

## **TOURISM – A VIABLE ALTERNATIVE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL MOUNTAINOUS COMMUNITIES. CASE STUDY: EFTIMIE MURGU, CARAŞ-SEVERIN COUNTY, ROMANIA**

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**Abstract:** Tourism represents a viable alternative for the development of rural mountainous communities, because it can act as an integrating force, capable of revitalising other economic sectors through its multiplicative effect and help improve the populations' quality of life. The Eftimie Murgu commune benefits from generous and variate nature tourism potential and most important from a cultural heritage site: the Rudăria Watermill Complex which is the most significant complex of watermills in south-eastern Europe and is included in the UNESCO heritage list. This study aims to analyse the potential of the commune and the degree in which it is being valued. The objectives of the study included: evaluating the tourism potential with the help of analysis trees; analysing the community members and tourists' perceptions about the degree in which the potential of the area is being

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capitalised, and proposing recommendations on the better capitalisation of the local tourism potential. The research methodology consisted in: field observations, analysis trees, social surveys (semi-structured interview), and GIS mapping. The results emphasised an insufficient capitalisation of the local tourism potential proven by a weak accommodation offer and deficient access network in the area, a reduced promotion of local ethnic-folkloric traditions and brands, specific activities (like festivals) or crafts. The authors concluded that local authorities must be convinced tourism is a viable and valuable activity that can economically revitalise the area and generate additional income for the local population.

**Key words:** tourism potential, natural heritage, cultural heritage, capitalisation, promotion, Rudăria Watermill Complex, Eftimie Murgu, România.

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## INTRODUCTION

In the last few decades, tourism defined as “*a form of cultural-educational and recreational activity of the human society*” (Bojan, 2009) became an economic branch that is rapidly growing (Cheng et al., 2011; Önder et al., 2014; Cucculelli & Giffi, 2016). Many of the world’s regions rely on tourism to secure their development as it is the only viable alternative to the rest of economy’s activities (Glössing et al., 2017), while others see it as an activity of equal importance to various economic domains (Chindriș, 2014).

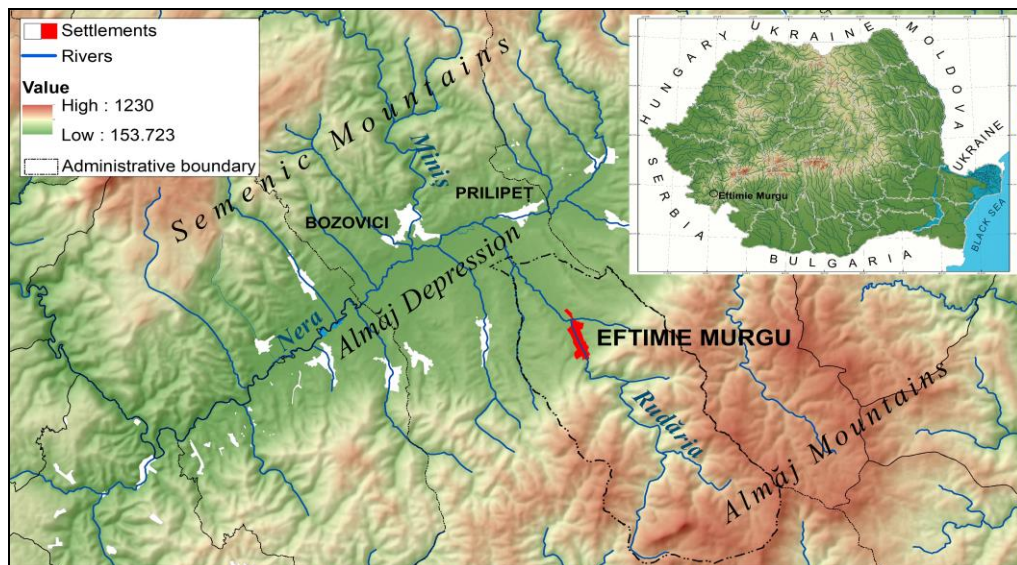
Romania, as many countries from Eastern Europe, made considerable efforts to develop its tourism since having to restructure its economy after 1989 (Matei et al., 2016). In the same time, Romania - the EU member country - had to respect the European norms of durable tourism which include: decreasing pressure on crowded destinations, stimulating new forms of tourism such as slow tourism (Conway & Timms, 2010) or soft tourism, adapting tourism management to new requirements and criteria, ensuring a balance between tourism activities and environmental protection, improving the quality of life of local communities, conserving traditions, and achieving tourists’ satisfaction (Matei, 2016). In this context, tourism is recognised as a viable alternative to the economic development of Romanian rural communities, especially mountainous ones, where it can act as an integrative force, create new jobs, and improve the inhabitants’ quality of life (Sharpley, 2000). Also, it can harmonise the other economic sectors through its multiplicative effect, or its different specialisations such as agro-tourism or ecotourism (Matei et al., 2014), and also reduce migration.

