

Active tourism in Dornelor basin – between possibilities and spatial manifestation

Corneliu Iașu, Alina Munteanu, Mesalina Boghinciu, Andrei Coca and Bogdan Ibănescu

Abstract—Different forms of active tourism have begun to develop in Romania, especially after 1990, the year which marked the international opening of the country and the assimilation of some unknown or, until then, insufficiently promoted tourism practices on Romanian territory. Yet, a real approach of these alternative forms of tourism was ascertained at the beginning of the year 2000, the region of Bucovina being a proper space which presented both the premises and the background, but also the necessary tourist demand. The main purposes of this study were to certify the tourist's demands and also to analyse the potential economic benefit of this type of tourism for Bucovina region. In order to achieve these objectives, a survey has been developed during the days of a well known niche competition, Rarau Climbing Open. Besides the socio-demographic data, the tourist behaviour, the compatibility with other forms of active tourism, the survey offered essential data about participants' budget. The final results of the study permitted the outline of some general characteristics of the participants, allowing also the projection of a few strategic measures with a significant economic potential for the concerning area.

Keywords—Active tourism, Dornelor basin, mountaineering, tourist behaviour.

I. INTRODUCTION

Although recent studies state that Romanian tourism has relied its offer on natural resources and that the time has come to rethink the tourism offer in order to promote Romanian cultural sites, nature itself still presents many possibilities for a remodelling of touristic offer. The global economic difficulties may represent an opportunity for Romania to better highlight its tourism potential [1]. However, the present approach shows that there is a gap between the

November 25, 2010. This work was supported in part the European Social Fund in Romania, under the responsibility of the Managing Authority for the Sectoral Operational Programme for Human Resources Development 2007-2013 [grant POSDRU/6/1.5/S/25, POSDRU/88/1.5/S/47646].

Corneliu Iașu is with the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Bd. Carol I, nr. 20A, cod 700507 Iasi, Romania (phone: +40232201493; fax: +40232201474; e-mail: ciatu@uaic.ro).

Alina Munteanu is with the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Bd. Carol I, nr. 20A, cod 700507 Iasi, Romania (e-mail: alina.g.munteanu@uaic.ro).

Mesalina Boghinciu is with the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Bd. Carol I, nr. 20A, cod 700507 Iasi, Romania (e-mail: dumitrita.boghinciu@yahoo.com).

Andrei Coca is with the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Bd. Carol I, nr. 20A, cod 700507 Iasi, Romania (e-mail: coca_and@yahoo.com).

Bogdan Ibănescu is with the Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Bd. Carol I, nr. 20A, cod 700507 Iasi, Romania (e-mail: ibanescudam@yahoo.com).

Romanian tourism potential and its capitalization and presentation [2].

Our attention was focused on Dornelor basin, area which has a central point of attraction, Vatra Dornei, an internationally known spa resort. Being situated inside the North-East Romanian Development Region, this territory has a great potential of development due to the fact that the region is the only one in the country which has the right to access non-reimbursable (up to 70 %) European structural funds. Bringing into discussion apparently, an unattractive approach for the Romanian scientific community, this paper represents a first point of future quantitative and qualitative analysis of active tourism.

II. CONCEPTUALIZING ACTIVE TOURISM

The tourism is by excellence an activity related with mobility and change and the value system which connects the tourist and its destined space is in continuing transformation. The tourist's motivations and desires for a certain destination are evolving due to its personal experience but also to the societal knowledge. Since the 1960s, the mass tourism was the seasonal expression of a steady stream of large number of tourists [3] who were coming to holiday destinations, typically located along coastal areas, with cheaper transportation in and from industrialized countries. Since the 1980s, longer holidays and a growing interest for cultural aspects of the destinations have permitted an alternative tourism, practice which offered benign alternatives to the problems associated with mass tourism [4]. Travelling to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well being of local people was the guideline for ecotourism, the main commercial manifestation of alternative tourism conceptualized two decades ago, although visiting natural areas has a long history.

A new travelling philosophy that combines adventure, ecotourism and cultural aspects of a discovery tour was taking shape in the post-1990s. This belief expressed by active tourism aimed to combine recreation, education and bring benefits to the tourist as well as the visited land (Fig. 1). Active tourism has many aspects in common with ecotourism and nature tourism and it also integrates some activities of action and adventure tourism. Additionally it also includes some aspects of cultural tours and academic and scientific expeditions. There are many aspects in common between all this forms of travelling, but there are also important differences which need detailed explanation.

