

SUMMARY

The doctor's thesis *Sustainable rural development strategies in Dorna's Basin* aims at carrying out studies and research of the social, economical and cultural environment of the localities from Dorna's Basin, Suceava county, in order to fundament a strategy of sustainable development of the area, for inhabitants' benefit. Havin a huge human and economical potential, Dorna's depression or Dorna's Land have constantly been studied by sociologists and researchers.

The paper is divided into three parts, thus:

1. Part I (chapters I, II, III and IV) is dedicated to a careful analysis of the concepts of *rural space* and *rural sustainable development*, starting from various definitions for these terms that can be found in the specialized national and international literature. The term „rural” comes from the latin word *rura* which means field, land, countryside dwelling or **ruralis** which expresses the notion of village. We therefore think that in a restricted sense the term of rural is used for the territories whose economical destination is agriculture, forestry, aquaculture, fishery and gaming and in a broad sense for the territories in which the economical, demographical, ecological and cultural variables are different from the urban space. The official concept of "rural area" is defined by Recommendation 1296/1996 of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on the European Charter of the countryside, in the following form: the rural space includes an inner or coastal area that contains villages and small towns, where most of the territory is used for agriculture, forestry, aquaculture and fishery, economic and cultural activities of the population of these areas (industry, handicraft, services, etc..) non-urban facilities for leisure and amusement or natural national and regional parks and reservations or other uses. In Romania the rural space is defined by Law 2 / 1968 on territorial- administrative organization, as being composed of the administrative area of the villages existing in the country, which bring together the country's rural population.

Given the geographic position of the studied area, close attention was paid to the rural mountain area and to its various approaches in Romania and the European Union. Regarding the concept of sustainable development, one can say that over 60 definitions were theoretically formulated, the one worth noticing being in the BRUNTLAND report which defined it as the

development that fulfills the needs of present without compromising the prospects of the future generations to meet their needs.

In the European Union, throughout its existence, but also in other countries, economic policies were meant for the rural areas as well. Obviously, other types of economic policies, sectoral and industrial, commercial, transport and so on, implicitly, have been presented there.

But all these sectoral policies, taken together or by themselves, address the rural space sequentially. However, agricultural policies are representative, given the predominance of agriculture as an economic branch in rural areas. Therefore, the development of the objectives proposed by each type of economic policy hasn't meant the direct and mandatory elimination of the general disruptions but especially of those connected to the rural environment. Rural life implies the existence of problems with very heterogeneous content and a high degree of difficulty which are in mutual inter-conditionary relations. Or, separation from the context and dealing with the problems in rural areas - singularly or by groups - lead to new failures.

For nearly two decades, at EU level, efforts are made to integrate the policy of agricultural structures into the economic and social context, respectively into the development of rural area. Experience shows that the diversity of rural activities can be used as a complement to agriculture.

Related activities - marketing of agricultural products, rural tourism, investment projects relating to environmental or cultural heritage of the area (region), small and medium enterprises have developed and offer new perspectives.

Overall, the rural policy of E.U. appears again as a combination of agricultural market policy, structural policy and environmental policy, being a complex instrument, but not always coherent.

The thesis makes an analysis of policies, programs and projects for rural development from the European Union and our country during 2000 - 2006 and 2007 - 2013 (the programming periods of the European Union), with emphasis on the National Plan for Agriculture and Rural Development and the Sapard program for the period 2000 - 2006 and on the National Rural Development Program for 2007 - 2013, financed by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

2. Part II is devoted to research of the countryside, to the presentation of the research methods, results and interpretation of the results obtained. The research performed uses the analysis of statistical indicators (chapter V) and the SWOT analysis (chapter VI) as methods, respectively the analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and dangers. This analysis provides a full picture of the countryside, by studying at the same time the internal

characteristics and the external influences exercised over it, taking into account both the positive and negative variables.