But tourism is not a panacea of rural development anywhere and anyhow (Matei & Caraba, 2010), it also needs potential resources such as heritage elements, or specific and general infrastructure (Ielenicz & Comănescu, 2006), marketing, and supportive policies (Stăncioiu, 2009). According to the World Tourism Organization as well as other organizations of the European Community, the tourism potential of mountainous regions is made out of an ensemble of natural, cultural, and socio-economic elements that can pique the interest of tourists thus creating visitors flows (Câdea et al., 2000; Ielenicz & Comănescu, 2009; Pop & Marin Pandelescu, 2009; Chindriș, 2014).

The purpose of the study lies in analysing the capitalisation of the tourism potential of the Eftimie Murgu commune. The objectives include: i). evaluating the tourism potential by using analysis trees; ii). analysing the community members and tourists’ perceptions about the degree in which the potential of the area is being capitalised; iii). outlining recommendations on how to better capitalise the local tourism potential.

## STUDY AREA

The Eftimie Murgu commune, known as Rudăria, was first documented in 1410 (Ghinea & Ghinea, 2000), and is located in south-western Romania in the Almăjului/Bozovici intra-mountainous depression, at the base of the Almăjului Mountain and it administratively belongs to Caraș-Severin County (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** The geographical position of the Eftimie Murgu commune (Source: Topographic map, scale of 1:50.000, Military Topographic Survey, 1989)

The study area pertains geologically to the Danubian Domain, as the Almăj unit is made out of metamorphic rocks and magmatic intrusions. The Quaternary deposits from the Holocene era are made out of sands and gravels, but they can be found only scarcely, respectively in the riverbed of the Rudăria creek (Săndulescu et al., 1978).

The relief is varied and develops into concentric steps in which the hydrographic network deepened. There are three distinctive relief depression increments: piedmont hills, terraces, and the floodplain which appear more often as you get closer to Almăjului Mountains. The stepped relief offers a large view from hills toward the depression and vice versa from the floodplain, but this variety, having as a masterpiece of the nature the Rudăriei Gorges, is an asset that raises the tourist attraction of the area, knowing that it refers to the scenic/aesthetic, scientific, cultural/historical and social/economical values (Pralong, 2005; Reynard et al., 2008). The climate of the area is temperate - continental with many sub-Mediterranean influences (Ianăș, 2011). The average annual temperature varies between 9°C and 10°C and with 700-800 mm of precipitation falling every year.

