ACCESS 2 MOUNTAIN

Sustainable Mobility and Tourism in Sensitive Areas of the Alps and the Carpathians:

STUDY ON TRAFFIC FLOWS IN MARAMUREŞ COUNTY AND IN THE NORTH OF THE EASTERN CARPATHIAN MOUNTAINS – ROMANIA

WP 3| Act. 3.3

Executive Summary

May 2013

Jointly for our common future

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Study on traffic flows and on possible solutions in Maramureş County and the North of Eastern Carpathians – Romania, referred to hereafter as "the Study", was designed as part of the project *WP3 – Analysis, traffic flow models and follow-up tools*, with the aim to present and analyse the accessibility components and traffic characteristics in the mountainous area of the Northern Romania.

The structure of the study allows for its subsequent use as a tool for strategic planning and drafting of public policies on (a) sectoral level for specific development of transport infrastructure area and (b) territorial and administrative level. From this perspective, the study is designed to be a dialogue initiating and facilitating document regarding the drafting and implementation of development plans (Master Plan) of a modern transport infrastructure, adapted to the mountainous feature of the area. This process of sectoral planning of transport infrastructure shall be included in a sustainable global vision of development of the studied area, at the same time considering the following: economic growth, social equity, environment conservation and protection, promotion of local cultural identity and good management of mountainous communities.

From this standpoint, the study presents:

(1) Territory features of the studied area; location, geographical and demographic characteristics, and natural resources;

(2) Institutional, legislative and technical support for territorial and sectoral planning of the areas of transport, environment and tourism;

(3) Area profile of transport infrastructure network: area accessibility, most used travel means and financial analysis components: cost-benefit;

(4) Territorial environment issue, especially related to the transport sector;

(5) The relationship between the fields of transport and tourism, as main economic branch of the centre of the studied area (Maramureş), complemented with the profile of the tourist visiting the area.

The study identifies the following:

(6) The challenges and the development potential of the transport system;

And, as its final "deliverable" outlines, the study:

(7) Proposes solutions identified along the data collection and analysis stages for improvement purposes and

(8) Outlines a set of conclusions and recommendations for all stakeholders involved in an envisaged sectoral development process of transport infrastructure and territorial development of the studied area.

The study outlines are thoroughly related to and aim at fully supporting all specific project objectives.

2 METHODOLOGY

The study was designed as a tool of (long-term) strategic analysis of the priority area of transport system in the mountainous area of the North of Romania.

For the general support of the five specific project objectives, the beneficiary of the study commissioned an additional drafting of the profiles and analysis of the secondary areas: environmental, tourism, legislative and institutional.

The structure of the study observes the methodological stages of a strategic analysis presented below, together with the research methods used:

(Secondary) Stages	Chapters	Research methods
1. Internal environment analysis		
Target area territorial profile	3. Geographical issues 4. Demographical issues	Source identification, statistics collection and mapping
Priority area profile: transportation	7. Transport infrastructure	Source identification, statistics collection and mapping
Secondary area profile: the environment	12. The environment	Source identification, statistics collection and thematic mapping
Secondary area profile: tourism	13. Tourism 14. Tourist profile	Source identification, statistics collection and thematic mapping, Designing and applying questionnaires to evaluate tourist profile
Secondary area profile: institutional and administrative	5. Administration forms, 6. The main legal tools, 10. Maps, 11. Planning documents, strategic studies.	Source identification and mapping, Researching public archives
2. External environment analysis	15. Conclusions and recommendations	Strategic studies research – identifying opportunities and challenges
3. Defining development objectives		Expert group focus – problem analysis, solutions to improve the situation
4. Follow-up		

2.1 Limitations of the research

The data are collected from various public institutions in the studied area or at the central level, with dissimilar procedures and periods of data collection, validation and reporting. The lack of correlation between various institutional databases, which would enable information validation, leads to confusion or requires an additional research (in order to identify and determine common indicators) so that the analysis data of the studied areas should be authenticated. The following rule has been identified: "the more specific the collected data (in terms of field or study area) is, the more difficult are the identification, collection and interpretation."

- The monitored indicators, data series, reference periods of collected data are often different. As a rule, the study makes use of the value of monitored common indicators, resulting from the latest statistics series identified (most of these relating to the year 2010 as the reference year).

- The diversity of formats of data presentation and thematic maps (most of them in PDF extension) hinders data compilation and correlation.

- A small part of these data can be accessed online or extracted from printed reports. The access to most analysis data involves complying with bureaucratic procedures that threaten meeting deadlines for studies and reports.

- Thematic maps were difficult to identify. GIS-based graphic presentations are not currently put into institutional practice. Most of the collected documents focus on limited areas (or on specific examples of particular study areas) and were drafted during externally funded projects.

3 INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS OF THE STUDIED DOMAINS

3.1 Territorial profile of the studied area

The studied area is situated in the North – North-Western extremity of Romania, bordering Hungary (N-W) and Ukraine (N), and covers the administrative territory of **Maramureş-MM** county (NUTS 3 – RO 114) and the adjacent counties: to the West: **Satu Mare** - **SM** (NUTS 3 - RO 115); to the South: **Bistriţa Năsăud** - **BN** (NUTS 3 - RO112), to the East: **Suceava** - **SV** (NUTS 3- RO 215). The northern mountainous area of the Eastern Carpathians covers 47,8% of the administrative territory of the target area.

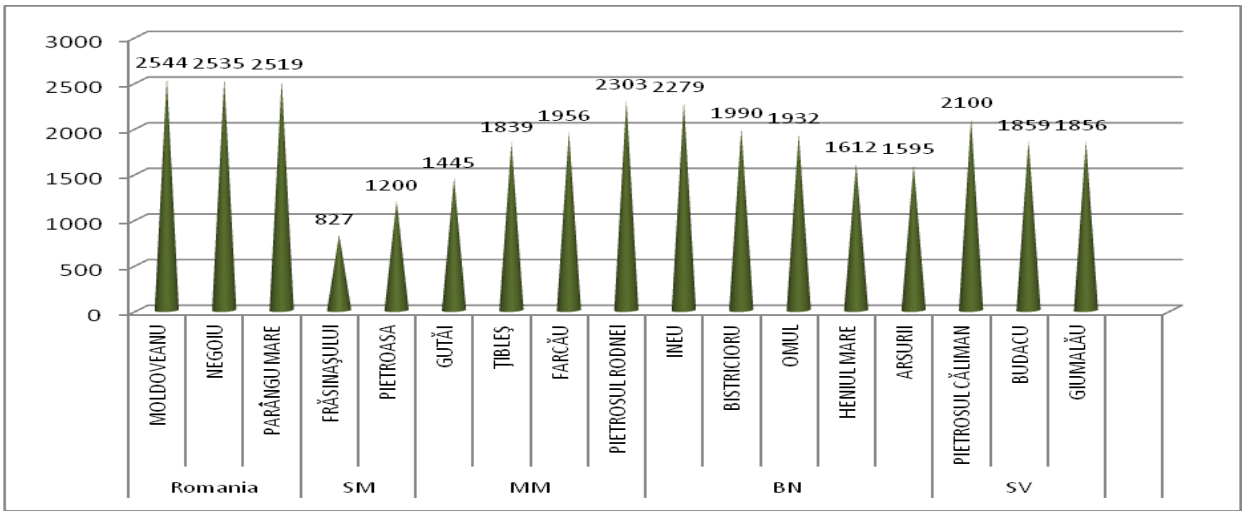
	Areas (sq km)				
County	**Administrative**	**Waters**	**Mountain**	**Hills and plateaux**	**Plains**
Maramureş	6,304	54	**3,385**	2,446	473
Satu Mare	4,341	77	**751**	884	1,590
Bistriţa Năsăud	5,283	72	**1,928**	3,427	-
Suceava	8,497	56	**5,594**	2,959	-
Total	**24,372**	**258**	**11,658**	**9,716**	**2,063**
Romania	**238,391**				
%	***10.2%***	***1.1%***	***47.8%***	***39.9%***	***8.5%***