For a more complete characterization of the rural area of Romania, the investigation included the most important dimensions of the rural life, expressed through a set of 7 criteria of analysis. For the selection criteria and other analysis tools, we considered that they should be part of a methodological framework for European usage, in order to ensure compatibility between the diagnosis of the Romanian rural area with the diagnoses of Europe. Compatibility can be ensured only by using the same set of indicators, condition which is not easy to fully ensure in the current stage of organization of Romanian statistical system. It remains to be filled with a number of indicators that would enable a detailed knowledge of rural territorial administrative units, such as GDP per capita, the contribution of branches to the creation of GDP, household income, the structure of usage of non-agricultural lands, level of population's education, level and structure of unemployment, etc.

The criteria for analyzing the rural area are: physical, geographical, demographic, economic, dwellings, technical endowment of localities, social and environmental criteria. An analysis which uses these criteria allows the identification of the rural space which will ensure sustainable development. In order to achieve a comprehensive analysis with the highest degree of objectivity, each criterion was detailed in a sub-set of 3-8 sub-criteria. The basic condition is selecting the sub-criteria was that they express the main problems the rural residents face with. The criteria and sub-criteria have been operated through a set of 45 indicators which allow to measure the intensity of phenomena and processes and to identify the development trends.

The chapters VII and VIII establish a series of strategies of sustainable development for localities from Dorna Basin, starting from the diagnostic analysis of the component localities. From the administrative point of view the localities from Dorna basin belong to county Suceava and contain 12 administrative units within its limits, namely: Dorna Arini, Dorna Candrenilor, Iacobenii, Panaci Poiana Stampei, Saru Dornei Broșteni (now turned into a town), Crucea, Cârlibaba, Ciocanesti, Cosna, comprising about 45 settlements polarized in the hearth of the depression by the only important existing city: Vatra Dornei (turned into a city in 2000).

Suceava county is located in north-eastern Romania and is bordered to the north and east by Ukraine, to the south by Neamț and Mureș counties and to the west by the counties of Maramureș and Bistrița-Nasaud. The county has an area of 8553.5 km². The municipalities Suceava, Fălticeni, Campulung Moldovenesc, Radauti, Vatra Dornei are the main cities in the county. Suceava city, the administrative residence of the county has 120,000 inhabitants. Suceava county has about 700,000 inhabitants, out of which 250,000 are in the urban areas and 450,000 inhabitants in the rural areas. The climate is temperate and humid, with an average

annual temperature of 8 ° C. Hills and mountains are the predominant forms of relief and 54% of the county is covered by forests, $\frac{3}{4}$ of them being coniferous forests. The arable lands cover an area of 1813 km² and the hydrographic basin comprises 136 square kilometers of rivers and lakes. Thus, in terms of total area, Suceava county represents 3.6% of the country's surface, being the second largest county in the country. The county's population represents 3.3% of the country's population, from this point of view taking the 7th place in the country.

Agricultural area of Suceava county represents 2.4% of the agricultural area of Romania (21st place from all the Romanian counties) and the arable land area represents 1.9% of the total arable area (22nd place). The first place among the Romanian counties is held when it comes to the number of cattle, 5.7% of the total number of cattle in Romania and also the production of cow milk, 5.9% of the national production of cow and buffalo cow milk. From the mathematical point of view the basin is enclosed in the west by the meridian 25 ° 5' and in the east by the meridian 25° 30' eastern longitude, crossed by the 47 ° 17' north latitude parallel. Dorna Depression is enclosed by mountains, thus: in the N there are Suhard Mountains, in NE Giumalau Mountains, in E-SE Bistriței Mountains, in S Calimani mountains and in V Bârgău Mountains.

Although the aspect of a depression is very clear, drawing the southern and western limits is pretty difficult because the peaks, unshackled from the Călimani and Bârgău mountains and bounded by the tributaries of the two main rivers (Dorna and Neagra Șarului) pass in slopes towards the basin's bottom, so that the basin's outline is visible only in the north and east. Thus, the asymmetric profile of the depression is highlighted, emphasized also by the considerable development of the terraces on the right bank of Bistrita river.