The hydrographic network develops around Rudăria, a tributary of the river Nera. It formed with the confluence of two smaller creeks Rudăria Mare and Rudăria Mică, each of them flowing from the southern mountainous area. Before entering Eftimie Murgu, the Rudăria creek forms a sector of narrow gorges dominated by steep and huge cliffs with two of them called Adam and Eve due to their anthropomorphic forms. The Rudăriei Gorges house the most massive watermill complex in south-eastern Europe included in the UNESCO heritage list (Popovici, 2013). Flora and fauna of the area are varied. Flora includes beech forests (*Fagus sylvatica*), but also a highly diversified mix of species that

contains: common hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*), Turkish oak (*Quercus cerris*), Hungarian oak (*Quercus frainetto*), lime tree (*Tilia sp.*), flowering ash (*Fraxinus ornus*), oriental hornbeam (*Carpinus Orientalis*), smoke tree (*Cotinus coggygria*) and lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*) and also meadows specific to rocky regions with *Poa nemoralis*, *Festuca valesiaca*, *Festuca rupicola*, *Alium flavum*, *Genista ovata* etc. (Arsene et al., 2015). Beyond the beauty of the landscape given by the mixed forest, the degree of forestation is 51,4% which enriches the touristic value of the commune.

The dominant soils are represented by haplic luvisols, and also eutric cambisols, luvic and albic stagnosols in the lower floodplain areas (Moca & Filipov, 2015). The soils make possible the cultivation of some plants that can partially support the local economy and, implicitly, the tourism business. According to the 2011 census, Eftimie Murgu's population rose to 1.628 inhabitants showing both a decrease in number compared to the previous census as well as a more ageing population. The primary economic activity of the inhabitants relates to livestock breeding (sheep and bovine), wood exploitation, and orchard tending (apple and plum trees) (Ianăș, 2011) despite the fact that holdings are made by more plots, resulting an agricultural fragmentation (Vijulie et al., 2012). Other notable activities include wood processing: carpentry, cooper, wheelwright's work, pallets producing, wooden moulding, as well as furrier's trade, tailoring, smithing, bricklaying, miller's trade, and bakery (Mayorality of Eftimie Murgu, 2017).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The *research methodology* consisted of field observations, analysis trees, social surveys (semi-structured interviews), and GIS mapping. The first step of the research was, of course, the documentation phase when the specialised literature was consulted. This step was followed by successive field visit between May and June of 2017 in order to identify and inventory the main tourism resources in the study area and to fill in observation charts. Based on field data from the observation charts the analysis tree method was used for the evaluation of the tourism resources available in Eftimie Murgu.

This method implied selecting the main criteria and sub-criteria according to which evaluating qualifications attributes were given for a total maximum of 100 points, starting from various tourism components: tourism resources - 50 points, specific tourism infrastructure - 20 points, and technical infrastructure - 30 points (Urban Proiect, 2007).

When appreciating the attractiveness factor of tourism resources, an equal score was given to elements pertaining to nature tourism potential as well as anthropic tourism potential with each of them being able to accumulate a maximum of 25 points (Urban Proiect, 2007). A series of natural resources were selected in order to *evaluate the nature potential* of the area, which included: its position on the relief steps, the existence of spectacular geomorphic elements (Ilieș, 2009), the forest vegetation, endangered species, fauna species of great hunting importance; other elements considered were hydrologic ones (lakes, mineral springs, waterfalls, and specific landscape) or natural protected areas (Table 1).

In order to *evaluate the anthropic potential*, the anthropic resources were classified into: museums and collections, art elements, and traditions (festivals, local holidays, and crafts), etc. The maximum score for this section is 25 points (Table 2). Additionally, this score can only be achieved if UNESCO monuments are present in the study area. The *evaluation of tourism specific infrastructure* required the analysis of the accommodation units which received scores depending on their distribution, according to the number of rooms per each accommodation structure, functioning accommodation capacity, and their room distribution based on comfort level. This section can receive a maximum of 20 points (Table 3).

The *evaluation of the technical infrastructure* can receive a maximum of 30 points. This analysis was based on multiple criteria: assessing the accessibility to administrative units by using the existing transport infrastructure, provision of public amenities by local authorities, and provision of communication services through the telecommunication networks (Table 4). During the field visits from June 2017 semi-structured interviews were conducted on a sample of thirty subjects, with half of them being tourists and the other half locals. The authors elaborated an interview guide when creating the semi-structured interviews in order to cover a more complete panel of aspects.

