education Rural Urban Income 0–5000 lei/month Incomes over 5000 lei/month</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>567</td>
<td>182  392 284</td>
<td>244  614 221 637</td>
<td>487</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>33.91%</td>
<td>66.08%</td>
<td>21.21%  45.68% 33.10%</td>
<td>28.43%  71.56% 22.75% 74.24%</td>
<td>56.75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As age (b) the category of 31–50 years predominated with a weight of 45.68%, followed by the category of over 50 years with a weight of 33.10% and the category of 18–30 years with a weight of 21.21%. Analyzing this information and other than statistic we see that there is a real interest in rural areas as a tourist destination for young people, which is a positive aspect, which in time could lead to reducing migration to urban areas, increasing the revenues from tourist activities carried out in rural areas with the remaining part of the financial resources here.

Regarding the level of education (c) of those who participated in the questionnaire applied by us, a somewhat logical and at the same time gratifying phenomenon can be observed, so 71.56% of the tourists who arrived in this area have higher education. This means that those who come here, having reached a certain stability and why not the desire to find simplicity and at the same time a certain level of tourism culture, and the choice of this area is somewhat certainty that the area has original valuable elements.

As might be expected, 74.24% of tourists arriving in the studied area have as environment of origin (d) the urban environment, starting from the stressful conditions of urban life. Even if 22.75% of the tourists who come here come from rural areas, it is also a gratifying aspect in the sense that if they chose the rural area coming from it, there are some original elements of favorability here.
From the total number of respondents, 56.75% have a level of monthly income (e) between 0–5000 lei/month and 43.24% a level of monthly income located over 5000 lei/month.

**Highlighting the suitability of the Moieciu area for rural tourism activity**

We have previously presented that the analyzed rural area has numerous tourist resources, but we wanted to see tourists' opinion, and which resources have value in their eyes (see Table 6). This direction aims at identifying the favorability of the studied area for rural tourist activities and the motivations that substantiated the choice of the area as a holiday destination and at the same time that support its suitability for rural tourist activity.

**Table 6.** Highlighting the suitability of the Moieciu area for rural tourism activity [in No and %, N = 858].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>The Suitability of the Moieciu Area for Rural Tourist Activity (a)</th>
<th>Respondent’s Opinion about Specific Tourist Motivation of this Area’s Tourist Favorability (b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Landscape and Natural Resources</td>
<td>Quietness and the Possibility of Distancing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td></td>
<td>743</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td></td>
<td>86.59</td>
<td>13.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A first question is oriented through a clearly mention the suitability of Moieciu area for rural tourism activities. It can be seen that in the majority, 86.59%, tourists consider the Moieciu area as being favorable for rural tourism (a), but there are some aspects that support future improvements, from this category the aspect mentioned are: road and tourism infrastructure, visibility of the specific tourist product area. Probably these needs for improvement were the basis of the negative answer, regarding the favorability for rural tourism activities, coming from 13.40% of those who answered our questions.

The second part of this researched, direction then involves arguing the reasons for favorability, and the answer to this question is left free, at the discretion of the tourist. As the variables assessing the suitability of the Moieciu area for rural tourism activities and the respondents’ opinion about specific tourist motivation of this area’s tourist favourability are measured using nominal data, their central tendency can be quantified using the mode, which is the most frequently occurring value. 86.59% of the respondents considered that the Moeciu area is suitable for rural tourism activities, therefore the mode of this variable is “Yes”. \( \chi^2 = 37,711 \), degrees of freedom = 4, \( p \) value of \( 1.285 \times 10^{-7} \). The value of \( p \) is less than alpha (0.05), so we can say that the empirical distribution differs from the theoretical one and we can classify the preferences of the respondents in order. The mode of the variable pertaining to the respondent’s opinion about specific tourist motivation for this area’s tourist favourability is “Existence of famous resources”. Furthermore, in the case of this variable, the responses can be ranked based on their frequency in order to approximate their importance for the respondents. “Existence of famous resources” is the mode, therefore we can consider it as the most important factor influencing the respondents’ opinion, followed by “Gastronomic products”, “Landscape and natural resources”, “Quietness and the possibility of distancing” and lastly “Tradition/customs/crafts”. Thus, the respondent’s opinion about specific elements of this area’s tourist favorability (b) highlights several aspects:

- the landscape and natural resources were the main motivation for which they chose the Moieciu area as a rural holiday tourist destination for 18.53% of the respondents, this category of respondents considering that this aspect/resource is the “plus” of the area;
the peace and the possibility of distancing was appreciated as a very favorable aspect and main motivation of choosing this area, by the 17.60% of the respondents. Indeed, in a pandemic context it is more difficult to carry out tourism, but due to the smaller size of rural tourism structures this form of tourism can ensure distance, tranquility and at the same time meet the leisure needs of the tourist. The fact that rural tourism activity can favor this desideratum: to do tourism, but to keep some distance, has been identified and speculated by both categories involved in tourism: tourists and owners of rural tourism structures;

− the traditions/customs/crafts specific to the Moieciu area were considered the “strong” elements for which 15.03% of the respondents arrived here;

− the specific gastronomic products also enjoy by a special appreciation from 21.56% of the respondents, who mentioned as main motivation these appetizing and original products for which they came or returned here;

− the existence of famous resources (such as Bran Castle or Dracula’s Castle, or Dinosaur Park) is the motivation mentioned by 27.27% of respondents as being their main elements for choosing this area as a tourist destination. The Moieciu area is located on the sea-mountain route, and if the already established resources are added to this aspect, it is easy to understand that these two aspects are the main motivations. However, this recent situation, meaning the pandemic [63], may be another aspect that somewhat has determined tourists to choose more isolated areas, less circulated, where there is the possibility of tourism in a low degree of congestion.

Pointing tourist satisfaction degree and expectations regarding the tourist product from the studied area

Moieciu area is one of the areas which has developed from the point of view of rural tourism quite a lot after 1989, being why not an example of sustainable development of rural tourism activity. This is a reason why we wanted to highlight the tourist opinion about specific tourist product which came from this area and see the satisfaction degree of the tourist.

In order to identify the satisfaction degree with the specific aspects of the rural tourism product from Moieciu area, the question took into account all three components of the tourist product: accommodation, food and leisure (see Table 7). Those surveyed must mention the concrete local elements identified in the consumed tourist product. Ordinal data -> Mode (5, 5, 3), Median (4, 4, 2). The median is the midpoint value of the dataset, half the observations are above it and half are below it. For the accommodation element 63.51% of the answers received from tourists are located in the satisfied-very satisfied range (with grades in the range of 4–5), which reflects the quality of the service received or their high satisfaction. A percentage of 23.19% of the answers were placed in the poorly satisfied category (grades in the range of 1–2). 77.15% of the responses received for the food item placed this item in the satisfied-very satisfied category, giving grades in the range of 4–5, and only 2.91% placed it in the poorly satisfied range, giving grades in the range of 1–2. For the leisure element, the problem changes, 52.56% of the tourists’ answers being located in the poorly satisfied interval. Therefore, we conclude that, as in the case of the previous questions, tourists’ answers are consistent, putting the gastronomic element, respectively, the food element, at special place. Furthermore, the quality of accommodation services is highly appreciated by the tourists. On the other hand, they sanction the limited offer of leisure possibilities.
Table 7. Pointing tourist satisfaction degree and expectations regarding the tourist product from Moieciu [in No and %, N = 858].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Pointing Satisfaction Degree Regarding Tourist Product (a)</th>
<th>Presentation of the Tourist’s Expectations Regarding the Tourist Product (b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Quality of Accommodation Services</td>
<td>Food Quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>10.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>12.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>13.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>29.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>34.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the accommodation part, more traditional elements are wanted; In the case of the food element, it is desired to include other products specific to the place, from the local production; In the case of leisure, tourists are expected to find the way of life of the inhabitants (introduction in the tourist product of the traditions, of the specifics of life in the country) besides the activities related to nature.

The disadvantages, or what was missing from each element of the tourism product (b), we also find as a component of this question: For the accommodation part more traditional elements are wanted; In the case of the food element, it is desired to include other products specific to the place, from the local production; In the case of leisure, tourists are expected to find the way of life of the inhabitants (traditions, the specifics of life in the country) in addition to the activities related to nature.

Among the various motivations, verbally expressed by tourists for choosing the rural tourism product from Moieciu area, in addition to the specific elements included in the tourism product analyzed through our question, were: quite good prices compared to other areas, the possibility of developing/participating in some specific rural crafts, nature and possibility of spending time in peace and security, the human-animal connection, the possibility of involvement in life on the farm, the possibility of ensuring health safety in the context of Covid-19 Pandemic situation [64].

