

MONOGRAPHIC STUDY REGARDING THE NATURAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL POTENTIAL OF MANASTIREA CASIN COMMUNE IN ORDER TO PROMOTE RURAL TOURISM AND AGRITOURISM

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Allover Romania there are geographical zones with high tourist potential which, from various reasons are, not promoted. One of these zones is also the one where Mănăstirea Cașin commune is situated.

The Manastirea Cașin commune is situated at the border of the three Romanian provinces: Moldavia, Walachia and Transylvania, in the southern part of the Eastern Carpathians.

In this study we want to make a full presentation of the territory of Mănăstirea Cașin commune for the natural, economic and social potential, using both a set of specific indicators for the characterization of the rural area, and certain monographic elements obtained through direct investigation.

Mănăstirea Cașin commune belongs to the mountainous zone of Cașin river, being situated in a breath-taking landscape. It has several natural monuments, historical vestiges, as well as religious objectives of which we can notice the former Cașin Monastery built by Gheorghe Ștefan in the 17th century. The richness of the folkloric and ethnographic elements makes this place a future attraction for tourists. The paper suggests some strategic elements meant to turn to good account the patrimony of the commune.

Key words: rural area, mountainous zone, tourist potential, rural development, ethnography.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

For the study there was used modern methodology used in the European Union and involving characterization countryside based on a set of 48 statistical indicators, structured within the 7 criteria: physic-geographical, demographic, economic, habitable, equipment technique, environmental and social. In addition, in case of some aspects with monographic character there has been made a description of some aspects that could not be included in figures, based on a direct documentation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. General aspects

Mănăstirea Cașinului commune is located in mountain area of river basin area of Casin. It is next to with Câmpurile and Soveja villages belonging to Vrancea county in the south.

The west neighbours communes are Bretcu (Covasna county), and Bogdanesti Oituz (Bacau county) and in the north, Casin commune.

The total area of the commune is of 243.7 km². It includes on its territory 4 villages: Mănăstirea Cașin, Pârvulești, Lupești and Scutaru. Of them the largest is Mănăstirea Cașin with 3940 inhabitants.

The commune originated with establishment of the monastery and the lordly residence by Gheorghe Stefan-ruler of Moldova,

2. Hydrographic potential

On the territory of this commune, at the place is called Fundu Casinului (1275 m altitude) there springs the river that gave the name to the entire valley. Due to torrential rains, sometimes, it increases its bed .

The high altitude of the river is one from the string until its confluence with Tulburea rivulet. Its affluents are Zboina, Buciesul, Marmora, Calasaul, Pietroasa, Gheoina, Prisaca, Paraul dulce and Saratelul.

3. Climate

Mănăstirea Cașin is surrounded by mountains (Oituz and Vrancea) and it has a climate which is characterized by relatively cool summers and mild winters, without strong winds.

The maximum of temperatures are in summer of 30 35 °C, and in winter -10. The cloudiness is between the limits of 100-150 days.

The rains have irregular character, having limits ranging from 600 to 750 mm annually.

4. Soils

The soils of the commune present a wide diversity due to generic terms of development.

In the upper part of the Casin river there predominate the brown and acidic soils because forest of conifers.

In the median area the soils are reddish-yellowish and acidic-reddish and across the Casin river the soils are of calcareous type.

Overall, all soils have a degree of middle fertility or even lower, some less pretentious crops being cultivated (forage, grain maize).

In *table 1* we present the characterization indicators of the countryside of Mănăstirea Cașin commune.

The characterization indicators of the countryside of Mănăstirea Cașin commune.

Tabelul 1

Study diagnosis on the indicators of characterization of Mănăstirea Cașin commune