**Table 1.** Evaluating the nature tourism potential  
(Data source: According to Urban Project methodology, 2007)

Category	Score
Position on the relief steps	
Plain	1
Hills and Piedmont	2
Sub-Carpathians	3
Mountains	4
Seaside and Danube Delta	4
Geomorphology	
Gorges, steepes, karsts, vicinity to imposing natural units	1
Vegetation	
Forests covering more than 30% of the area	1
Fauna	
Species of great hunting importance	1
Hydrography	
Lakes, fisheries, mineral springs, waterfalls	1
Landscape	2
Natural landscape, flora, fauna	
Protected areas	5
	<b>25</b>

**Table 2.** Evaluating the anthropic tourism potential  
(Data source: According to Urban Project methodology, 2007)

Category	Score
Historical monuments of national interest (archeologic, architecture, memorial houses)	8
Museums and public collections	9
Popular art and traditions, crafts, holidays and rituals	8
Total	<b>25</b>

**Table 3.** Evaluating the tourism specific infrastructure  
(Data source: According to Urban Project methodology, 2007)

Category	Score
Accommodation units	7
Treatment facilities	5
Conference rooms, exhibitions centres	6
Sky slopes, cable transport installations	1
Other tourism installations (golf courses, water facilities, amusement parks, herds of horses) etc.	1
Total	<b>20</b>

The local population sample was selected using the "snow-ball" technique (sampling through identification) while trying to achieve a diverse representation in terms of level of education and economic profession and also respecting the age and gender structure of Eftimie Murgu's population. The local population sample included two representatives of local authorities, one guesthouse owner and twelve farmers, who are also employed in maintaining the watermills. Each of watermills is owned in an associative type enterprise by multiple families. Their interviews included questions meant to identify: the level of tourism investments in the area; the degree in which authorities are involved in the development of local tourism; the type of activities relating to the watermills they are managing that could be provided by them or locals in general and could increase the overall satisfaction of tourists; the difficulties they face when dealing with heritage value assets, etc. The interviews aimed to analyse the subjects' perception about the degree in which the locality's tourism potential is being capitalized.

The tourists' sample was selected randomly from the available visitors of the site. As for their interviews, the questions were meant to identify the reasons why they chose to visit this particular destination, what information methods they used to prepare themselves for this visit, their level of satisfaction with the tourism objectives they visited, their impressions on the local tourism infrastructure, etc. The interviews have been processed manually. The *limits of the study* stem from the low number of tourists interviewed which is directly correlated with the overall low number of tourists that reach Eftimie Murgu due to an insufficient accommodation network and generally reduced accessibility. GIS techniques, respectively Arcgis 10.3.1® based on Google Earth were used for spatializing well-bucket mills within the Rudăria Watermill Complex and the Topographic map, scale of 1:50.000, Military Topographic Survey, 1989 for the geographic location of the area.

**Table 4.** Evaluating the technical infrastructure  
(Data source: According to Urban Project methodology, 2007)

	Name	Maximum score		Score
Direct access to the main infrastructure network	Port	1	Yes No	1 0
	National / international airport	5	Yes No	5 0
	Access to European roads	5	Yes No	1 0
	Access to national roads or railways	5	Access to national roads and railways Access to national roads or railways Without access to main transport networks	1 0,5 0
Housing amenities		7	Centralized water supply system and sewerage waste system One of them None	5 2,5 0
		2	Natural gas supply network No	2 0
Electronic communications services		5	Mobile networks Internet One of them None	5 2,5 0
Total		<b>30</b>		

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Evaluating the tourism potential of Eftimie Murgu commune based on analysis trees