Identifying the capitalization level of local resources through rural tourism activities, of the extent in which products/elements of local origin were found in the tourist product

Starting from the defining premise that rural tourism means capitalization of the resources specific to the rural world, we wanted to find out in what extent the resources of the Moieciu area are capitalized by this form of tourism, or more broadly to discover the extent in which the tourist notices the presence of local resources in purchased tourist product. Thus, we divided this direction into two main lines: one regarding the identification of the local resources’ capitalization level through rural tourism activities, and the second regarding the establishment of the extent in which products/elements of local origin were found in tourist product.

In order to identify the capitalization level of local resources through rural tourism activities in the studied area (a), were clearly established capitalization degrees in the question, from low to high, however, was desired a motivation of the chosen capitalization degree (see Table 8). From the information provided by tourists we notice that they consider Moieciu area as being not sufficiently capitalized through rural tourism activities, 54.66% putting on the first place the average capitalization degree, and the 32.05% low capitalization degree. Only 13.28% of respondents believe that the Moieciu area capitalizes local resources through rural tourism at high level. This is not necessarily a positive aspect if we consider the fact that this area is actually the “cradle of Romanian rural tourism”. The justification came from the tourists is that they found out about the
rural tourism product specific to this area from friends/acquaintances, not from the tourist promotion sites (where the emphasis is on Bran Castle, or Dinosaur Park), but once they arrive here they are pleasantly surprised by the resources mentioned but also by the specific rural way of life.

Table 8. Identifying the capitalization level of local resources through rural tourism activities [in No and %, N = 858].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure Unit</th>
<th>Identifying the Level of Local Resources Capitalization through Rural Tourism Activities (a)</th>
<th>The Extent in Which Products/Elements of Local Origin Were Found in Tourist Product (b)</th>
<th>The Elements of Local Origin Found in Rural Tourist Product-Mentioned by Tourists</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Capitalization</td>
<td>Average Capitalization</td>
<td>High Capitalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% 32.05</td>
<td>54.66</td>
<td>13.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Regarding the establishment of the extent in which products/elements of local origin were found in the tourist product (b), the question was provided with three answers. The data taken show that only a small proportion (14.10%) of rural specific elements are found in the tourism product in a large proportion. 44.87% of the respondents stated that the specifically rural elements are present in the purchased tourist product, but in a small proportion, and 41.02% stated that they did not identify the specific rural elements in the purchased tourist product, although they would have liked.

*Highlighting the connection between tourism and the development of the area*

The main objective of this paper is to highlight the fact that the Moieciu area is a true story of sustainable rural tourism development; therefore, we wanted to highlight how it is outlined, how this development is seen in the mind of the tourist (see Table 9).
Table 9. Highlighting the connection between tourism and the development of the area [in No and %, N = 858].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Measure</th>
<th>Unit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Existence of a link between the Development of Rural Tourism and the Degree of Development in Moieciu Area (a)</td>
<td>Concrete Pillars of Supporting Development Due to Tourism in Moieciu Area (b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes No Justification of Positive Answers</td>
<td>Sustainability of the Local Economy (1) Increasing the Attractiveness of the Area for Young People (2) Improving the Local Standard of Living by Identifying a New niche That Provides Value to the Rural Area (3) Achieving Personal Goals (Own Business, Employability, etc.) (4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. 614 244</td>
<td>195 233 187 132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% 71.56 28.43</td>
<td>22.72 27.15 21.79 15.38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In a first stage, the tourists were asked if there is a link between the development of rural tourism and the degree of development in the Moieciu area, by either positive or negative answer, in case of a positive answer, its justification is requested. For concrete pillars: X-squared = 27.87, df = 3, p-value = 3.867 × 10⁻⁶. The value of p is less than 0.05, so there are statistically significant differences between values. From the total valid answers, a percentage of 71.56% of the respondents considered that the rural tourism activity contributed to the development of the research area, based on this answer being justifications such as: The growing flow of young people/adults in the area, Local production began to be capitalized on by tourist activities, Improved quality of life. However, there is also a percentage of 28.43% who do not see this link between the development of rural tourism activity and the development of the area.

In a second phase, was wanted the concrete mention of the development directions supported/appeared following the development of the rural tourism activity. In this regard, the tourists chose a single item from a series of items, which in their vision contributed to the local development of the researched area. Sustainability of the local economy (1) was the chosen item by 22.72%, Increasing the attractiveness of the area for young people (2) was chosen by 27.15%, Improving the local standard of living by identifying a new niche that provides value to the rural environment (3) was chosen by 21.79%, and achieving personal goals (own business, employability, etc.) (4) was chosen by 15.38%.