Nr. crt.	Criterion	Sub-criterion	Indicators	Size
8.	Physical-geographical	1. Forms of relief	1.1.1. Main forms of relief	Mountainous zone
		2. Natural protected zones	1.2.1. Main categories of protected zones	zone protected for game and fish (till Scutaru)
		3. Factors of natural risk	1.3.1. Weight of zones with factors of natural risk	30% risk of floods, fire risk; earthquake risk
9.	Demographic	1. Population number	2.1.1. Number of inhabitants	5550
		2. Population density	2.2.1. Inhabitants/km ²	22,8
		3. Population evolution	2.3.1. Population evolution	Decreasing
		4. Factors of population increase	2.4.1. Average rate of births	9,1
			2.4.2. Average rate of deaths	14,8
			2.4.3. average rate of migration	5,0%
		5. Demographic aging	2.5.1. Index of population aging (>60 years/0-14 years)	1,40
10.		1. Agricultural potential	3.1.1. Structure of land fond	Arable-22,2% Meadows -18,7% Grazing lands-58,6% Vines+orchards-0,5%
			3.1.2. Structure of cultures on arable land	Forage-50,9% Maize-40,8%
			3.1.3. Arable land/inhabitant	0,51 ha
			3.1.4. Animal density at 100 ha	46,3 UVM/100 ha
		2. Forest potential	3.2.1. Forest area per inhabitant	3,78 ha
		3. Tourist potential	3.3.1. Number of adequate households for rural tourism	3%
		4. Industrial potential	3.4.1. Degree of complexity of industrial activities	One unit of wood processing
			3.4.2. Agricultural products processing	-
			3.4.3. Number of enterprises at 1000 inhabitants	0,2
		5. Potential of agricultural exploitation	3.5.1. Average area of exploitation types	EI-1,4 ha
			3.5.2. Degree of association in land exploitation	-

			3.5.3. Degree of integration of agricultural activities	-
			3.5.4. Average productions	Maize – 3,1 t/ha Potatoes – 20,0 t/ha Vegetables – 11,4 t/ha Forage – 15 t/ha
			3.5.5. Capital per hectare(degree of technical equipment)	14 tractors 10 ploughs 14 trailers
		6. Property structures	3.6.1. Weight of private agricultural areas of the total area	98%
		7. Degree of occupied population	3.7.1. Active occupied population 1000 inhabitants	478
			3.7.2. Population active in agriculture /1000 inhabitants	15/100 ha
		8. Diversification of economic activity	3.8.1. Weight of active non-agricultural population of the total active population	20%
11.	Habitation	1. Inhabitable area	4.1.1. Inhabitable are per inhabitant	12,0
		2. Construction materials	4.2.1. Weight of residences made from durable materials	80%
		3. Age of buildings	4.3.1. Weight of buildings which have less than 25-30 years	50%
		4. New residences	4.4.1. Weight of buildings which have less than 5 years	5%
		5. Equipping the residences with water installations	4.5.1. Weight of residences with inside water installations	10%
12.	Technical equipment of the locality	1. Water alimentation	5.1.1. Drinkable water distributed to the consumers mc/inh./year	Private wells
		2. Energy equipment	5.2.1. Degree of electrification of households	100%
		3. Natural gases equipment	5.3.1. Gas connected households- %	-
		4. Connection of telephone	5.4.1. Connection degree of residences to telephone network	100%
		5. Access to transport means	5.5.1. Access to road and railway network	80%
13.	Social	1. Heath	6.1.1. Inhabitants /physician	2800
		2. Education	6.2.1. Nr. students/teacher	13,5
		3. Communication	6.3.1. Nr. season tickets TV/1000 inh.	80
		4. infantile death	6.4.1. Rate of infantile death	-
14.	Ecology	1. Water	7.1.1. Air quality (frequency of exceeding the maximum admitted limits (LMA) of polluting substances	-

	2. Air	7.2.1. Water quality(frequency of exceeding LMA)	-
	3. Soil	7.3.1. Soils affected by factors of quality delimitation	-
	4. Forests	7.4.1. Weight of affected forests by phenomena of drying and deforesting on total forest area	-

5. Demographic aspects

The total number of village residents is 5550, with a density of 22.8 inhabitants in km². The reduced density is explained by the mountainous character of the relief, and by weak economic development of the zone.

The evolution of the population has the tendency to decrease as the birth rate is only 9.1%, while the death rate is of 14.8% at 1000 inhabitants. We mention also that the rate of migration is of 5%.

Of the other demographic factors we mention the aging one, with a level of 1.40 and the labour force renewal of 1.05.

The active population is of 478 at 1000 inhabitants.

6. Agriculture

The territory of the commune with a character range, the share natural areas have meadows (76%, arable land representing only 22.2% of surface. Orchards occupy an unimportant area, under 1% with a significant number of trees few, and numerous pergolas of hybrid vines.

In the animal husbandry, their density is 46.3 uvm to 100 ha upper basin Casin area, but lower potential area. The centuries ago, the area was famous for raising sheep. Today, this occupation nearly disappeared for economic reasons, wool prices fell.