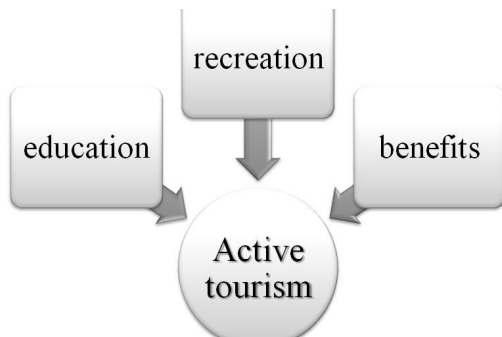


Fig. 1 The active tourism and its importance in tourist travels (source: active-tourism.org)

The forms of active tourism represent a recent but a very important preoccupation for the specialists from various domains such as geography, economy, territorial planning, even medicine. The multidisciplinary of this field of research permitted a progressive improvement of the methodology taken from different scientific domains and the terminology is being clearer, especially for the concepts of hiking and water sports. The recent approaches in the field of active tourism, approaches adapted to the needs of the XXI century society allow the achievement of more consistent researches and the acquirement of obvious results.

There are numerous studies published worldwide but very few cover explicitly the active tourism. Their majority include forms of active tourism in themes regarding alternative tourism or sustainable tourism, which are more complex and generous concepts in terms of possibilities of approach. The positive aspects of active tourism are not neglected by any of the scientific papers whether it concerns the social impact as the group cohesion [5] or the environmental and economic perspective [6]. Most of the times, active tourism is being rightfully associated with rural areas and their sustainable development [7]—[9], but the name of active tourism hardly continues to find its place in scientific literature.

The active tourism is integrated in adventure tourism [10] which can be practiced in a lighter and/or extreme form, notions specific mostly for the American tourism literature. However, the pure adventure tourism involves rather activities of high personal risks and dangers and the production and delivery of adrenalin [11]. The New Zealand authors state that the active tourism and the adventure tourism represent complementary forms which mark in the same time distinct stages of a continuous evolution of the desire for discovery of the human being. These two concepts remind us of the tourist's aspiration of adventuring which has been replaced over time when the tourist phenomenon developed with the exploration of paths by means of maps and guides. A supplementary distinction between active tourism and adventure tourism has been outlined: the active tourism is being defined through the

activity practiced while adventure tourism is rather associated with a destination [11].

The Active-Tourism Organisation offers an analysis of this entire series of concepts and terms. This organization promotes responsible and active travelling around the world, coordinates the transfer of knowledge and expertise between scientists, travel operators, non-governmental organizations, policy makers and countries in the world. Fig. 2 represents the vision of the organisation on tourism market, although not everyone would agree to this classification. Its own statements place active tourism on a distinct level than ecotourism and adventure tourism, despite the fact that these three tourist practices have common points. This synthesis of relationships between concepts does not reflect the organisation's own explanations regarding the characteristics and the specificity of each tourism practice.

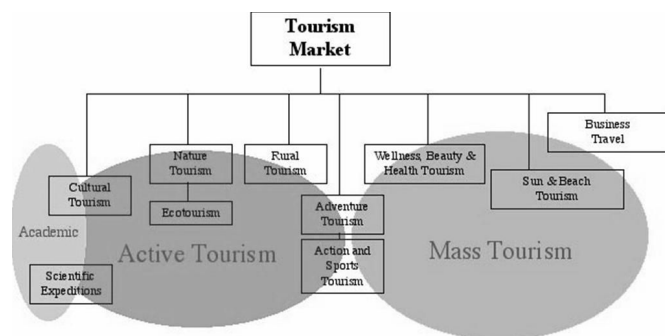


Fig. 2 The vision of Active-Tourism Organisation of tourism activities (source: active-tourism.org)

III. ACTIVE TOURISM PHENOMENON IN DORNELOR BASIN

Dornelor basin is a relatively small and common intramountainous depression but which benefits from a generally well conserved traditional nature and lifestyle. These aspects make it one of the most attractive and visited areas from north-country, especially for the possibilities that offers for active tourism (Fig.3), for rest and relaxation, for winter sports. The tourism development in this area represents more of a necessity for sustaining local economy which is being based on an elementary capitalization of local resources through zootechnics, food industry and forestry.

A. The beginning of active tourism

Back in 1935, a strong tourist movement had emerged in Vatra Dornei, focused on developing different forms of what we call today, active tourism. The planning of sports grounds and the presentation of some of the tourist paths from Giupalau – Rarau Mountains, Suhard and Calimani Mountains and a panel of addresses of local mountain guides in a published tourist guide of Vatra Dornei in 1936 were the main expressions of this new travel philosophy.