Analysis trees outlined a series of aspects useful for our study. The *nature tourism potential* of Eftimie Murgu is extremely valuable and rich in landscape variety, as it combines diverse relief forms (steeps as well as gorges), vegetation (forests and rocky meadows), hydrology (Rudăria creek), and high-interest fauna elements. Rudăriei Gorges are included in a nature reserve area since 1982 and is part of a Natura 200 Site (ROSCI0032) since 2007. The terrestrial habitats of local fauna include beech forests, secondary associations formed by Mediterranean shrubs (șibleac) usually located on the site of former oak forests, grasslands, rocky slopes and screes, as well as a pine tree (*Pinus sylvestris*) plantation. The aquatic habitats are related to the Rudăria creek and its tributaries. The main threats to the species living here and their habitats are uncontrolled logging, poaching, excessive grazing, infrastructure works, and water dams. Based on the evaluation of the nature tourism potential, the area received a score of 15 points (Table 5).

**Table 5.** Evaluating nature tourism potential in Eftimie Murgu (Data source: Observation chart, 2017)

Category	Score
Position on relief steps	4
Almăjului Mountains - Almăjului Depression	
Geomorphology	1
Rudăriei Gorges, steeps, relief developed on metamorphic rocks	
Vegetation	1
Forested areas occupy more than 30% of the study area, beech ( <i>Fagus sylvatica</i> ), common hornbeam ( <i>Carpinus betulus</i> ), turkey oak ( <i>Quercus cerris</i> ), Hungarian oak ( <i>Quercus frainetto</i> ), oriental hornbeam ( <i>Carpinus Orientalis</i> ), smoke tree ( <i>Cotinus coggygia</i> ), lilac ( <i>Syringa vulgaris</i> ), rocky meadows with <i>Poa nemoralis</i> , <i>Festuca valesiaca</i> , <i>Festuca rupicola</i> , <i>Alium flavum</i> , etc.	
Fauna	1
Wild cat ( <i>Felis Silvestri</i> ), lad turtle ( <i>Testudo hermani</i> ), horned viper ( <i>Vipera ammodytes</i> ) etc.	
Hydrography	1
Rudăria creek, waterfalls and dams in the Rudăriei valley	
Landscape	2
Natural landscape, varied fauna and flora	
Protected area	5
Rudăriei Gorges – nature reserve, Natura 2000 site	
Total	<b>15</b>

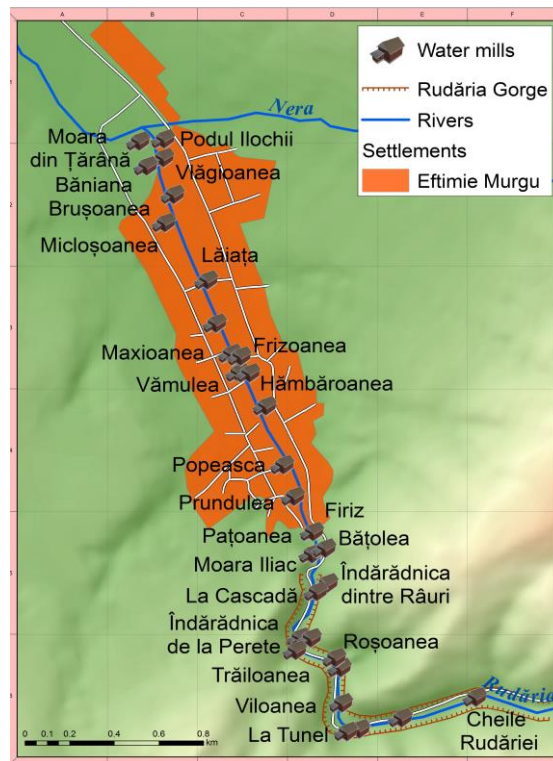
Another strong point of the study area is its *anthropic ethnic-folkloric heritage* which is highly diversified and very well preserved. Among the anthropic resources of the area the most important is the Rudăria Watermill Complex located along the Rudăriei Gorges Reserve; with others numbering the ethnographic museum, as well as the immaterial heritage of traditions and rituals specific to this Romanian village (e.g. the Lilac Festival, the “Lunea Cornilor” Festival that reproduces wedding rituals with the help of masks or “maimozi/corni”, the Milk Measuring festival - “Smâlzul”, or Negaia which is the local village festival that incorporates folk dances and other traditions).