The Northern limit of Dorna Depression is given by Suhard mountains and in NE by Giumalau mountains. The line that separates the depression from the mountains starts from the valley of Cucureasa River valley and passes north of Tesna village then ascends the valley of Cosna river to the village with the same name, continues north of Ciocanesti village, forming a long field that separates Suhard mountains from Giumalau mountains. The limit then continues south of Giumalau mountains up to Zugrenilor Gorge, which separates the Giumalău mountains from Pietrosul Bistriței mountains.

The Eastern limit starts in Broșteni, it continues with Zugrenilor Gorge, at the foot of Bistriței mountains and passes east of the localities: Rusca, Ortoaia, Dorna Arini.

The depression is bordered by Bistriței mountains to the SE, the line following Călimănel brook south of Panaci commune. The limit then goes deeply into Călimani massif up near the confluence of GuraHaitii brook with Neagra Șarului and then continues west of Saru Dornei locality, avoiding the north northeastern side of Calimani mountains west of Saru Bucovinei and

Todireni and south of Dorna Candrenilor, Poiana Negri, Poiana Stampei, lowering to Dornișoara locality.

The western limit follows a winding route from the western foot of the Suhard mountains to the west of Călimani mountains. As in the west Dorna Depression widens, almost reaching Bargaului mountains, the limit can be identified along the water sweep between Bistriței and Someșul Mare river basins.

Within the limits mentioned above, the surface area of depression is over 2000 square km (together with the frame surrounding the mountains), developed mainly along the rivers coming from Bargaului and Călimani mountains, respectively Dorna and Neagra Șarului.

Given the density and depth of fragmentation one can separate two major sub-units. Dorna Depression, largely extended towards Bârgaie, through the valleys of Cosna and Dornișoara rivers and Neagra Șarului Depression on the valley of the creek with the same name, both dominated by Călimani and Grinties mountains. These are also individualized by the other components of the natural landscape.

Dorna Depression is linked with the lower neighboring regions by passes. Thus, the connection with Transylvania region is made through Tihuța pass (1201m), with Maramureș region through Prislop pass (1416m) and over the Mestecanis pass (1099m) with Moldavia.

Through the existing passes and the routes of communication: the railway passing from Moldavia into Transylvania, respectively from Suceava to Cluj-Napoca and the national network of roads that makes the connections with Transylvania by E576 (DN17) Bistrița-Vatra Dornei-Câmpulung Moldovenesc, with Maramureș by DN18 up to Sighetu Marmatiei, with Moldavia by DN17A (Vatra Dornei-Radauti) and DN17B (Vatra Dornei-Crucea-Broșteni). Dorna Depression, even though it is surrounded by mountains it is not an isolated area, having a high degree of accessibility from the surrounding areas.

In order to study the countryside from Dorna area and to develop a diagnostic analysis, the method of statistical indicators has been used. The studied period, 1990-2005, surprised all the aspects related to the rural areas after the Romanian revolution, in economic, social or cultural plan. The indicators used refer to:

- the geographical location of Dorna Basin;
- demographic situation of settlements;
- the labor force;
- education;
- culture, art;
- health;
- agriculture;

-environment protection.

The diagnostic analysis of Dorna Basin by the method of statistical indicators provides an accurate picture of the area, either geographically, economically or socially, which may be the basis for substantiating a strategy of development of the area, on short, medium or long term.

Identified strengths:

- the natural environment of an inestimable value in which all the localities from Dorna Basin are situated;
- the existence of a significant agricultural potential resources from the point of view of land resources and labor resources;
- low industrialization and extensive agriculture practiced in the area, without excess of chemical fertilizers has allowed to maintain the biodiversity and to obtain products with high organic quality;
- the existence, before 1989, of the private sector in the area's agriculture (100%) and the lack of collectivization, with the consequences well-known;
- the existence in the area of some commercial agricultural households established through a Governmental program for supporting the animal husbandry in the mountainous areas (GD 865/2002) or through SAPARD program, which can be regarded as models;
- the significant share of the surfaces covered by pastures and meadows existing in the structure of the land fund;
- all municipalities in the studied area have a large tourism and cultural-spiritual potential;
- great opportunities to practice agri-tourism as an activity complementary to agriculture;
- the increase of agri-tourism guesthouses and their accommodation capacity, tourism and rural tourism being the alternatives that more and more tourists choose for spending their holidays;
- the existence of strong traditions and a good experience on the cultural life in all localities of the basin;