3.1.1 Geo-climatic issues and natural resources of the territory

The climate of the area is moderate continental, with oceanic influences in the West and continental ones in the East. These influences impact on seasonal temperatures (T) and precipitation (P):

	Month	V - SM	MM	SV - E
$T_{average/\ month\ -\ max:}$	August	21.8°C	20.4°C	21.4°C
Taverage/ month – min:	January	-1.8°C	-2.7°C	-7.0°C
$T_{max:}$	July-August	36.0°C	39.0°C	33.6°C
$T_{min:}$	January-February	-15.6°C	-30.0°C	-24.7°C
Paverage/ month – max:	May-June	177.8 mm	205.4 mm	226.5 mm
Paverage/ month – min:	February-March	28.8 mm	32.6 mm	28.6 mm

The height of the main mountain peaks increases from the West to the centre of the territory:



The natural resources of the area are represented by the poly-metallic deposits (Au, Ag, Cu, Zn, etc.), concentrated in the central-western part of the mountainous area (Oaș - Gutâi - Țibleș Mountains) – a historic source of local socio-economic development. The restructuring of the mining sector during the years 1998 and 2007 led to the closing down of all poly-metallic mines, which had a significant impact upon the society, economy and the environment of the entire territory.

However, the exploitation of mines providing raw materials for constructions (andesite, amphibolite, limestone, sandstone, volcanic tuff, etc.) and the richest mineral water resources in Romania (carbo-gaseous, chloro-sodium, sulphurous, etc.) is still operational.

The hydrographic network of the territory is represented by the the river basin of the Someș (from the central area to the West) and the Tisa (bordering Ukraine to the north), the tributary basin of the Mureș river (to the South) and, in the easternmost part of the territory, the river basin of the Suceava, the Moldova and the Bistrița. The density of the hydrographic network, as referred to the territory surface, is higher than Romania's national average.

Agricultural land represents 51.87% (12,641.4 sq km) of the total surface of the territory, of which 46.92% (5,931.6 sq km) is arable. Animal breeding is mainly located in the mountainous and pre-mountainous areas.

The mountainous area does not border significant seismic risk areas (the only exception is the area of Gutâi Mountains, seismically rated as MSK class VII). The only natural hazards are **flooding** and/or **flash floods** caused by the sudden melting of the snow, abundant precipitation in April-May or the formation of ice packs and **landslides**, located in certain pre-mountainous areas as a result of the following specific conditions: geological (a lithologic clay-bearing substratum alternating with brittle rocks), morphological (slopes exceeding 3-5%), climate (annual average precipitation exceeding 500 mm) and man-made (generally irrational use of land and especially of slopes).

3.1.2 Demographic issues and settlement network

The population of the studied area (almost 9% of the population of Romania) bears the following demographic features:

County	aged 0-14	aged 15-64	aged 65+	Total	Urbanization rate	Population growth rate[1]	Emigration rate[2]
MARAMUREŞ	82,295	362,326	65,861	510,482	58.8%	-3	0.36
SATU MARE	58,829	260,358	44,917	364,104	47.3%	-2.5	0.42
BISTRIŢA-NĂSĂUD	54,137	221,434	41,676	317,247	37.3%	0.6	0.33
SUCEAVA	128,939	479,200	100,294	708,433	42.8%	0.6	0.33
Total	***324,200***	***1,323,318***	***252,748***	***1,900,266***			
ROMANIA	**3,241,295**	**14,995,129**	**3,194,874**	**21,431,298**	**0.6**	**-4.9**	**0.37**
%	10.0%	8.8%	7.9%	8.9%			

(Statistics – year of reference 2011)

The active population (age group 15-64) constitutes 69.6%, followed by the younger population (age group 0-14), representing 17% and the elderly (aged 65+) 13,4%.

The "youngest" county is Suceava, and the "eldest" is Maramureş, a fact proved by the "population growth rate" indicator. The population growth rate of Satu Mare County is also affected by the highest emigration rate.

The settlement network covers the main river basins and their tributaries, inter-mountainous depressions and foot of the mountains plateaux. The urban population rate is higher in the western part of the territory (Satu Mare and Maramureş), decreasing in favour of the traditionally rural population of the mountainous settlements to the east of the territory (Maramureș, Bistrița-Năsăud and Suceava). Due to the unspoiled landscape of these places, the following main rural tourism areas have been created in Romania: Maramureș, Lunca Ilvei (Bistrița Năsăud) and Bucovina (Suceava).

The main towns of the area are the administrative centres of the counties with their population not exceeding 150,000 inhabitants (Baia Mare municipality, Maramureş County administrative seat) or 100,000 inhabitants (Satu Mare municipality for Satu Mare County, Bistrița municipality for Bistrița-Năsăud County and Suceava municipality for Suceava County).

[1] The difference between birth rate (new-borns/ 1000 inhabitants) și death rate (deceased/ 1000 de inhabitants)
[2] Measured in emigrants/ 1000 de inhabtants

3.2 Tourism sector

The most important tourism objectives – The studied perimeter includes some of the most important areas of rural and ecological tourism in Romania: Bucovina (SV), Maramureş and Lunca Ilvei (BN) precisely due to the scenic mosaic combining the natural and cultural rural heritage elements.

The worldwide uniqueness of the monasteries in Bucovina and the wooden churches in Maramureş has constituted the foundation for the development of the religious and cultural tourism.

Due to terrain, temperature and precipitation configuration, the mountainous area provides perfect opportunities for winter sports, as it also nestles the northernmost ski-resorts in Romania. During the rest of year, the mountainous area is an ideal place to practise other forms of active tourism, such as hiking, trekking, mountainbiking, paragliding, etc.

The richest content in mineral waters (carbo-gaseous, chloro-sodium, sulphurous) in Romania, constitutes the perfect background for the development of spa resorts.