Our analysis awarded 25 points for the anthropic tourism potential. This score was validated firstly by corroborating all the indicators calculated for the study area and secondly by the presence of a UNESCO monument, namely the Rudăria Watermill Complex, which is the only way a maximum score could have been achieved (Table 6).

The Rudăria Watermill Complex is located in the Eftimie Murgu commune, on Rudăriei valley and consists of 22 functional watermills (Figure 2), a unique site in the country and one which elevates the area even more in terms of tourism potential (Iancu & Turdean, 2001). The well-bucket watermills (horizontal wheel with radial cups) were built here in order to grind grains (Figure 3 a, b) using hydropower energy (Zagoni et al., 2013) and they were utilized in an associative type enterprise by families in the commune (“devălmășie”) called in the area “rândași” (with each mill still bearing a table with the grinding schedule for each family) (Iamandescu, 2005). They are still managed by the local population who pass along generations “*their turn at the mill*”.

**Table 6.** Evaluating the anthropic tourism potential of the Eftimie Murgu commune  
(Data source: Observation chart, 2017)

Category	Score
Historic monuments of national interest (archeologic, architecture, memorials)	8
Rudăria Watermill Complex (traditional techniques)	
Museums and public collections	9
The Eftimie Murgu village ethnographic museum	
Fold art and traditions, crafts, holidays and rituals	8
The Lilac Festival, the “Lunea Cornilor” Festival (reproduces wedding rituals with the help of masks or “maimozi/corni”), the Milk Measuring festival (“Smâlzul”), Negaia - folk dance festival	
<b>Total</b>	<b>25</b>



**Figure 2.** Location of Rudăria Watermill Complex (functional and non-functional watermills) (Source: Google Earth, 2017)



In terms of *tourism infrastructure*, the area offers very few accommodation units: the Casa Valea Morilor Pension, the La Moara din Grădină Guesthouse, as well as housing provided by locals in their own homes; the limited accommodation offer is one reason for reduced tourists flow. As a result, Eftimie Murgu functions more like a transit tourism destination. There are more accommodation units that could serve the study area, but most of them are located 25-30 km away from Eftimie Murgu. The score obtained for the evaluation of the tourism infrastructure was of 2 points (Table 7).



**Figure 3.** Watermill on Rudăria valley (a);  
Functioning mechanism of a watermill (watermill wheel - "ciutura") (b)

**Table 7.** Evaluating the tourism infrastructure in Eftimie Murgu  
(Data source: Observation chart, 2017)

Category	Score
Accommodation units - Casa Valea Morilor Pension, La Moara din Grădină Guesthouse	2
Treatment facilities	0
Conference halls, exhibition centres	0
Sky slopes, cable transport facilities	0
Other recreational facilities (golf courses, nautical recreational facilities, amusement parks, horse herds)	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>

**Table 8.** Evaluating the technical tourism infrastructure in Eftimie Murgu  
(Data source: Observation chart, 2017)

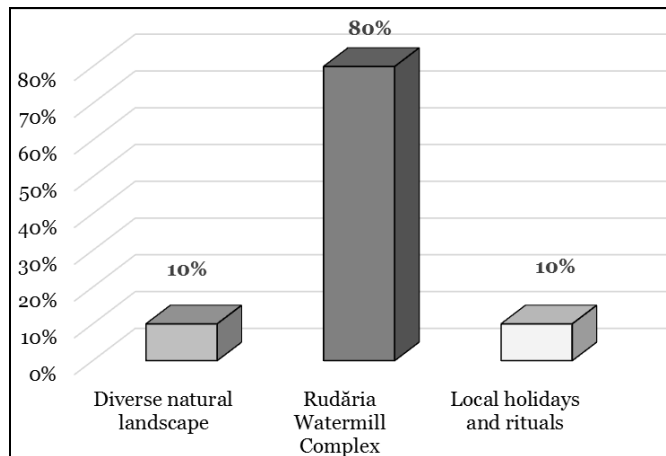
Name		Score
Access to national roads / railways	Access to DN 57B, DJ 571F	0,5
Access to amenities (centralized water supply system Access to a sewerage waste system)		2,5 0
Natural gas supply system		0
Communication services	TV, phone, internet	5
<b>Total</b>		<b>8</b>

