

**MONEASA TOWN, BETWEEN BALNEARY AND
RURAL TOURISM**

**LOCALITATEA MONEASA INTRE TURISM BALNEAR SI
TURISM RURAL**

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***Abstract:**The balneary tourism is one of the few forms of tourist which largely capitalize the technical progress both at the modern medical equipments level, as a priority for developing this tourism form, and at the level of other equipments categories (accommodation, food, recreation). The development of balneary and recreation tourism can lead to sustainable economic development of general-interest stations, but also of the rural areas which possess balneary factors, due to the multiplier effect of this activity. In order to revitalize and modernize the balneary and rural tourist product, the authors should consider attracting new population segments, given that, new elements in the balneary cure, new types of cures responding to the requirements that take into account the balneary "fashion" at a time and new selling techniques and methods of balneary product, of purchasing it, are introduced.*

***Key words:** balneotherapy, rural, strategic objectives, tourist, Moneasa*

INTRODUCTION

Romanian rural tourist product, similar to existing rural tourist products on global tourism market, includes basic components (food, accommodation, transport, etc.) and auxiliary components (balneotherapy, entertainment, sports activities, etc.). Basic services are designed to satisfy daily needs, which, with few exceptions, related to regional, national, traditional specific, don't entirely justify the need for traveling or leaving residence by the tourist. The balneary and tourist activity development must be also supported by local community

because they would have a favorable effect on community and on the region's overall.

Tourism planning of the area must be done so that the space should be as attractive as possible, but, at the same time, to be kept the traditions, customs and specifics for each area. The balneary and tourist infrastructure includes all material resources that tourism uses to achieve economic and social functions. Within its framework, it can be included the accommodation and food capacities, recreational facilities, network services, communication ways, electricity and heat network, water, sewerage, postal, banking and medical services etc. The infrastructure must create all conditions to maximize the tourist fund and satisfy demand.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The authors of this paper have completed two phases. In the first phase, it has been required a theoretical and bibliographical documentation concerning the balneary tourism, history of Moneasa town and rural tourism. It has been defined the issue and formulation of the main hypotheses in order to constitute an explanatory and convincing model, inducing the importance and activity of the researched subject. The final phase has been drawn up and completed by the collected information. The drafting of this paper was made in laboratory, based on the notes from the ground, the existing material and consulted bibliography.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Moneasa town is situated in the northeastern side of Arad County, in a depression valley at the foothill of Codru-Moma Mountain, at an altitude of 280-290 m. Strongly ionized air in Moneasa with mineral water bath helps to treat rheumatic, gynecological and nutrition diseases (diabetes, obesity).

Certainly, in addition to pool baths, there is the possibility of kinetotherapy, electrical therapy, physical therapy and medical gymnastics.

Thermal waters from Moneasa are karstic waters which arise from

carbonate (calcareous) deposits of Finis homoclin near the contact with impermeable deposits of canvas Moma. They belong to the category of hypothermic (20-37 °C) and subthermal (10-20 °C) water.

The success of balneary product depends on the efforts directed towards the promotion and its distribution at national and, especially, international level. To this regard, it is necessary to involve the central authorities, which must coordinate, in a unitary vision, the measures to popularize, externally, the agrotourist demand, should intensify the activities to participate at fairs, and specialized exhibitions, contact the major tourism intermediaries, should attract their interest for this special tourism form, reflected in a generous offer, which sketch a specific profile, to help the integration within the European space, by removing human borders and communication barriers.

The institutional skills on implementation of measures and projects within the scope of intervention concerning the health tourism are:

Table 1.

The main competent institutions

CCIAA	Chamber of Commerce, Industry and Agriculture in Arad
	Private sector
M Turism	Ministry of Tourism
APL	Local Public Administration

Table 2.

The codes and measures that should be undertaken

Code	Measure
M 5.1.1	Rehabilitation, expansion and modernization of the station
M 5.1.2	Stimulation of investment, which exploit the natural resources with therapeutic value
M 5.1.3	Development of specific facilities for preventive wellness treatment
M 5.1.4	Development of entertainment facilities
M 5.1.5	Promotion and tourist information about balneary potential of Timis County

A combination of balneary and rural tourism can be achieved in few stages as follows:

A first phase would be the selection of the area apt for balneary tourism development in Moneasa, on the basis of which will be several criteria such as: natural, cultural and anthropogenic attractions; mentality of residents towards tourist phenomenon; geographical location to urban centers potentially issuing; balneary tourism infrastructure in area; appearance of tourist traffic intensity; offers of leisure activities (tourist routes, hunting, fishing, sports). During this phase, it is aimed to the establishment of balneary tourist development strategy and creation of tourism development plans and projects that must be followed. The weak point of rural tourist activities is represented by poor infrastructure. However, it is an essential point that provides the possibility or impossibility of tourist activities practice.