Other tourism objectives are represented by elements of historic and cultural heritage, situated in the old towns in the area or in adjacent communes.

Below is **an image of tourist accommodation facilities** and their capacity can be evaluated by the number of tourists accommodated:

Tourism establishment	Number of tourists	Maramureş		Satu Mare		Bistriţa - Năsăud		Suceava	
Total, out of which:	**436,358**	92,498	*21.2%*	96,561	*22.1%*	52,934	*12.1%*	194,365	*44.5%*
Hotels	**288,918**	59,560	*20.6%*	52,358	*18.1%*	45,791	*15.8%*	131,209	*45.4%*
Hostels	**9,353**	4,027	*43.1%*	1,627	*17.4%*			3,699	*39.5%*
Motels	**7,369**	3,146	*42.7%*			2,014	*27.3%*	2,209	*30.0%*
Tourism villas	**32,962**	1,589	*4.8%*	21,183	*64.3%*			10,190	*30.9%*
Chalets	**11,783**	333	*2.8%*	9,221	*78.3%*			2,229	*18.9%*
Guesthouses	**40,680**	11,235	*27.6%*	5,349	*13.1%*	3,777	*9.3%*	20,319	*49.9%*
Agro-tourism guesthouses	**37,084**	7,785	*21.0%*	5,717	*15.4%*	376	*1.0%*	23,206	*62.6%*
Children's camps	**5,799**	4,823	*83.2%*			976	*16.8%*		
Tourism stopovers	**1,332**			1,106	*83.0%*			226	*17.0%*
Camp sites	**696**							696	*100.0%*
Bungalows	**382**							382	*100.0%*

(Reference year – 2010)

Over half of the tourism accommodation infrastructure capacity in the area is covered by hotels (66.2%), situated in the towns and mountain resorts of the area. Agro-tourism guesthouses (rural tourism) cover 8.5% of the accommodation capacity. Other relevant forms of tourism accommodation are: gueshouses (9.3%), tourist villas (7.5%) and chalets (2.7%). The average overnight stay in the area amounts to three days.

3.2.1 Tourist profile

Romanian/foreign visitors ratio in the tourism area of Maramureş (unchanged regardless of the area studied) is 4-1. In August 2012, a survey on tourist visiting Maramures was conducted. Over 300 Romanian and foreign tourists have been interviewed while experiencing the trip with the (Mocăniţa) steam train on Vaser Valley, while visiting the Merry Cemetery, staying at guesthouses or making a stop at the information tourist office in Baia Mare. The resulting similarities, as well as the differences setting the Romanian and foreign visitors to Maramureş apart are outlined in the table below:

	Romanian tourist	Foreign tourist
Average sojourn length:	1 – 5 days (57%), 6 – 10 days (21.5%)	1 – 5 days (59%), 6 – 10 days (35.9%)
Number of previous visits:	Never (45.7%), 1-3 times (33.5%)	Never (56.4%), 1-3 times (11.5%)
Main sources of tourism information:	Tourism websites and advertisements (52.3%), personal connections (33.8%), direct tourism services (11.4%);	Tourism websites and advertisements (23.1%), personal connections (22.6%), direct tourism services (11.6%);
Source of trip planning elements:	Tourism websites and advertisements (44.4%), personal connections (33.8%), direct tourism services (13.4%);	Tourism websites and advertisements (45.7%), personal connections (22.6%), direct tourism services (12.8%);
Tourism facilities chosen:	(Agro-)tourism guesthouse (63.2%), hotel (16.9%)	(Agro-)tourism guesthouse (44.9%), hotel (25.1%), camping (13.3%)
Preferred tourism attractions:	Landscape (31.3%), traditions and culture (23.8%), wooden churches (19.5%), handicraft (11.7%)	Landscape (29.4%), traditions and culture (28.4%), wooden churches (20.7%), handicraft (17.2%);
Interest in natural habitats:	High (41.6%) and very high (18.2%);	High (28.1%) and very high (30.8%);
Level of knowledge of natural habitats:	High (18.6%) and very high (2.7%);	High (5.2%) and very high (3.8%);
Activities related to visiting the natural habitats:	Mocănița trip (21.7%), visiting natural attractions (12.2%), walks/hiking/trekking (9.6%), biking (2.9%).	Mocănița trip (23.4%), visiting natural attractions (10.3%), walks/hiking/trekking (6.6%), biking (1.8%).

3.3 Environmental profile of the studied area

Protected areas – the area ranks first in Romania, in reference to the preserved surfaces within protected areas. Most of these protected areas are located in the mountainous area:

Protected areas		Surface (sq km)	Biosphere reserves	National park	Natural park	Natura 2000	
						SCI	SPA
Maramureş	59	2,395.5	1	1	1	12	5
Satu Mare	13	1,384.8				5	2
Bistriţa Năsăud	35	1,44.,1	1	2		9	1
Suceava	59	1,690.7		1		23	7
Total		6,015.2					

SCI – Site of Community Importance; SPA – Special Protection Area

Protected areas are affected by: intensive agricultural and zootechnical technologies, abusive logging and poaching, extensive urbanization, incomplete purification of mine waters, uncontrolled tourism.

The main pollution sources in the area come from (former) industrial activities (for example, fully restructured mining and metallurgical industry), transportation, intensive agro-technics and zootechnics, logging.

Through its heavy traffic, transport contributes to the pollution in the area, increase in the oxidisers and heavy metals content in the soil, resulting from gas combustion and volatile organic compounds emissions. From the point of view of exhaust fumes emissions, most of the road vehicles are equipped with lower, inefficient engine versions (37% - Euro 2, 32% - Euro 3).

Concurrently, the noise level is significantly higher around road arteries, especially in the urban areas.

3.4 Transport Sector Profile

3.4.1 Transport infrastructure

Road transport infrastructure covers the whole area, with its following main road arteries:

Running from the West to the East:

- **DN 19**A National Road: Petea (at the Romanian-Hungarian border – Satu Mare) - DN19 (Satu Mare – Negreşti Oaş - Sighetu Marmaţiei) through the North of the area,
- **DN 18**: Baia Mare - Sighetu Marmaţiei – Borşa – Pasul Prislop – Cîrlibaba (SV),
- **DN 17**: Beclean (BN) – Bistriţa – Pasul Tihuţa – Vatra Dornei (SV) – Câmpulung Moldovenesc – Gura Humorului – Suceava.

Running from the North to the South (linking the counties in the North of Romania with the rest of the territory):

- **DN 19A**: Satu Mare – Zalău (Sălaj County),
- **DN 1C:** Halmeu (land border crossing point to Hungary) – Livada – Baia Mare – Dej (Cluj County),
- **DN15A**: Bistriţa – Reghin (Mureş County) – Târgu Mureş,
- **DN2**: Siret (land border crossing point to Ukraine) – Suceava – Fălticeni.