In the spring of 2007, the National Authority for Tourism has approved 17 paths in these mountains. The network of

tourist mountain paths in Dornelor basin is of approximately 280 km and it is periodically equipped and patrolled by

members of Vatra Dornei Mountain Rescue team. To the sports diversity practiced in Dornelor basin, in 1999 are being

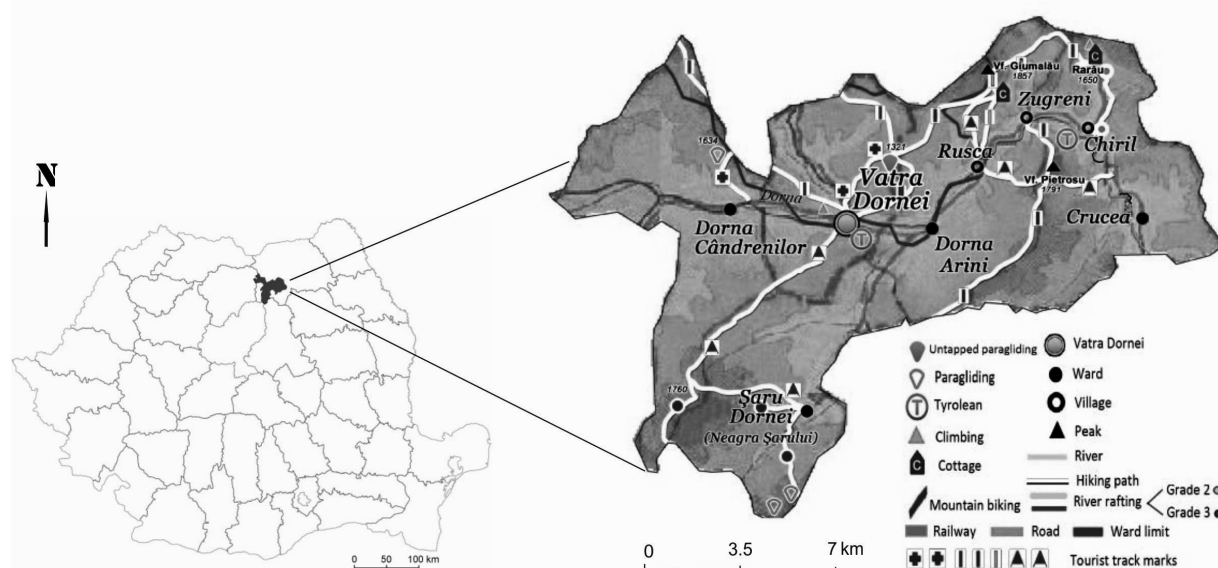


Fig. 3 Active tourism forms in Dornelor basin (source: remaking after ANCPPI)

added new elements of adventure and extreme sports: river rafting, paragliding, mountain bike, tyrolean traverse, rock climbing.

The first river rafting activities were recorded in the spring of 1999 on Bistrita river and since then, a sector of approximately 35 km remained blocked. Ousorul Peak (1,634 m), near the city of Vatra Dornei is considered to be the best place on Romania's paragliding map because of the laminar currents existing there. This mountain peak was also the host of a national paragliding competition in 2001, only two years after the birth of this sport in this area. Later on, an important form of active tourism made its presence in the area in 2006 when 150 km of mountain biking paths were set.

Another significant event in the dynamic of active tourism was the opening of Active Tourism Park in 2009, an initiative sustained also by the Stefan cel Mare University of Suceava. This park offers the possibility of 45 km of nordic walking, located within the range of the resort, and presenting all the European characteristics of this form of activity.

The Calimani Mountains, situated in the south of the region have a long tradition of hiking activity, reaching back to the first decades of the XXth century. The hiking paths are well maintained, and one of the traditional hiking path links Vatra Dornei to Rodnei Mountains, through Runc peak, Suhardu Mare peak, Omu peak (link to Rotunda pass).

B. The dynamic of active tourism forms

The most practiced sports and tourist activities in the world are represented here in Dornelor basin. Rock climbing and mountaineering, generally, have become more popular amongst young people. These activities involve backpacking, physical fitness programmes and cross-country skiing [12].

Walking, hiking and mountain climbing are tourist practices present also on the rest of Romanian territory, especially because of the possibility of climbing every Carpathians peak. As a risk recreation [13], mountaineering involves activities more or less difficult. The complexity of practices are conditioned ultimately by each direct and exact option of the tourists, in close relation with their age, physical strength, health, training and level of knowledge in that domain. Dornelor basin has climbing paths on Alpina Dorna 1 rock, rock climbing and bouldering tracks between 20 and 80 metres on Rusca Rock, and on Pietrele Doamnei – Rarau Mountains only for mountain climbing. The diverse tourist offer of guided activities include two paths of tyrolean traverses that cross Dorna River, both of them being though means of recreation and not links between two random points of a mountaineering path.