We consider that, after achieving this aim, several elements groups for infrastructure (communication ways; technical equipment of towns and housing, infrastructure for education, health and culture) would benefit. We are aware that the achievement of this objective is not just easy and requires significant financial resources.

The second phase would be the extension of balneary and tourist activity from an isolated phase to a phase of development and transformation into an economic component of life for Moneasa area. It is the most difficult phase which, in addition to the detection of entrepreneurs willing to practice this activity, involves their training and the classification of tourist capacities in typology of comfort classes specific to European markets.

Achieving this aim involves in the future the insurance of treatment and accommodation dignified conditions. Main elements include: modernization of accommodation and food structures; modernization of treatment bases not only to restore a balneary tourist treatment in the normal operating parameters, but especially in order to allow the attraction of new market segments, Romanian and foreign, with high incomes, leading to the efficiency of economic activity.

The 3rd phase, the last one, provides a well implemented tourist activity which means both the creation of organizational local structures such the travel agency, able to facilitate the relations between host and

guests, to perform scheduling services for holiday and to provide organized recreational activities, and the cooperation with other European institutions.

The implementation of this objective implies a harmonious combination of accommodation elements with food, leisure and treatment elements specific to Moneasa so that it can be achieved a product competitive with any other balneary product on national or international side. By achieving the aim, some beneficial aspects may arise: creating or maintaining a tidy aspect of the area, protecting and using lifestyles specific to the area; creating jobs; developing the other economic branches; attracting young people into this area; acquisition of entrepreneurial thinking by people in the area.

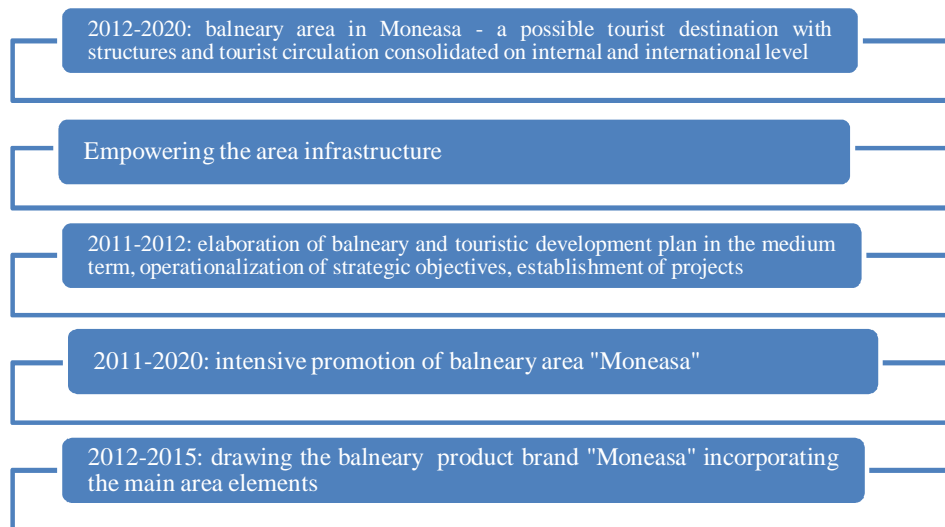


Fig. 1. Staging of the general objectives for balneary tourism development plan in Moneasa

Agrotourist demand analysis as the basic component of balneary and tourist market must show the role played by consumers in development possibilities of this type of product. The competition analysis involves collecting and analyzing as many information as possible from the areas where there is a competitive potential. This step, which requires detailed knowledge of balneary and tourist

products in territory, aims to answer to the following questions: what are the main competitive areas? What products are on the market? What are the strengths and weaknesses? And how the collected information eliminating the competition can be used effectively?