County and commune road network ensures that secondary settlements enjoy access to national roads as well. Below are the characteristics of the entire road network of the area (the year 2010):

Road infrastructure and traffic flow	Length [km]	Asphalted [km]	Not asphalted [km]	In good condition [km]	Annual daily average**
Total	12,596.77	4,357.31	8,239.46	6,599.56	
European roads	566.68	566.68	0.00	566.68	40.645
National roads	828.68	828.68	0.00	619.65*	19.692
County roads	3,479.52	2,425.61	1,053.91	1,246.88	6,232
Commune roads	2,947.17	536.35	2,410.82	463.96	213
Other types of roads**	4,774.73	0.00	4,774.73	3,702.40	0

** Difference in km at rehabilitation stage.*

*** Standard vehicles-personal cars.*

****Forest roads (no data are available on exploitation, agricultural and private roads).*

The car fleet of the area is mainly represented by passenger cars. Motor vehicles have mostly replaced traditional animal draught transportation means in the mountainous rural communities.

Types of vehicles	Number of vehicles	Fitted with				
		Euro 2	Euro 3	Euro 4	Euro 5	Euro 6
Mopeds and motorcycles	5,115					
Vehicles	312,518	79,405	71,583	62,505	4,466	19
Buses and minibuses	2,693	404	464	157	-	-
Trucks	47,535	242	298	34	-	-
Haulers	2,522	14,095	18,289	3,865	1,605	-
Special purpose road vehicles	1,415					
Tractors	3,892					
Trailers and semi-trailers	20,218					
TOTAL	**395,908**					

Lower engine version car fleet as compared to the current environmental standards favours air and noise pollution around the main traffic arteries.

Bicycle infrastructure is only beginning to be equipped. As it does not represent a priority for the transport sector policy, most of the bicycle paths are the outcomes of non-reimbursable project grants. The aim of such projects is to capitalize on the niche potential of bicycle touring and/or mountainbiking. The legth of the bicycle paths, according to statistic data, does not exceed 343 km (240 km in Maramureş).

Cable transport is used in tourism areas only to facilitate tourist access to higher mountainous areas, especially for winter sports. The total length of cable transportation lines reaches 30,4 km.

Public transportation is serviced in all settlements of the area by certified public and private providers. Trip schedule primarily relies on ensuring population access to jobs or local public service providers (education, healthcare, administration).

The main bus stations of the county public transportation are those from the administrative center of Baia Mare (West), Sighetu-Marmaţiei (North) and Târgu Lăpuş (South). These three locations are connected with the other towns and villages in Maramureş by daily buses having the following features:

Station	No. of operations	Timetable			
		To		Return	
		Departures	Arrivals	Departures	Arrivals
Baia Mare	110	4.00 - 22.30	4.50 – 23.45	4.30 – 23.00	4.50 - 23.45
Sighetu Marmației	37	4.00 – 23.30	5.35 – 23.55	4.45 – 22.00	5.45 – 22.35
Tg. Lăpuș	8	5.45 – 19.00	6.45 – 20.10	5.25 – 19.30	6.20 – 20.30

The poorly developed **rail infrastructure** of the area is represented by the following main rail arteries:
Running from the West to the East:

- Railway line: Dej (railway junction for routes headed WE and NS in the North-West Development Region) – Bistrița (BN) – Câmpulung Moldovenesc (SV) – Suceava,

Running from the North to the South:

- Railway line: Satu Mare (ensuring cross-border rail transport with Hungary) – Baia Mare Jibou (SJ) – Dej (CJ),
- Railway line: Vadu Siret (rail border crossing point with Ukraine) – Suceava – Fălticeni.
- Railway line: Salva (BN) – Vișeu de Jos (MM) – Sighetu Marmației (railway affected by landslides).

These lines link the main socio-economic centres of the area.

Narrow gauge rail transport, stretching for 46 in Maramureş and 10 in Suceava, has been preserved and used as the only person and freight transportation means in hardly accessible mountainous areas.

Air transport infrastructure relies on the three airports (Baia Mare – International, Satu Mare – International, "Ștefan cel Mare" – Suceava) ensuring air traffic flow across the country borders through Bucharest international airports. The annual number of passengers using the three local airports (in *2011*) amounted to 68,655.

Another important airport in terms of tourist access to the mountainous area of the North of Romania is Cluj-Napoca International Airport (the main airport in the North-West Development Region), situated 150 kilometres away from the county administrative centres: Maramureș, Satu Mare și Bistrița - Năsăud. Tourist (road and rail) transportation between the airport and the mountainous tourist objectives is ensured by a newly modernized infrastructure.

3.4.2 Tourism and transportation in Maramureş

Maramureş is the target place of tourist routes for tourists converging from three different directions, which have been identified as a result of evaluation of questionnaires applied to Romanian and foreign tourists in August 2012:

- Over 30% of visitors arrive via the southern infrastructure (from Cluj-Napoca),
- Over 20% arrive via the only road for vehicle access from Bucovina (SV),
- Over 10% arrive from North-West (from Satu Mare area, the western part and the North-Western Romanian border).

The greatest majority of tourists to Maramureş use road transport to access the area (77%, by correlation with national data). Of these, 77.4% of Romanian tourists and 35.9% of foreign tourists use their personal car to such a purpose, rented cars (6.1% of Romanian tourists and 27.8% of foreign tourists) or public transport (9.6% of Romanians and 7.6% of foreigners). Tourists visiting places of interest within the area represent about the same percentage.

It is also to be noted that the differences in percentage revealing users of public transportation (by plane 3.3%, by train 7.4%) or the environmentally-friendly one (by bicycle 2.1%) in order to access the tourism area favour the foreign tourists. In case of tourists visiting natural places of interest, these differences are almost absent, except for the bicycle as a means of transportation, which is preferred by almost three times as many foreign tourists than the Romanian ones.

Most tourists interviewed on the quality of road infrastructure and foreign ones interviewed on rail infrastructure rate them as poor, which makes the planning of the tourist visit to Maramureş depend upon the most accessible, not the shortest route.

Another hindrance pointed out by the tourists to Maramureş (16.2% of Romanian tourists and 34.5% of foreign ones) is the lack of bicycle paths to and around the tourist area.

Another notable aspect related to the transportation infrastructure in the tourist area in Maramureş is the fact that the narrow gauge railway (Mocăniţa) in the Vaser area is the most widely known and appreciated activity of the interviewed tourists during the study.

According to the data provided below, Romanian tourists' interest in the development of environmentally friendly transportation means is greater than that of the foreign tourists visiting Maramureş:

	Romanian tourist	Foreign tourist
Evaluating the impact of the traffic upon the tourism areas and natural habitats:	Average (47.5%), high (25.8%), very high – endangering (9%);	Average (31.1%), high (9.0%), very high – endangering (9,0%);
Tourists' interest in improving the transportation facilities in natural habitats:	Average (27%), high (30.8%), very high (26,7%);	Average (26.9%), high (16.7%), very high (7.7%);

3.4.3 Transport and environment

Most of the road means of transportation have old engines, with no pollution control technologies (37% Euro 2, 32% Euro 3). Traffic increase causes exhaust fumes to become one of the main sources of pollution (CO_2, NO_x, VOC), especially in the areas influenced by urban centres. *(Annex 11 a, b, c – Maps of* CO_2, NO_x, VOC *on the significant road network).* The noise level is also much higher in the vicinity of main roads, especially urban ones.