When *evaluating the technical infrastructure*, the authors considered how accessible the commune is, the transport infrastructure, the quality of civil amenities

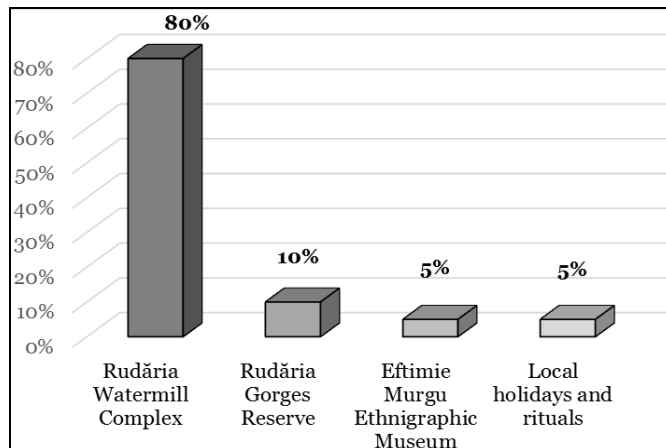
provided by local authorities, the housing infrastructure, and communication services provision (TV, phones, and internet). The main access routes for Eftimie Murgu are DN 6 (Caransebeş-Orşova), and DN 57B towards Oraviţa. Coming from Pripileţ tourists need to follow DJ 571F up to Eftimie Murgu and access the nature reserve itself along the Rudăriei Gorges on an asphalt road. Railway access is possible just as far as Oraviţa or Caransebeş. Amenities of the commune include a centralized water supply system, but no sewerage or natural gas supplies. Communication provisions were marked as “good”, and the technical infrastructure gathered a score of 8 points (Table 8).

### **Tourists and locals' perception about the capitalisation of local tourism potential**

The degree in which the commune's tourism potential is being capitalised was analysed both from the perspective of the local population as well as the tourists visiting Eftimie Murgu. The interviewed tourists declared overwhelmingly (80%) that they came to visit the Rudăria Watermill Complex (Figure 4).



**Figure 4.** Tourists' motivation in choosing Eftimie Murgu as their destination (Source: Information drawn from semi-structured interviews, 2017)



**Figure 5.** Tourists' satisfaction with the objectives they visited (Source: Information drawn from semi-structured interviews, 2017)

The main information source was the internet, with 80% of them searching the World Wide Web for guidance (either the city hall official page - <https://www.primariaeftimiemurgu.ro/prezentarea-comunei/>; <https://rudaria-turistica.ro/> or the official page of the Rudăriei Gorges Reserve - <http://www.cheilerudariei.ro/>, and others) and 20% being directed here by friends and family. The interviewed tourists declared they were fully satisfied with the attractions of the area (Rudăria Watermill Complex, Rudăriei Gorges Reserve, the ethnographic museum, local traditions, and rituals). When asked to provide a hierarchy of the attraction points in the area in terms of importance they placed the Rudăria Watermill Complex first as their main source of satisfaction stating the novelty and uniqueness of it (Figure 5), while being equally (100%) disappointed by the weak promotion of the nature and anthropic tourism potential of this commune.