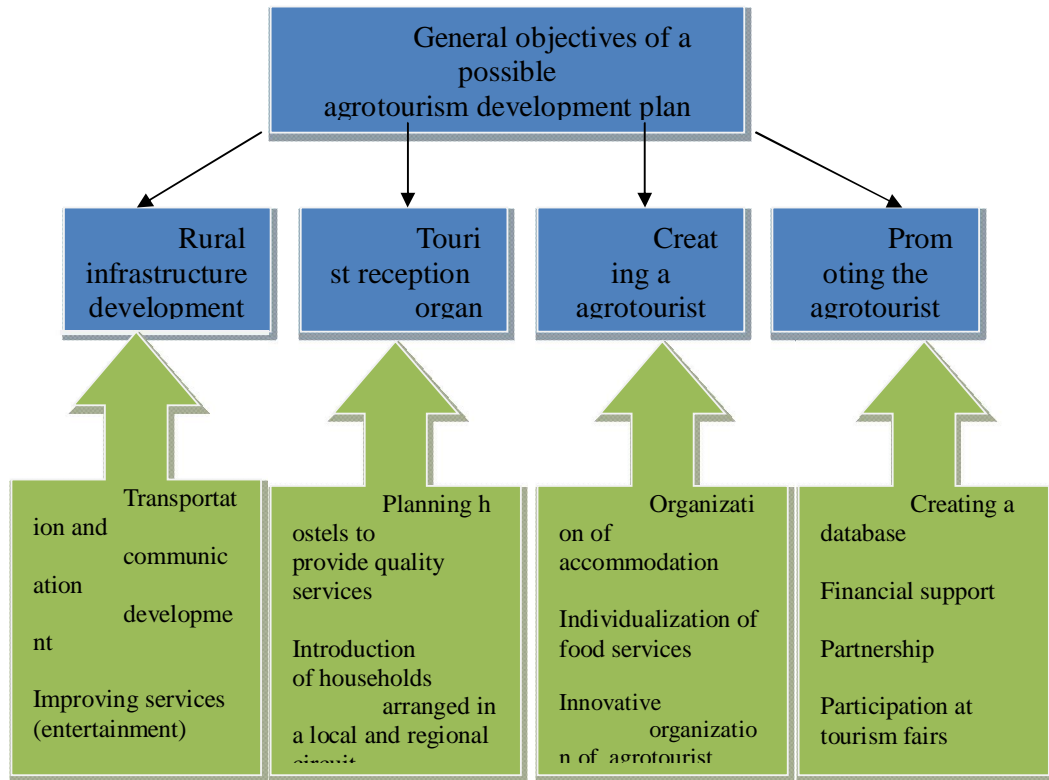


Fig. 2. General objectives of a possible agrotourism development plan in Moneasa

There are two types of components for rural tourism product: primary or basic, including housing, food and transport and secondary or auxiliary: receipt, mutual discovery, animation, sports activities, entertainment.

The accommodation in Moneasa town isn't problematic, having many

tourist reception structures. A real problem is the comfort degree of some structures. For Food, we propose, primarily, modernization of these structures, in order to coincide with international standards. Secondly, we recommend the preservation of gastronomic elements specific to region.

Regarding the entertainment, in addition to the creation of recreational opportunities inside accommodation structures such as gym, fitness, swimming pool, etc., we propose to develop outdoor or in nature recreational possibilities, due to its environmental character, being increasingly required.

The main motivation for this tourism form is represented by the treatment, so, we consider that we must take into account the exploitation of thermal waters by arranging or improving the existing facilities

CONCLUSIONS

The balneary tourist product in Moneasa hasn't commercial power if it doesn't satisfy at least one of the following requirements: brand image, best quality-price ratio, uniqueness on the market, ensuring a wide variety of tourism elements.

It is certain that balneal tourism can be a lever for local development in Moneasa area. However, tourism is not a universal "cure" for all development problems.

In order to have a high value for balneary and tourist offer, it is necessary that the economic value of adjacent activities remains at a high level. This principle doesn't concerns only the attractiveness of exerted rural environment, but also the specific activities.

An important emphasis should be placed on the renovation and modernization of accommodation; treatment and nutrition in order to bring at international standards.

Main strategic objectives for balneary and rural tourism development are: the renovation, modernization and reclassification (3, 4 stars) of all existing accommodation units, treatment base modernization, provision of new services: wellness, beauty salons, events, organization, conferences, use of the term "health" instead of "medical".

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