3.4.4 Revenue and expenses in transport

Road transport financial balance for the reference year 2011 at the level of all counties in the area is deficient, as the county road infrastructure management revenues amount to 29% out of the global management expenses.

(lei)	Maramureş	Satu Mare	Bistriţa	Suceava
Expenses related to roads and bridges, of which:	**4,854,291.04**	**2,735,552.99**	**10,421,907.08**	**23,097,524.72**

Routine repairs	4,412,562.82	2,320,252.95	2,810,354.18	8,545,270.06
Revenue	**2,417,470.91**	**2,520,876.37**	**2,596,569.05**	**4,183,765.30**
VAT for roads	2,241,676.30	2,463,956.20	2,419,830.57	3,916,798.41
Vehicle tax	175,794.61	56,920.17	176,738.48	266,966.89
Balance +/-	-2,436,820.13	-214,676.62	-7,825,338.03	-18,913,759.42

Should expenses include externally financed projects and the ones benefiting from state joint financing, the percentage of revenues in relation with expenses drops to 14%.

Non-reimbursable European funding	**11,029,743.50**	**4,129,403.71**	**15,769,602.87**	**11,614,714.83**
National budget joint			2,359,659.26	

No public data are available for the evaluation of the financial balance for railway network administration at national or area level.

As to air transport financial balance, this is a positive one in the case of Baia Mare and Satu Mare International airports.

	Baia Mare AirportBaia Mare	Satu Mare airportSuceaBa	Suceava airport
Expenses (euros)			**-**
Capital	1,548,587.74	2,320,252.95	-
Maintenance	217,088.65		-
(Passenger tickets) revenues	**2,626,416.32**	**2,657,980.70**	**3,264,575.94**
Balance +/-	**+ 860,739.93**	**+ 337,727.75**	-

As to Ștefan cel Mare airport in Suceava, it shall benefit from financing granted by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for the implementation of a modernization project:

ERDF investments	**-**	**-**	**20,011,687**
National budget joint financing	-	-	15,243,560
Local budget joint financing	**-**	**-**	2,627,406
Total financing (expenses):	**-**	**-**	**37,882,653**

3.5 The profile of the administration institutions capacity – law and administration related issues

3.5.1 Competent public institutions and the legal framework

From the point of view of the areas analysed in the study, one must mention and clear out the fact that there are two types of complementary public authorities operating in Romania:

Type of public authority:	Territorial-administrative	Sectoral
Decision-making	Local and county councils,	Ministries

structures:	organized as a result of election processes	
Executive structures:	Mayoralties, County Councils	The administrative apparatus itself and the decentralized public institutions in the territory under the ministry jurisdiction (at national and county levels)
Authority exercising limitations:	The limits of the territorial-administrative unit (the commune, town, municipality, county)	The line of business: for example, transport, the environment, tourism, etc.
Legal reference framework	- Public administration law (no. 215/2011) - Specific legal framework regulating sectoral activities;	Specific laws: - institutional establishment, organization and performance; - regulating the activities carried out in the business sector;
Role and responsibility:	- territorial management and development of the administrative unit; - complying with the sectoral legal framework;	- regulating, authorizing and control of enforcement of specific sectoral laws.

A special case is the regional administrative level through its eight Regional Development Agencies (RDA), which:
- from the point of view of territorial-administrative public authority, RDA represents the executive structures of the Development Regions (non-legal entity associations of the constituting county authorities: **the North-Western Region** in case of Maramureș, Satu Mare and Bistrița – Năsăud counties and **the North-Eastern Region** in case of Suceava county). RDA's primary responsibility is to coordinate the planning and implementation of the regional territory development (Regional Development Plans).
- from the point of view of sectoral public authority, RDA represents the territorial structures of the Ministry of Regional Development and Tourism (the present Ministry of Regional Development and Public Administration), whose main responsibility is to manage the implementation of the Regional Operational Programme (Regio) and to sign and monitor the implementation of European funded projects (from the European Regional Development Fund).

During Romania's pre-accession period (until January 1, 2007), the national legislative package, especially the sectoral one, underwent an extensive transposition of the Community acquis.

Parallel with the legislative amendment, the sectoral authorities benefited from programmes aimed at increasing the ability to enforce the norms, procedures and tools of the amended legislation at territory level. At the same time, the first structures of territorial-administrative public authorities at regional (RDA) or sectoral (Regional Agencies) level were formed.

3.5.2 Reference documents

At the local – county level, spatial development planning takes place on the basis of Land Use Planning Plans (Programmes), which is then enforced through Urban Planning Regulations, regulated by specific legislation. The technical process of drawing up such plans generally includes organizing local development policies as well (strategies, action plans and institutional arrangements for monitoring and assessment).

Local and county authorities' general capacity for (long-term) strategic planning is affected by:
- primarily focusing the institutional resources upon providing services to the population and
- the general approach of spatial development planning (lacking preparatory analysis or sectoral development plans).

At regional and national level, Romania is currently being involved in the territorial-administrative and sectoral planning process for 2014-2020. This involves revision of regional development plans (RDP), nationally integrated into the Regional Operational Programme (Plan) (ROP) and the Sectoral Operational Programmes (SOP), in force during 2007-2013. The reference framework for the national planning level is represented by the respective European Union policies and planning documents.

For such reasons, the reference documents related to the study were as follows:
- County development policies (strategies);
- Territorial-administrative and sectoral Regional Development Plans for tourism, of North-Western and North Eastern Regional Development Agencies;
- Environment sectoral plans at county level, drawn up by Environment Protection County Agencies;
- Other policies and development plans at national level: territorial-administrative (2007-2013 Regional Operational Programme, Romania's Sustainable Development Strategy – Horizons 2013-2020-2030) and sectoral (General plan for the development of transport in Romania – Master Plan).

3.5.3 Plans and maps

For various reasons, using GIS graphic systems to monitor and assess spatial development process in Romania is still not widespread in public administration, especially at local and county levels. Therefore, the authors of the present study used the following types of plans and maps:

- own (theme maps in order to have a graphic representation of the following transport networks: road, rail, air, public and cable);
- provided by the beneficiary (tourist maps);
- received from other public institutions (sectoral planning maps at national level);
- as part of projects implemented in the studied mountainous area (paths for non-motorized access).