Agriculture is poorly organized with a crushing excessive owners, the average holding being 1.4%. The lack of associative structures, for processing and marketing agricultural products, determine a weak economic efficiency in agriculture, the effects on young people from common stability.

7. Infrastructure

As regards real estate infrastructure, it is represented by upgraded houses, of which 80% are made of sustainable materials. About 50% of them have more than 25 years.

There is a weak supply running water (10% dwellings) lacks centralized sewerage system, and the network of natural gas. All dwellings are electrified and have access to telephone networks (or mobile).

Regarding the educational institutions and health exist infrastructure necessary to ensure their operation, with a certain lack of medical staff in order to achieve an appropriate health care.

8. Ethnography

From the ethnographic point of view the commune is distinguished by crafts as woodworking, wool, hides.

The popular costume is specific to the Moldavian area, with some original elements which are related to the garnishing of shirts (women and men) and the proof the women, in form horizontal, predominantly black, cherry and brown. women aged wore fota black.

The necklaces were composed of “galbeni” and “irmilici” were offered at wedding.

9. Art and architecture monuments

Of the monuments of this type, the most important is "Manastirea Cașin" (1653-1658), built by the former ruler Gheorghe Stefan. It was for Athos Mountain, and in 1864 secularized, becoming the village church. All the precincts are ruins of the lordly palace and Heroes' Monument from the First World War. Other Church monuments are Harancelu Bucies church, "Cuvioasa Parascheva" church in Lupesti village cemetery and monument with the nation's heroes (1916-1919).

10. SWOT Analysis

The study was conducted by SWOT and analysis were advantages which have been weak and existing commune level.

The data are presented in *Table 2*.

Table 2

SWOT Analysis of Mănăstirea Cașin commune	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presence of Mănăstirea Cașin – historical monument of over 300 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the road that crosses the commune is closed, not existing connections with Țara Bârsei or Țara Vrancei
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The commune belongs to the mountainous zone with breath-taking landscapes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The identification of the drop process of the population because of the migration and negative indicators regarding birth and death
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild climate with fine winters and cool summers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of enterprises for forest and agricultural products processing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of the environment is very good 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The existence of an aging process of the labour force
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no industrial polluting factors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A weak preoccupation for tourist promotion of the area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the human factor is characterized by hospitality and love for everything that is beautiful 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of interest for turning to good account the Mănăstirii Cașin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Households with traditional architecture 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presence of some natural tourist objectives: Bucieș and Săltătoarea falls, forested mountainous peaks 	

• Hero monuments from the First World War	
• Enclosed area trout raising	
• the existence of traditions regarding sheep raising and wood craft	
• the existence of a county modernized road	
• The presence of a hunting house (Casa de Vânătoare de la Întărcătoarea)	

Opportunities	Risks
• Better turning to account of Mănăstirii Cașin, as high historic, architectural and religious importance	• Depopulation of the zone because of youth migration and low birth rate
• Attraction of internal and European financial means for setting up tourist pensions with ecological character, both in the locality and near Mănăstirea Cașin	• The existence of some zones predisposed to natural disasters (land falls, floods because of uncontrolled deforestation)
• Better turning to account of the mountainous forest, terrestrial and water fauna	• Insufficiency of funds for environmental protection
• Modernization of roads to Țara Bârsei and Oituz valley in order to facilitate tourist access	• Request for tourist services is smaller than the offer
• Increase of some micro-enterprises to get ecological products	

There are numerous "strengths" which refers to location in a picturesque area of great beauty, this a historical monument (Casin Monastery) important are also the special quality of environment, mild, many ethnographic elements, traditions in the processing of agricultural products.

Of the weak points, more important are those that relate to the fact that the road which passes through common's "close" character, the locality being isolated, and that there is a process of "aging" of human resources.

It also said weak growth and absent a program to promote tourist area.

We consider that a strategic programmer, the assembly, which would aim at both aspects of economy, as well as those for social development, in which the focus should be positioned on promoting tourism, common Casin Monastery may have development prospects in the future.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Mănăstirea Cașin commune is located on the west of Bacau county in the mountain area belonging to basin area of Casin river.

2. The study undertaken has revealed the particularly high natural, economic and social potential, resulted in beauty space geographically, this numerous objective cultural and religious, many of the items ethnographic and folklore, quality environment.

3. The research has shown the need for the elaboration of a strategic programme of economic development, in particular through agro-tourism, aimed at ensuring an economic and social revival of the commune.

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