Weaknesses identified:

- road infrastructure still poorly developed in the area;
- Low representation of networks of water and sanitation;
- the high number of farms of subsistence and semi-subsistence type, with an average area of 2 ha, determined by a strong fragmentation of land;
- decrease of the number of animals in all the species and dramatically in sheep;
- low agricultural production, both vegetal and animal;
- continuous degradation of pastures and meadows;
- poorly developed health infrastructure;

- reducing the number of schools, on grounds of efficiency.

Opportunities:

- possibilities to rapidly expand the areas for organic farming;
- availability for association: in Dorna basin, since 1992, there is the Mountain Farmers' Federation - Dorna, a non-governmental association with more than 2600 members;
- capitalization of biodiversity and wealth of the forest;
- diversification of rural activities towards management economical activities, rural tourism;
- training of human resources through continuous education at the Training and Innovation Center for Development in the Carpathians - CEFIDEC-Vatra Dornei;
- possibility of getting funding from the EU under the National Program of Rural Development.

Risks:

- natural handicaps (relief, climate) resulting from the status of less favored area (mountain area);
- mechanically copying the European concepts regarding the development of rural space and environment protection;
- perpetuation of low level of productivity makes the farmers to continue to lack the sources necessary for modernization and implicitly for increasing competitiveness;
- the disappearance of subsistence farms may generate social problems in the area.

The implementation of the strategies for sustainable development of the settlements from Dorna basin aims at setting the priorities for the period 2007-2013, thus trying to integrate these priorities in the European Union's (Common Agricultural Policy) and Romania's (National Plan for Rural Development) vision of rural development. As one may notice throughout this paper, the assessment of needs and the identification of resources have been made taking the areas of interest of the two documents listed above into account.

The strategies for sustainable development of rural localities from Dorna Basin should aim at improving the quality of life in these settlements and at limiting the exodus of rural population towards the industrialized urban centers or the highly developed regions of Western Europe. Characterized by a high degree of marginalization, situated at Suceava county's extremity, at an appreciable distance from the administrative center of the county and county decision makers, with a limited economic potential, the localities from Dorna Basin become the main targets for the national and European development policies, be it rural development policies, regional development and environmental policies or policies for human resources development.

Given the fact that the main agricultural activity in Dorna Basin is related to animal husbandry, especially the dairy cows, a first strategy aims at modernizing and restructuring farms in order to increase their competitiveness, by better using the production factors. The investments oriented towards increasing the farm incomes, the level and quality of production, the compliance with the standards on hygiene, promotion of production and use of renewable energy, promotion of traditional processing of agricultural products at the farm will be supported. In order to improve the living conditions of the inhabitants the strategies on medium and long-term envisaged will pursue the modernization of villages, by extending and upgrading the road network, the development or extension of water and sanitation networks, extension of public lighting networks on side streets as well as modernization and endowment of localities' cultural establishments.

The strategy for diversification of non-agricultural economic activities and for development of micro-enterprises in Dorna Basin aims at increasing the farms' complementary revenues from non-agricultural activities, at creating new jobs, creating new services for the rural population, promoting entrepreneurship and development of rural tourism.

The human resources development strategy in Dorna basin aims at the following:

- vocational training, information and dissemination of knowledge for the people the basin's localities, working in the agricultural, food or agri-forestry sectors;

We are considering initiation, training or specialization courses in the fields mentioned above, performed at CEFIDEC Vatra Dornei and funded by the National Program of Rural Development 2007-2013 for modernization of production activities and diversification of economic activities and for animating and acquiring skills to prepare the strategy for local development of the localities from Dorna Basin, a strategy that can be funded by the LEADER axis of the National Program of Rural Development.

- measures to promote entrepreneurial culture in rural areas, through the Human Resources Development Sectoral Operational Program (priority axes 2 and 3), funded by the European Social Fund.