4 CONCLUSIONS ON THE ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT STAGE OF THE STUDIED DOMAIN

Conclusions will be shown through a SWOT[3] analysis presented below:

4.1. Conclusions on the internal environment analysis

Domain:	Competitive advantages (S+)	Disadvantages (W-)
Territorial	***Location:*** -The location of the entire northern group of the Eastern Carpathians in the studied area on the Romanian territory; -The border area with Hungary and Ukraine (the European Union's mountainous border in the Carpathians); -Mountain peaks of over 2000 m high, situated in three counties. ***Climate:*** -Moderate continental climate, with monthly average temperature ensuring thermal comfort; -The existence of four attractive and distinct seasons, influencing the socio-economic and environmental aspects in the areaș -Limited areas with a high degree of natural hazards: Insignificant seismic rate, occasional floodings, restricted and mostly stabilized landslides. ***Natural resources:*** -The most important mineral water resources in Romania; -Rich hydrographic basins in all mountainous and at the foot of the mountain areas. -A mosaic of mountainous landscape due to integration of tradition and anthropic activities from the countryside into the natural environment; -Diverse fauna and flora, developed along extensive protected areas. ***Demographics:*** -The population of the area makes up 8.9% of the national population, of which the majority (over 50%) live in the rural environment; - Over 17% of the population of the area is young (aged 0-14) and almost 70% is	***Location:*** -Geographic isolation of the studied area – marginal to the EU and national territories; ***Climate:*** -Decrease in transition periods from winter to summer; -Great temperature fluctuations between the registered minimum and maximum values (-30°C/+39°C); -Significant effects caused by the natural hazards phenomena: flood, flooding. ***Natural resources:*** -Cessation of poly-metallic ores exploitation - traditional source of economic development of the area; -Exploitation of construction materials through environment-harming technologies; -Sources of urban and industrial pollution of hydrographic basins; -Flora and fauna affected by intensive grazing, extensive logging, poaching, uncontrolled tourism, low level of ecological education and awareness. ***Demographics:*** -Population aging in the country; -The effects of the emigration phenomenon during the previous periods ***Settlement network:*** -Continuous expansion of the built-up areas of the settlements; -Urbanization of rural settlements, disregarding urban planning and traditional architecture principles and traits;

[3] SWOT Analysis = acronym for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. By definition, Strengths (S) and Weaknesses (W) are considered to be internal factors over which you have some measure of control. Also, by definition, Opportunities (O) and Threats (T) are considered to be external factors over which you have essentially no control. SWOT Analysis is the most renowned tool for audit and analysis of the overall strategic position of the business and its environment.

	economically active (aged 15-64); -Positive demographic rate for two counties in the studied area **Settlement network:** -Stretching over all inter-mountainous valleys and the foothills; -Historical inter-urban cooperation relationships; -Cultural identity of the "Lands", historical areas of the studied perimeter; -Revitalization of the rural environment through the emergence of emigration from the urban into the periurban rural environment.	
The environment	***Protected areas:*** -The largest surface and highest density of protected natural habitats in Romania; -Economic capitalization through tourism of protected natural habitats; -Increase of tourist interest in visiting and discovering natural habitats, in using non-motorized means of transportation to reach them. ***Pollution sources:*** -Decrease of industrial pollution as a result of conversion of the most polluting industries in the studied area: mining, metallurgic, chemical; -Increase of the level of tourists' ecological education and decrease of the effects their visits have on the protected natural habitats. ***Transport as a pollution source:*** -Trend to modernize the area car fleet by purchasing motor-vehicles complying with the higher ecological standards (Euro 5, Euro 6).	***Protected areas:*** -Affected by intensive agricultural and zootechnical technologies, abusive logging and poaching, extensive urbanization, incomplete purification of mine waters, uncontrolled tourism. ***Pollution sources:*** -(Historical) Industrial pollution brought about by the urban centres of the area affect the periurban natural habitats; -Sources of mining pollution caused by the mines situated in the mountainous area (heaps, tailing ponds and incompletely purified mine waters); -Emissions from buildings and homes heating sources (of fossil fuel, wood, mainly used in mountainous areas); -Uncontrolled waste dump (especially in the countryside), along the secondary transportation routes or watersides. ***Transport as a pollution source:*** -Traffic increase causes exhaust fumes to become one of the main sources of pollution (CO_2, NO_x, VOC), especially in the areas influenced by urban centres -The development of air transportation as a result of modernization of Baia Mare and Satu Mare airports will cause negative environment impact upon the area
Tourism	-Tourism areas (brands) nationally and internationally renowned: Bucovina, Maramureș, Lunca Ilvei; -The diversity and density of the tourist sights included in the natural and cultural and religious heritage (Maramures – 8 monuments UNESCO listed, Suceava – 7 monuments UNESCO listed); -The ideal setting to practise various forms of active tourism, -The ideal setting to practise rural- and agrotourism (tourists, especially the foreign ones, usually associate villages in	-Poor accessibility (road and rail) of tourism areas increases the costs and shortens the visits; -Lack of signposting through tourist brand promotion labels in county entrances (for example, traditional Maramures gates); -Sparse and decrepit signs and tourism information boards; -Sparse tourism marked paths, both for walking and cycling; - Cultural identity distortion -Deficient promotion of tourism products/services;

	Maramures with the picture of an archaic lifestyle); -Potentially tourism capitalizing natural mineral resources; -The existent tourism infrastructure, especially the one in mountainous and rural areas; -Number of tourists visiting the area and the increasing interest in visiting the protected natural habitats by means of non-motorized vehicles; -Personalizing the offer according to the client (the greatest majority of tourism companies are small family businesses that adapt their offer according to each tourist's requests, unlike mass tourism destinations); -Good value for money for existing products/services; -Increase in the direct information and promotion means (specialized websites and tourism advertisements); -Identifying tourism as core economic branch for local - county development.	-Lack of tourism information centres along main routes, road, rail and air accessibility points; -Poor knowledge of protected natural habitats in the area by Romanian and foreign tourists; -Over 77% of the tourists use personal or rented cars to visit the tourist area; -Poor training of human resources in the tourism industry (resulting in a chaotic development of the sector, lack of professionalism, lack of vision, etc.); -Poor development of complementary services to food and accommodation; -Poor involvement of local tourism agencies in the sector through incoming offers (most of these almost exclusively focus on outgoing offers); -Contradiction between the highest priority rate attributed to tourism as a source of local-regional development and the amount of resources (human, material, financial) allotted to the development of the sector by the public authorities.
Transport	***Road:*** -Good road accessibility across the mountainous area and between the mountainous settlements, developed along the two geographic axes (W—E and N – S); -Covering the territory with a balanced and varied road network; -Applying EU traffic standard modernization measures to the main routes; -People and companies striving to purchase motor-vehicles complying with ecological standards (Euro 4, 5 and 6); -Beginning the construction, setting up the infrastructure for bicycle use (343 km), especially in mountainous and foot of the mountain areas (through external funding projects) -Development of cable transport in tourism areas (30.4 km of cable transport network); -Public transportation provided by authorized public or private operators in most of the settlements of the studied area; - Preserving the use of draught animals as transportation means on local, agricultural and/or forest roads. ***Rail:*** - Ensures the link between the counties of the area, between their socio-economic and administrative centres;	***Road:*** -High usage of individual vehicles to the detrimentof the means of public transport -Development of public transport does not take into account the needs of tourists willing to visit the sights -Low usage of the bicycles and lack of regulations and rights for cyclists -Low access of visitors to protected areas -Short distance roads of higher categories (European and modernized national roads); -Generally poor quality of lower category roads, as compared to the ones of higher category, due to the prioritizing of the access to the funding of rehabilitation and modernization works; -Most local roads are not rehabilitated or modernized; -Unpaved agricultural or forest roads, as these are affected by heavy transport traffic; -Insufficient use of the bicycle as a means of transport; -Lack of alternative routes for agricultural and draught animal transportation means or for bicycle users makes the traffic sluggish and unsafe; -Cable transport is mainly adapted and used for winter sports, as a ski lift. Few cable transport lines are modernized (cable cars, chairlifts).