Local authorities expressed their support for promoting tourism in the area and their wish of increasing tourist flows. As such, they consider that promoting the area in “*Banatul Montan*” (periodical printed tourism guide as well as on website) is a priority and a resource worth harnessing. Discussion with local authorities also brought forward the problems that they are currently facing and need solving: the inadequate roads network, lack of a centralized sewerage system, insufficient accommodation units, weak promotion of other interest points around the area (apart from the Rudăria Watermill Complex), etc. Locals declared in their interviews that they were unhappy (70%) with authorities’ initiatives in terms of tourism promotion. They also pointed out their own difficulties in ensuring the maintenance of heritage type sites and items, like the watermills. The mills were restored with the help of the Sibiu Astra Museum in 2001 through local effort and European funds after which the local population had to ensure the continuous function of the watermills by individual means. Meanwhile, the watermills deteriorated or were partially destroyed by floods (like for example the one of September 2014) and the locals repaired them having had to recourse to the elderly's knowledge on this matter.

The material used most frequently in mill construction is wood which easily deteriorates and as such requires continual replacement works. In order to increase their life span and for operational efficiency both the traditional gutter that directs water – which is usually made of alder wood –, as well as the watermill wheel, were replaced with metal parts. In spite of all difficulties they face managing the watermills; locals mentioned that a series of activities could bring added value to tourists’ experience. These include setting up organized visits to both the watermills on Rudăriei Valley (this would ensure a presentation of the traditional operating system) which is presently difficult to do as many of the mills are locked so tourists cannot enter, and to the small village museum (where one watermill is dismantled in all its components) which would help tourists better understand how they function. Another activity suggested by locals consists of grinding the grains in the presence of tourists (“*grinding our grains is a tradition that we still keep alive*”) and using the flour and other local products when preparing a traditional dinner, etc.

### **Recommendations on better capitalising the tourism potential of the study area**

Due to the unic value of the site, we highly recommend several solutions for a better capitalisation of the tourism potential, which could be applied by the local authorities, as the followings:

– Increasing local authorities' interest in tourism investments with some incentives regarding rules for rented land, low fee for reinvestment of profit or those hiring local workforce, etc.;

- Achieving a higher degree of acknowledgement on the part of the local population about the benefits that agro-tourism can have on the economy;
- Diversifying the tourism offer (mountain hikes along Rudăriei Gorges, training the locals as tourism guides, giving tourists the opportunity to participate in everyday events of the commune, or specific folkloric manifestations such as - the Cornilor Festival, the Lilac Festival, the Milk Measuring festival);
- Increasing the accommodation capacity in the study area, and also possibly modernising the existing shelters and transforming them into agro-tourism farms;
- Improving accessibility to the area, by modernising the access ways to the commune;
- A better promotion and marketing for local products and tourist offers are subsequently needed it.

*The practical and scientific importance of the study* consists in the analysis tree method used for the evaluation of the tourism potential of the Eftimie Murgu commune based on its four components: nature and anthropic tourism potential and tourism and technical infrastructure. Also, by analyzing the tourists and locals perception about the degree in which the study area's potential is being capitalised the authors were able to identify weak points in terms of tourism promotion of the area and determined that tourism is an activity that would lead to supplementing the income of the local community. The practical importance of the study is that its results can be disseminated among local authorities which can adjust their local development strategies to incorporate solutions to the problems identified by the authors in this study.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Eftimie Murgu has a diverse range of resources for tourism development, but they are poorly capitalised. This translates into an ineffective environment for creating new entrepreneurial enterprises (e.g. agro-tourism).

The tree analysis method showed a deficient tourism infrastructure in the study area and a low accessibility degree due to precarious road networks.

The analysis of tourists and locals perception on the capitalisation of the tourism potential of the study area pointed out a weak effort to use the tourism potential of the area, and a lack of vision on the part of local authorities, who focus on the watermill complex and neglect other existing attraction points. The financial future of the local population will depend heavily on the presence of a tourism offer as diverse as possible and with a high attractiveness factor. A fundamental measure in achieving this is putting tourism in the front and centre as an activity that could economically revitalise the area and generate extra incomes for the local population.

## **Aknowlegments**

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