Pointing some measures needed to be taken to support the future sustainable development of tourism activity.

Tourists are also the ones, who, come up with concrete proposals, so that the rural area under analysis is more visible, therefore more capitalized from a tourist point of view, emphasizing the specific local values, the gastronomic elements, the architecture of the place, which they want inserted in the rural tourist product, but also on a better knowledge of these values, why not through the prism of modern means of promotion.

Through this question the tourists were asked to come up with 3 actions/measures as the most important ones that, as possible/future owners of rural guesthouse would take to attract tourists. The question has no answer, leaving a free answer to the respondents. Each of the interviewees had one or more answers. The answers to this ques-
tion were oriented towards: great emphasis on a series of more attractive tourist programs, with an emphasis on country life; improving the tourist product; improvement or addition of leisure facilities; an accentuated promotion activity; the need for authorities support (see Figure 5).

![Figure 5. Pointing representative measures taken to attract tourists in the area [in %, N = 858].](image)

5. Discussion and Recommendation

There are fewer rural settlements offering unique products on the market, Moeciu being one of these areas. Maintaining a brand image of the tourist service requires the existence of an optimal ratio between the nature of the offer, the quality of services and the perceived price. However, the rural area offers a lot of profitable tourist elements: guesthouses, campsites and accommodation in farms can support a wide range of activities such as rural, cultural tourism, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, winter sports, cycling tourism. In the future local rural area, with all his positive or negative aspects, must be seen as an opportunity. Our following recommendations for the area, are:

1. One of the important measures to support the rural tourist activity is the development of an info tourism center with an adequate database regarding the rural tourist offer in the studied area, information on access areas, accommodation facilities, promotional materials, calendar of events and other services. The creation of such a center can be a sustainable action for the development in time of this activity and of the area (see Figure 6), both for the owners of rural tourist structures and for tourists, ensuring:
   - Good coordination of the activity, especially during the peak season by creating this possibility of technical assistance;
   - The existence of real, concrete information about the opportunities and possibilities of the area, possible to use for the creation of a tourist product “brand of the area”;
   - The possibility of ensuring a timid start of public-private partnership between rural entrepreneurs, local authorities and why not tourists in the analyzed area, with sewerage on the tourist field and not only;
   - The possibility of carrying out concrete information campaigns, but also of promoting the specific rural offer of the area, being the interface between local entrepreneurs and tourists.
2. Based on the study carried out, it can be said that it is necessary to modernize and relaunch tourist offers with European and traditional attraction, through which the local economy would benefit, attracting primarily a large number of domestic consumers. At the same time, through an appropriate promotional policy, the analyzed rural area can become a renowned rural destination. In order to bring and at the same time support the development of the area, the focus is on some more attractive tourism products, which will increase the interest and appreciation of tourists for the Moieciu area, and in time create many benefits (see Table 10).

3. In order to ensure a sustainable development of rural tourism, it is necessary to calculate the optimal capacities for the provision of tourist services, to exclude unjustified extensions, which may negatively modify rural areas.

4. For the competitive confrontation with other foreign rural tourist products, the prices of the Romanian rural tourist services must be acceptable, and the providers of tourist services in certain cases to be subsidized.
### Table 10. New sustainable rural tourism product “Moieciu brand” proposals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- For the accommodation part, more traditional elements;</td>
<td>- Accommodation in: tourist villas, bungalows, holiday villages, tourism or agritourism guesthouses which reflect local character-Magura Village with constructions of wood. The old shepherds’ settlements offer a unique view of the Piatra Craiului ridge and the Bucegi massif. It is the first tourist village from Romania after all.</td>
<td>- preservation and elimination of the loss of ancient crafts - attracting the interest of the locals in supporting and involving in activities carried out - creating new jobs and stopping rural-urban migration - possibility of obtaining secondary income either from involvement in tourism activities or from involvement in related activities capitalized by tourism - the revival of the interest for the agricultural activities, as possible income generators - preservation of homes, ancestral way of life, traditions and ensuring their continuity, so sustainability over time - possibility to diversify the local economy and to stimulate the idea of partnership - valorization of local resources</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- In the case of the food element, it is desired to include other products specific to the place, from the local production;</td>
<td>- Food with a particular accent on products produced by local sheepfolds</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- In the case of leisure, tourists are expected to find the way of life of the inhabitants (introduction in the tourist product of the traditions, of the specifics of the life in the country) besides the activities related to nature.</td>
<td>- Leisure focus on: - returning to nature and active relaxation through: trips on the surrounding routes and in winter walk with the “sledge” - participation in the “day by day” life of the rural community and at some of the oldest Romanian traditions referring to “agricultural agreement” regarding the land, the customs related to shepherding - learning about folk costumes, weaving, wool weaving and the art of fur in Simon village and about some crafts: decorating Easter eggs, masks and dolls, icons on glass - visiting Bran Castle, for the ones attracted by the famous legend of Dracula, to see and learning about historical values and Romanian monarchy of the area and peasant households and technical installations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: own proposals of the authors based on the conclusion of the research.