	-The main railway network ensures access via N – S route, to the western and eastern parts of the area, and in the southern part of the area, it ensures access via W - E route; -56 km of narrow gauge railway are preserved in the hardly accessible mountainous area, for economic and tourism purposes ***Air:*** -Three functional international airports (two in the West and one in the East of the area), connected through air routes to the airports in Bucharest and road to the airport in Cluj; - Investments in the modernization of the airports in the area.	***Rail:*** -Decommissioning railways (the ones mainly used for freight in/between the decommissioned industrial areas); -Poor accessibility in the centre and the north of the studied area (railway affected by landslides and speed limits); -Poor quality and low speed in rail transport due to the lack of investments in the rail infrastructure in the area; -Railway stations with poorly equipped buildings, with poor traveller/tourist servicing. ***Air:*** -Limited number of international flights/foreign tourists on airports in the studied area, which reduces the number of foreign visitors and as a result, does not encourage new measures of developing the public means of transport to the mountain areas -Small number of tourists using air transport due to lack of information and/or connections, traffic flow between different types of transportation in the area.
Institutional-Administrative	***Institutional:*** -Existing sectoral (transport, tourism, the environment) and administrative local, county and regional public structures, responsible for the coordination of territorial development and relevant domains; -Trained personnel in institutional twinning projects and professional development programmes; -A full cycle of territorial and sectoral strategic planning (for the period of 2007-2013); -Project-based development of institutional management ability (most of which come from European funding); ***Legal:*** -Harmonized legal framework with the European legislation in all fields of study; -Revision process of territorial-administrative and sectoral policies at national and regional level for the period 2014-2020.	***Institutional:*** -Public budget crisis as a result of decreasing local budget revenues; -Poor equipment and usage of modern tools in the area of territorial and sectoral management (for example, equipment and use of GIS systems and of inter-correlated databases); -The purpose of the activities undertaken by the local and county territorial public administrative authorities to provide administrative services to the population; -The loss of trained and efficient personnel in favor of the private sector; -Limited institutional capacity and resources allocated to strategic planning for the territorial and local/regional sectoral development(e.g. the lack of county Master Plans aimed at developing the transport sector); -Insufficient experience in the application of participatory planning methodologies (the bottom-up approach), in the preparation and implementation of development policies; -Periodic institutional restructuring by sectors (ministers and subordinated institutions), with changes to the roles and duties in law enforcement (lead to overlapping, lack of authority). ***Legislative:***

		-Continually changing and unpredictable regulations of main law enforcement; -Low correlation between sector and administrative-territorial policies ; -Poor integration of specific local and zonal needs in higher rank priorities.

4.2. Conclusions on the external environment analysis

Field	Opportunities (O +)	Threats(T -)
Territorial	-Availability of EU funds for investments in the infrastructure and services of territorial and sectoral development; -Accession to Schengen area.	-Precarious system of research and innovation, low competition; - Limited capacity for co-financing; -Lack of correlation between investments at territorial level; - Low participation on the labour market: *- "Brain drain" phenomenon, loss of the most skilled human resources;* *-Loss of competitive advantage (cost of manpower);* *-Evolution of European demographic, increase in the share of population aged over 65 (over 20% in 2020).*
The environment	-Support and development trend of traditional organic farming; -Increasing interest in renewable energy; -Engagement of the local authorities to invest in the completion of sanitation investments (deadline - 2018); -Companies' engagement to invest in order to fulfill business environment requirements..	- Inefficient use of resources: *- Low energy efficiency;* *- Poor environment infrastructure;* *- Threat to lose biodiversity.* -Calamities, natural disasters and global warming phenomenon; -The pressure of tourism upon the natural and cultural heritage.
Tourism	- The new European sectoral policy framework: "Agenda for sustainable and competitive tourism", linked to the objectives of Europe 2020 strategy of the European Union: *- economic prosperity;* *- equality and social cohesion;* *- protection of the natural environment and culture.* -Ecotourism - major market trend, which can be exploited in the area; -Positive reviews on Maramures in specialised foreign publications (Lonely Planet Magazine, Lonely Planet Guide describe the area as a realm of idyllic countryside); -Investors' increasing interest in the tourism area: *- foreign investment (English, Dutch and German investors, who have opened guesthouses in Maramureş);*	- Economic downturn: *choosing tourist destinations nearby, reducing the duration of the stay or the expenses during your stay;* - Increasing global competition; - Poor international visibility (tourism); - Lack of a legal framework to protect the countryside, affected by the low level of town planning regulations.

	-immigrants' reinvestment of income earned abroad in the area of origin; -Diversification of tourism services that may lead to the extension of active tourism period = a greater number of months per year with tourists. -Strengthening cooperation relations between tour operators, tourist areas in different countries; -Using information and communication technologies (ICT) in the tourist industry and its relationship with its clients; -The existence of European Funds (ERDF, FADR) for the financing of tourism projects, thematic programmes of international cooperation..	
Transport	-Completion of Transylvania motorway, which would connect the urban poles in the region to the European network of poles of growth; -National, county, metropolitan areas investment in rehabilitation, modernization of transport infrastructure (road and air); -Increased interest in the ensurance of environmentally friendly transport. -Increase in the number of low-cost flights from Cluj-Napoca International Airport (nearby) makes the target destination more accessible; -The existence of European Funds (ERDF) and Cooperation Programmes that finance transport infrastructure projects and the exchange of knowledge and best practice.	-Underdeveloped infrastructure; -Loss of competitive advantage (fuel price); -Small number of experts with experience in the implementation of energy efficient transport solutions.
Institutional Administrative	-Amendments to the law on regional development - opportunity for regional and local competences and streamlining of the administrative act.	-Legislative, political, economic and institutional instability; -Poor, ineffective public administration and governance; -Competition from other regions, directing funds to other areas of interest in the country; -Lack of harmonised sectoral priorities with those territorial-administrative; -The prevailing use of the "top down" method in drawing up development policies, discriminatory for administrative territorial development priorities of a lower rank.

Information Sources:

- "Europe - favorite tourist destination worldwide - a new political framework for European tourism", Communication from the EU Commission to the European Parliament, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions,

- "The agenda for a sustainable European tourism", communication from the European Union Commission.