Locations such as in Postavaru Mountains - Poiana Brasov, Piatra Craiului, Codlea (in Brasov County), as Dornelor basin are the favourite areas for paragliding. The most difficult and challenging flight, recommended only for those with a minimum two or three years of experience is the one from Postavaru Mountains – Poiana Brasov, which has a descent of 650 metres. But the presence of one of the strongest currents in the country inside Dornelor basin makes this territory an attractive destination for tourists willing to practice paragliding. Ousorul Peak offers a difference of 820 metres between launching and landing points, permitting a lift of 360 degrees.

Hiking is undoubtedly the most present form of active tourism. It has by far the most practitioners and it represents a start for other practices of active tourism. The concept of hiking is still under discussion and its definitions are still

different and confuse. Yet, Emmanuelle Sarlanga proposed a hiking routes typology [14] which was based on the existence of three required elements for the realization of a hiking route: the route itself as a main tourist product, the access way (a roadway or railway, necessary for the arrival of tourists at their destination) and the stages (depending on route's length, they can be upgraded facilities for picnic, beautiful view points or even shelters, chalets, villages with hotel facilities).

The first approved hiking paths have appeared in the Dornelor basin in the second half of XXth century ('60s – '70s), this type of activity having a long tradition in this area. Today, we can consider hiking in Dornelor basin as being the most spatially spread form of active tourism, covering all territorial units with routes of different length or level of difficulty. The local paths can last for 3 to 10 hours in average, summing 280 km marked tracks, from which 150 km can be used for hiking or mountain biking. The numbers exceed any other form of active tourism practiced in the area.

Although extremely present, this practice still presents opportunities for the study area. In Dornelor basin, the hiking routes can help draining the tourists from Vatra Dornei, the main attraction, to the wards around that don't presents a big enough interest for the tourist from Romanian big cities. This type of sustainable tourism development can be seen in Western Europe - Haute Gironde, Loire Valley and Seine Valley, being the most suitable examples (generally, in micro-regions based solely on one attraction).

By taking into account all these elements we just referred to, one of the activities we need to mention is nordic walking which summed in 2007 approximately 8 million practitioners [15]. The effects of this activity on health were highlighted in various international studies. Apparently, nordic walking uses about 90 % of muscles and it allows to burn up to 46 % more calories than usual walking due to the use of poles [16]. It has also a positive impact for overweight persons [17] or Parkinson patients [18]. These characteristics of health maintenance make nordic walking an activity practiced by age persons, from children to older people, including those with health problems.

In Dornelor basin this activity is recent, the first proposals appearing in 2007/2008, and the first paths beginning to be functional since 2009 [19]. However, as global trend, this sport knows here a sustained evolution, attracting more and more practitioners. The main reasons are the positive effects on health and the low costs involved. According to Vatra Dornei Tourism Promotion and Mountain Rescue Service the total length of nordic walking paths around Vatra Dornei is about 45 km arranged on six routes numbered R1 to R6, with lengths between 2 and 12.1 km, with level difference from 39 metres to 464 metres. Given the current growth trends of this sport, both among Western European countries and Eastern European Countries (including Romania), we can foresee a multiplication of nordic walking paths in the next years in Vatra Dornei. Hiking trails already designed can be used for nordic walking, but will consider compliance with grades of difficulty. Nordic walking is a much more demanding activity

than hiking, so it can be practiced on large scale only on routes with small and medium difficulty grades, according to annex no.2 of the Government Decision 77/2003 (journey time is between 3-8 hours with sustained physical effort, possible in some sectors) [20].

An important activity in Dornelor basin is horse riding, activity which takes place in Calimani National Park and in its surrounding area. The various grades of difficulty of horse riding attract a large category of tourists, tourist packages being available both for children/beginners and experienced riders.

The research shows that horse riding tourism has a rather commercial status in this area, dominated by children camps of Junior range type, by trips of maximum 6 days and by loop routes. Yet, horse riding is oriented towards a greater number of tourists, with low prices compared to those registered in western countries. The tourists are generally inexperienced and willing to take only short routes.

Still, the potential of Dornelor basin and the little experience of tourist operators allow the presence and even the evolution of this type of tourism towards an adventure activity, with longer, more expensive and guided trips (up to 2 or 3 weeks) for experienced tourists.