### 6. Conclusions

The aim proposed by us in this study was to bring in light Moieciu area, an area with a real story of sustainable rural tourism development, and we wanted to highlight this goal in terms of tourists’ opinions. As a paradox or as an irony of fate, the villages of Moieciu commune, such as all the villages of Bran area, flourished during the communist...
dictatorship because agriculture could not be cooperated here, and in time it became an area with a very large tourist potential, which is suitable for capitalizing on all forms of tourism. In the last 10 years there is a doubling of the number of accommodation structures in Moieciu area, rural tourism guesthouses represent the largest share from the total accommodation structures, having the most significant increase along years. Tourists arriving in these lands are very excited to learn about country life in a Romanian mountain village, to find simplicity, being attracted by the famous legend of Dracula (especially foreigners). From the participants in the study undertaken by us, 74.24% of the tourists arriving in the studied area have as average the urban environment, in proportion of 45.68% being included in the age category of 31–50 years, and 56.75% have a level of monthly income located between 0–5000 lei/month. All these aspects underline the fact that the tourist who arrives here has a certain “tourist culture” and could find here original elements.

The favorability of the area for tourist activities comes also from the answers of 86.59% of those surveyed, at the base on this favorability being gastronomic products in proportion of 21.56%, landscape and natural resources in the vision of 18.53% of respondents, peace and the possibility of distancing according to opinion of 17.60% of the participants in our study, but also the specific traditions/customs/crafts in the vision of 15.03% of the respondents.

Analyzing the satisfaction degree and expectations of the tourist by elements of the tourist product shows that 63.51% of the answers received from tourists reveal the high degree of satisfaction when we discuss about the accommodation element from Moieciu area, 77.15% have only words of praise for the feeding part. 52.56% of those who participated in the study sanctioned the leisure element of the tourist product specific to the area, being poorly satisfied with the current possibilities, wanting to find more of the specific rural way of life.

Currently, 54.66% of respondents consider that the area is capitalized through rural tourism activities at an average level, 44.87% of respondents stating that specific rural elements are present in the purchased tourism product, but in a small proportion. Tourists are also the ones who come up with concrete proposals, so that the rural area subject to analysis is more visible, among the proposals or actions listed by them being: more attractive tourist programs, with emphasis on farm life, adding leisure facilities, an activity increased promotion, and support from the authorities.

Tourists noticed in proportion of 71.56% the connection between tourism and the development of Moieciu area, the items they identified as a consequence of this development being: Sustainability of the local economy (1)—22.72%; Increasing the attractiveness of the area for young people (2)—27.15%; Improving the local standard of living by identifying a new niche that provides value to the rural area (3)—21.79%; Achieving personal goals (own business, employability, etc.) (4)—15.38, the direct benefits identified being: The growing flow of young people/adults in the area; Local production began to be capitalized on by tourist activities; Improved quality of life.

The fact that the area chosen for the study is one of the oldest regions in the country, in terms of the official establishment and development of rural tourism activity, is an aspect already certified, and that Moieciu area represents a real story of sustainable rural tourism development confirm the current degree of tourist development, the evolution of rural tourism structures in growth, but also the number of tourists who come here annually or the analysis from the tourist’s perspective. In order to be a future basis for sustaining this tourist region the tourist activity should take into account:

− some tourist objectives rehabilitation and “bringing to light” the traditions and traditional crafts, inestimable treasures, for the area, but also for the tourist activity itself;
− promoting the rural tourism structure as a form of carrying out the tourist activity in close connection with the offer of local products and services.
Obviously, the consequences can be quantified over time, but we say that they will be beneficial, and at the same time sustainable for all the inhabitants of this area, the study contributing to the identification of the favorable for rural tourism of the area, and very important to identify the opinions of tourists, as a starting point for future directions of development of the rural tourism field, proposals made also by us too and previously mentioned [65,66].

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