"- The position of the EU Commission services with respect to the development of a partnership agreement and some programs in Romania during the period between the years 2014 and 2020 ",

- Regional SWOT - the Agency for the development of North-West region (working document).

5 SOLUTIONS TO IMPROVE THE CURRENT SITUATION (CORRELATED WITH ACCESS 2 MOUNTAIN'S OBJECTIVES)

General objective:
Creation of sustainable tourism, to protect nature; accessibility and connectivity to and between sensitive regions in the Alps and the Carpathians

Specific objectives:				
Knowledge: Awareness and ability to use environmentally friendly forms of transport as solutions to the problems of transport in the mountainous areas, established at all levels and for all potential users.	**Infrastructure/ Connection:** Feasibility of using non-polluting means of transport for tourists in the sensitive mountain areas of the analysed pilot areas: *-non-polluting means of transport -narrow gauge railways and intermodal transport - efficient, attractive and competitive to the development of tourism in the Alpine and Carpathian areas, with similar problems but with different characteristics.*	**Transnational development of mountainous areas:** Innovative- and competitive offer-based (and revenue incurring) sustained economic growth in the mountainous regions in the tourism sector by identifying new possibilities to access the area and the subsequent investment created.	**The environment:** Reducing emissions of polluting gases, the greenhouse effect and the causes thereof and the enhanced quality of the environment.	**Policies at various levels:** Dialogue on the drafting of a policy for the development of mountainous area of the Carpathians, between or within the levels of transnational and European decision-making, initiated/strengthened. Strategic cooperation between the two distinct transnational geographical areas (Alpine and Carpathian)

Measures:				
1. Initiating the formal dialog on the topic, with the participation of the involved parties at the level of tourism areas and studied fields; 2. Launching of information and tourist education campaigns regarding the choice of tourism destinations and	1. Initiating a "triangle of knowledge" partnership (public administration - universities, research and innovation institutions - travel companies), aiming to develop Master Plans of the transport infrastructure at the county level for the 2014-2020	1. Feasibility of an Action Plan to attain solutions identified in the Master Plan, with the participation of all interested parties in the fields of: administration, transport, tourism and the environment. 2. Creating "cluster"-type structures around	1. Completion of the process nominating the custodian of all protected natural habitats in the counties; 2. Completion of Management Plans for protected natural habitats, bringing details about the methods and means of their sightseeing, including the	1. Development and implementation of a programme to increase management capacity of the tourism and transport domains within public authorities structures: *- Enhancing the sectoral departments by allocating resources or outsourcing*

means of transport, the relationship between the latter and the resources of the local communities; 3. Launching information and awareness-building campaigns of the local populations regarding the possibilities to capitalize on the natural habitats and their conservation through ecological sightseeing arrangements.	period, which would analyze: *- The connectivity of county transport networks to the main routes of road access in the region (TEN-T network),* *- Possibilities to modernize rail and air transport infrastructure to access areas of interest,* *- Optimization of the inter-relation of the forms of public transport infrastructure in order to improve tourist transportation flow and social benefits for the local population.* *- Analysis of the possibilities to use non-polluting means of transport in sensitive mountainous areas and technical justification of their implementation projects.*	thematic projects in the master-plan, based upon the interest of the parties involved in capitalizing on the opportunities created by the implementation of these projects. 3. The inclusion of thematic projects in land-use planning and their promotion in order to make the area attractive to investors.	intermodality of visitor transportation between the main roads of access to the area and the natural tourism objective; 3. Inclusion of this information in: *- The county Master Plan on transport infrastructure* *- Tourist promotional materials* *- Tourism Info hoardings and road signs*. 4. The authorities establishing movement restrictions in the area adjacent to protected natural habitats, their flagging through road signs and all stakeholders monitoring their implementation.	*executive functions;* *- Training programs for the human resources in the fields of tourism and transport;* *- creation of a monitoring and evaluation system of the tourism sector, with clear procedures for the collection, processing, interpretation and reporting of statistical data;* *- Equipping specific departments with database graphic processing systems (GIS).* 2. Participative development of a strategy for a better tourism 3. Implementation of the strategy through public engagement and allocation of resources in a territorial development policy.

The most stringent recommendation is to identify all parties involved in the development of the analysed domains and to initiate a public dialogue on the topic. In such a way, new resources will be initially identified and involved, which will cause the limitations for similar future studies to decrease.

The local development in the area has shown that:

- All “hard” infrastructure project outcomes are mere effects. The causes are of “softer” nature and are related to people’s ability to cooperate professionally, complemented by the type of community attitude of the people involved.

- Projects of any kind come at the end, not the beginning, of a planning process. Their fulfillment is facilitated by the organization and active implementation of public policies. Funding sources constitute opportunities, not causes of projects achievement.

- The bottom-up approach in the development and drawing up of public policies although resource-consuming, brings about unquestionably more long-term advantages.

Finally, a last piece of recommendation to the potential readers of the study, one should not read more into the present study than it really is: the first milepost of “a road less travelled by”. The newness of this study is its

integrative, sustainable approach of the relationship between such sectors as: transport, the environment and tourism with the spatial development of the mountainous areas in the North of Romania.

This allows for a long-term synergic impact upon the increase in local communities' welfare and handing down the unspoilt natural and cultural heritage to the future generations.

All information presented in this study are vital for the consolidation of a shared vision and a common strategy for the development of the sustainable access in the studied area. The current issues can be improved only if they have been properly identified and highlighted through such an analysis. The data centralization is also useful for the development of some toold meant to optimize the sustainable transport and training sessions concerning these aspects, activities that are going to be conducted during the implementation of ACCESS 2 MOUNTAIN and also after the project ends.

Project Partners

Lead partner
U-AT - Environment Agency Austria, AT

ERDF partner
bmvit - Federal Ministry of Transport, Innovation and Technology, AT

ERDF partner
Gesäuse - National Park Gesäuse, AT

ERDF partner
Mostviertel - Mostviertel-Tourism Ltd., AT

ERDF partner
Miskolc Holding - Miskolc Holding Local Government Asset Management Corporation, HUN

ERDF partner
UNICAM - University of Camerino, IT

ERDF partner
EURAC research – European Academy of Bozen/Bolzano, IT

ERDF partner
CJIT Maramureș - County Center for Tourism Informationon, RO

ERDF partner
ARR-KE - Agency for the S upport of Regional Development Kosice, SK

20% ERDF partner
RARR-PL - Rzeszow Regional Development Agency, PL

10% partner
TIMOK -Timok Club, RS

10% partner
CFUA - Carpathian Foundation Ukraine, UA

The project enjoys widespread support at transnational, national and regional level: the Permanent Secretariat of the Alpine Convention, Focal Points of the Carpathian Convention, European Federation of Museum and Tourist Railways, Ministries of Environment (AT, IT), Ministries of Transport (SI, PL) and other observers at the regional level of the project partners.