Another activity with a recent history in the area is mountain biking which take here many forms. The products are based on competitions and mountain biking trails lasting one day or more. Dorna basin hosts one of the most important national competitions of this type of sport and travel agencies offer many recreational opportunities for mountain biking trails. Crossing such a route may take up to three days. There are proposals for all four levels of difficulty, when physical activity is combined with the discovery of landscapes or cultural heritage sites inside the area.

Going to water sports and activities, river rafting is an attractive product, successfully implemented in many mountain areas (gorges and valleys are most attractive) in almost all countries, but concentrate in North America, New Zealand, the rivers in the Alps and Pyrenees. Usually, the river's sectors are divided onto 6 classes based on grades of difficulty to practice rafting (1-very easy to 6-very hard).

Although Dornelor basin has a very old tradition in the field, rafting activities were introduced in the area only in 1999. Nowadays, there are 3 major operators offering river rating services, especially on Bistrita river, downstream Vatra Dornei. Activity is performed on the four existing sectors, including two areas of difficulty from 2 to 2.5 grade (with lengths of 22, respectively 10 km of which only 4.3 in the study area) and two sectors with 3 grade of difficulty in Crucea county (with lengths of 1.2, respectively 1.3 km). Almost 60 % of practitioners come from Bucharest, most of them participating at various conferences or team buildings organized in the area. Moreover, these events are the only able to provide a sufficient number of people that allows the rent of equipment.

Even if we refer to hiking or rafting, mountain biking or nordic walking, active tourism takes different shapes in Dornelor basin, their majority being imported from other regions of the World. They all share their rapid ascension during the last ten years which permitted them to attract a great number of tourists. The result has been positive for both investors and local community, showing a growth of popularity and income from related services.

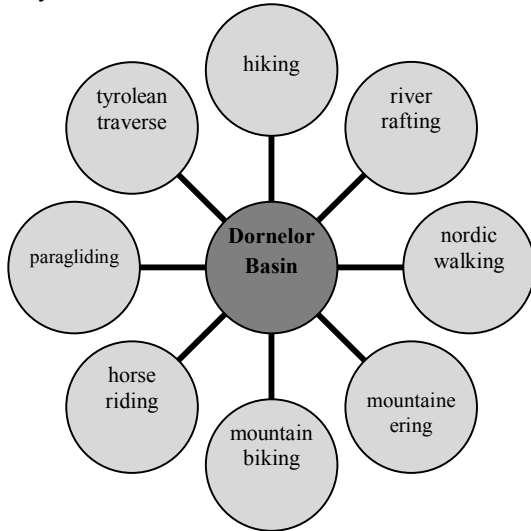


Fig. 4 Active tourism diversity in Dornelor basin

It has been proved that the most important short-term tourism growth opportunities are provided by this niche tourism based on natural and cultural resources [21].

IV. INTRODUCING THE SURVEY FOR ACTIVE TOURISM

The aim of applying a survey was to identify the interests, the origin, the budget of tourists, also the forms of active tourism practiced and the type of accommodation they prefer. The inquiry was applied in august 2010 on 73 subjects, aged over 17, at the Rarau climbing event. Rarau Climbing Open is a highly recognized competition at national level being considered as one of the top 3 similar competitions among Herculane Climbing Open and Rimetea Climbing open. As the results of our survey, we observed that, out of all subjects, 64 % were men (47) and 36 % women (26) (Fig. 5). The main age group was between 23 and 28 years old (41 %), followed by young subjects, 17-22 years old (34 %), with a great age

frequency of 21 and 23 years old. The majority of the participants (84.9 %) are under 30 (Fig. 6)

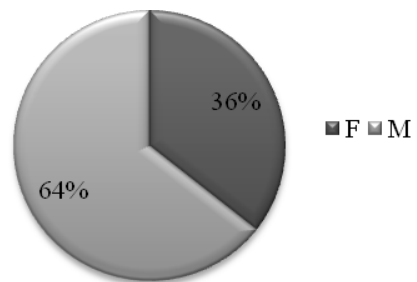


Fig. 5 The gender structure of the tourists at Rarau Climbing Open 2010

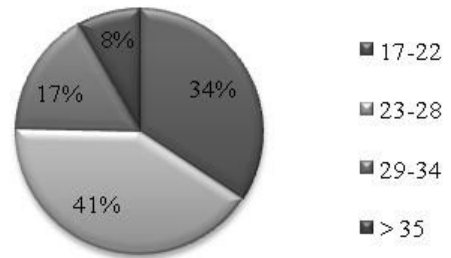


Fig. 6 Age-group structure of the competition's participants

Female respondents have an average age of 23, while the male average is 26.8. We observe the same situation as regarding the most frequent age which is younger at females (20-23) than at males (26-28).

The most part of the respondents (71 %) originate in Suceava County. There is a predominance of the participants from Campulung Moldovenesc, as they are very close to the site and as they lack an alternative (unlike visitors from Vatra Dornei who might also frequent the Calimani Mountains). They are followed by participants from Cluj-Napoca (6) and the capital Bucharest (5). The rest of the participants originate in the west Romania (7) followed by those from east of the country (3) (Fig. 7).

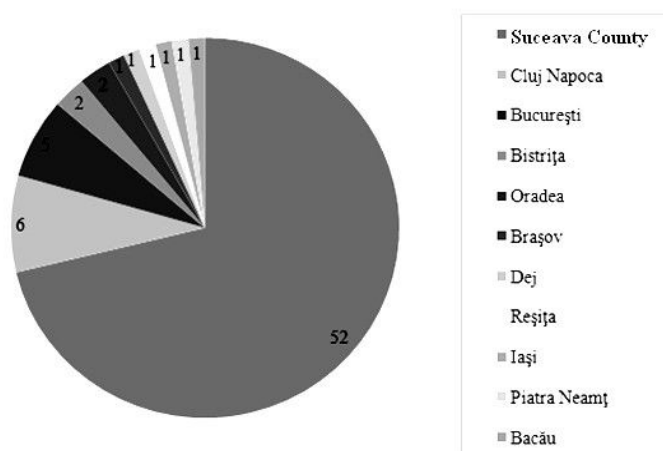


Fig. 7 The origin of the participants at Rarau Climbing Open 2010

As for their social and professional status, there is a predominance of students (30 of them), which is normal if we consider their predominant young age. The active persons on the working market have a wide span of professional profile – IT specialists, researchers, architects, PhD Candidates, photographers, electronic engineers, fitness instructors, hair stylist, driver or tourism agent.

The target group for Rarau climbing seems to be composed of specially young people aged under 30, from Suceava County or western Romania, mainly male, where female average ages is inferior to those of men. Male seem to be more into active tourism and to older ages.

The low average age of the participants also reflects within the social and professional structure (mainly students); instead, those who work have mainly high skilled professions which require a high stress level and are overpaid.

Except respondents from Suceava County, Rarau Climbing has mainly attracted participants from Western Romania, situation which might be explained by the higher incomes and the penetration of a broader leisure activity spectrum from western cultures.

The analysis of the expenses for the participants at Rarau Climbing Open 2010 represented one of the essential points of the study, part of the survey being focused on gathering the necessary data for an estimation of economic benefits of this type of event over the territory. After an evaluation of these data (Table I), a first conclusion was that sports equipment represents the first category of expenses, cumulating around 70 % of participants' total expenses. This interesting aspect deserves a special attention: while food, transport and accommodation expenses were reported to a single event, those for sports equipment were estimated for an entire year (it is logic if we take into account that climbing equipment is not easily disposable). For accurate results, the survey has been

analysed first without and then with the expenses on equipment.

TABLE I
THE TOURISTS' EXPENSES AT RARAU CLIMBING OPEN 2010

| Expense categories | Total expenses including equipment Average expense = 726,5 lei/tourist (aprox. 170 € / 235 \$) | Total expenses without the equipment Average expenses = 227,4 lei/tourist (aprox. 55 € / 75 \$) ^a |
|-----------------------|--|--|
| <i>Equipment</i> | 69 % | |
| <i>Food</i> | 10 % | 30 % |
| <i>Transport</i> | 8 % | 27 % |
| <i>Accommodation</i> | 6 % | 20 % |
| <i>Other expenses</i> | 7 % | 23 % |

Among the three categories of expenses – transport, food and accommodation – which sum up around 77 % (excluding the equipment) from the participants' budget for this event, an important choice was the meal (31%), associated to the presence of a nearby restaurant or to the sometimes overrated supplies. Transportation expenses represent also an important factor for those attending Rarau Climbing Open, its share of the total budget being around 26 %. However, this percentage is higher for visitors from farther parts of the country (from cities like Cluj-Napoca, Bucharest) and more excused (sometimes less than 5 %) for visitors from nearby (Vatra Dornei, Campulung Moldovenesc). A general feature of those who came from greater distances is the use of traditional public transportation. Trains and buses are often preferred because they make possible the travel of large groups of 10 or more individuals, while the vehicle is preferred by groups of 2 to 5 persons. Accommodation fails to obtain more than 20 % from the budget allocated by the visitors to this event. This little significance is quite normal if we consider the fact that many of them have brought their tents and sleeping bags given the assurance of favourable weather conditions in which the competition takes place.

It was observed that age could hardly be correlated with the expenses made, the vast majority of participants spending below the threshold value of 500 lei (approx. 120 euros) per event. However, the segment older than 30 years suffered some tourist behaviour changes, the average budget being much larger, only two individuals having budgets below 500 lei. On the opposite side it can be placed the dominant age category of the event, the age group between 17 and 29 years old. This group has a relatively similar economic behaviour, which can be generically called *economical student behaviour*.

An important objective of this study was to correlate expenses with the participants' tourist behaviour. We tried to see if visitors and other sports practitioners spend more (in terms of greater activity in this domain) or less (to save money in order to practice a wide variety of active sports) than others who are dedicated only to climbing. To general surprise, the practitioners of other sports allocated a more generous amount of money for an activity of this kind (an average of 767.65lei/event instead of 726,50 lei, the average of the allocated budget). It seems like the people who are passionate for active tourism are willing to allocate more money for this kind of events.

The calculation of expenses and their correlation with the locality of origin was of utmost importance for the study. We observed that if the people travel a longer distance, they allocate a more generous budget for this kind of event. The transport seemed to be an irrelevant indicator to explain these differences. A more credible explanation concerns rather the proximity and the different appropriation of the place. For the participants from Vatra Dornei, Campulung Moldovenesc, and partially Suceava, Rarau Massive, the place of the event, is very familiar, well known and often attended thanks to geographical neighbourhood. For the tourists who came from Transylvania, from the other part of the Carpathian Mountains, or for those who came from the south of the country, Rarau Massive acquires another connotation. They feel an estrangement phenomenon, specific and favourable to the tourist activities, phenomenon which is imperceptible for the 'local' ones.

As a logical conclusion of the analysis of tourists' expenses at Rarau Open Climbing it can be affirmed that this type of events are economically beneficial for the area of study. We would recommend the introduction of this kind of events in tours or their connection to similar events because of the multisport potential of the participants. In the same idea, the emergence of a more diverse offer for female audience and also the localization of some centers for leasing/purchasing the needed equipment should substantially increase the budget allocated by the participants.

V. LONG-TIME OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTIVE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN DORNELOR BASIN

Despite the diversity that we have observed in the previous chapter and the sustained dynamic of this type of tourism in Dornelor basin, we can observe an uneven development of these activities. While some of them prove a certain maturity, others are still in an early stages of development and they are yet in the pursuit of a place in tourist offers.

After a careful analysis, we can propose several deployments, ways of development and improvement directions for the forms of active tourism that we have presented so far, based on their specific and also on natural conditions of the territory.

A better focus on river rafting activities shows a complex impact on the crossed territories, which require detailed studies. Buckley sees this as being part of the adventure tourism concept, that can be performed without prior training because there is a low injury risk [22] and he considers it the first suitable option for development of upper sections of the rivers, but he rings the alarm on changing landscape problem [23].

The study area allows new river rafting sectors upstream Vatra Dornei on Bistrita Aurie river, but only in spring because of the swollen waters. Instead, it may be applied a strategy of promoting more sustainable and diversified services, allowing access to other categories of tourists such as people with disabilities. These measures have been already applied in the USA and Western Europe countries, where river rafting can be practiced even by people in wheelchair.

Climbing and mountain biking have made a great impact and this could be a great asset for a better knowledge of the territory. Both sports propose nationally recognized competitions e.g. Rarau Climbing Open, respectively Dorna Xtrem.

We believe these proposals can materialize into real projects with low level of investment, to support tourism development in Dorna basin. In a field such as tourism, in which changes occur rapidly, diversification and adaptation of tourist offers can only constitute favourable premises for a territory like the one studied.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The Dornelor basin presents an important tourist potential, being only partially capitalised by the developed activities. The multitude of active tourism forms that can be found in the area (rafting, nordic walking, hiking, mountain climbing, paragliding, tyrolean traverse, etc.) justifies the large number of tourists arrived from all over the country and even from abroad.

The appearance of these new forms of tourism is quite recent and the authorities are not able to keep up with their rapid development. Thereby, we can find discrepancies between the situation in the field, the promotion of the tourist area and the logistic frame.

Despite the rapid growth of active tourism practices, there are still many opportunities to develop and diversify the actual offer, the territory having the necessary natural advantages, hoping that tourism, if it is well planned and managed, can generate significant incomes for the local population [24].

VII. REFERENCES

- [1] A. V. Dulău, M. M. Coroş, (2009, august). Is Cultural Tourism Attractive in Transylvania? A Focus on Cluj and Sibiu Counties, Romania. *WSEAS TRANSACTIONS on BUSINESS and*

- ECONOMICS*, Volume 6, p. 413-424. Available: <http://www.wseas.us/e-library/transactions/economics/2009/29-656.pdf>
- [2] C. Iașu, M. Bulai, A critical analysis on the evaluation of tourism attractiveness in Romania. Case study: the region of Moldavia, in *Proceedings of the 5th WSEAS International Conference on Economy and Management Transformation (Volume I)*, Timișoara, 2010, p. 145-150.
- [3] J. JAFARI, coord., *Encyclopedia of tourism*. Routledge, London, 2000.
- [4] B. WARF, coord., *Encyclopedia of human geography*, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, 2006.
- [5] N.G. McGehee, "Alternative tourism and social movements", *Annals of Tourism Research*, vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 124-143, 2000.
- [6] D.B. Weaver, "Alternative tourism in Montserrat", *Tourism Management*, vol. 16, No. 8, pp. 593-604, 1995.
- [7] *Guide pédagogique sur l'élaboration et la mise en œuvre d'un projet de randonnée pédestre, « Innovation en milieu rural »*, Cahier de l'innovation N° 12, Observatoire Européen L.E.A.D.E.R, Commission Européenne, Direction Générale de l'Agriculture, 2001.
- [8] D.B. Weaver, *Sustainable tourism: theory and practice*, Elsevier Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford, 2006.
- [9] D. Hall, I. Kirkpatrick, M. Mitchell, *Rural tourism and sustainable business*, Channel View Publications, Clevedon/Buffalo/Toronto, 2005.
- [10] M. A., Delise, L. Jolin, *Un autre tourisme est-il possible ?*, Presse de l'Université, Québec, 2007.
- [11] M. J. Kane, H. Tucker, Adventure tourism, the freedom to play with reality, *Tourist Studies*, Sage Publications, 2004. DOI: 10.1177/1468797604057323.
- [12] R. G. Mitchell, *Mountain experience: the psychology and sociology of adventure*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1983.
- [13] D. W. Robinson, "A descriptive model of enduring risk recreation involvement", *Journal of Leisure Research*, vol.24, No.1, pp. 52-63, 1992.
- [14] E. Sarlanga, *Les routes touristiques de la conception à l'animation*, Editions ACFCI (Assemblée des chambres françaises de commerce et d'industrie), 1997.
- [15] Active Tourism Organization, Available: <http://www.active-tourism.com>
- [16] International Nordic Walking Federation (INWA), Available: <http://inwa-nordicwalking.com/NordicWalking/History/tabid/210/language/en-US/Default.aspx>
- [17] M. Farnsworth, P. Burtcher, "Nordic walking: Global trend set to make an impact on Australia's health and fitness", *Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport*, vol. 12, Supplement 2, January 2010, pp. e3.
- [18] H. Figard-Fabre, N. Fabre, A. Leonardi, F. Schena, Physiological and perceptual responses to Nordic walking in obese middle-aged women in comparison with the normal walk, *European Journal of Applied Physiology*, Vol. 108, Number 6, April, 2010, pp. 1141-1151.
- [19] F. J. M. van Eijkeren, R. S. J. Reijmers, M. J. Kleinvelde, A. Minten, J. P. ter Bruggen, B. R. Bloem, Nordic Walking Improves Mobility in Parkinson Disease, *Movement Disorders*, Vol. 23, No. 15, 2008, pp. 2239-2243.
- [20] Agentia de Turism Tara Dornelor (Dorna County Travel Agency), Available: www.taradornelor.ro.
- [21] Constituția României, H.G. 77/2003 (Government Decision 77/2003).
- [22] R. Gruescu, G. Pirvu, R. Nanu, Ways of raising finance for the improvement of tourism potential and tourism services, in *Proceedings of the 5th WSEAS International Conference on Economy and Management Transformation (Volume I)*, Timișoara, 2010, p. 207-212.
- [23] R. Buckley, *Adventure tourism*, CABI, Oxfordshire, 2006.
- [24] R. Buckley, White-whater Tourism, *River Tourism*, B. Prideaux, M. Cooper, Ed. CABI, Oxfordshire, 2009.
- [25] A. Iancu, L. Popescu, V. Popescu, "The Sustainable Tourism – between the Conceptual Approach and the
- [26] Strategy for Putting it in Practice", in *Proceedings of the 5th WSEAS International Conference on Economy and Management Transformation (Volume I)*, Timișoara, 2010, p. 33-38.