

COMITETUL DE MONITORIZARE AL PROGRAMULUI OPERAȚIONAL REGIONAL

HOTĂRÂRE

**privind aprobarea textului revizuit al axei prioritare 5 a POR:
„Dezvoltarea durabilă și promovarea turismului”**

În temeiul prevederilor art 12 din Hotărârea Guvernului nr.765/2007 privind aprobarea constituirii Comitetului de Monitorizare a Programului Operațional Regional 2007-2013 și a Regulamentului - cadru de organizare și funcționare al acestuia,

Comitetul de Monitorizare al Programului Operațional Regional adoptă prezenta hotărâre:

Art. 1 - Se aprobă textul revizuit al axei prioritare 5 a Programului Operațional Regional: „Dezvoltarea durabilă și promovarea turismului” cu modificarea operațiunii – „Crearea Centrelor Naționale de Informare și Promovare Turistică (CNIPT) și dotarea acestora”.

Art. 2 – Textul revizuit al axei prioritare 5 „Dezvoltarea durabilă și promovarea turismului” este prezentat în Anexă, care face parte integrantă din prezenta hotărâre.

PREȘEDINTE COMITETUL DE MONITORIZARE AL PROGRAMULUI OPERAȚIONAL REGIONAL

Elena Gabriela UDREA
Ministrul Dezvoltării Regionale și Turismului



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Priority Axis 5: Sustainable development and promotion of tourism

Objectives

This priority axis aims mainly to sustainable valorization and promotion of the cultural heritage and natural resources with tourism potential, as well as to improve the quality of accommodation and leisure tourist infrastructure, in order to increase the regions' attractiveness, develop the local economies and create new jobs.

Rationale

Within the National Strategy for Regional Development, prepared on the basis of the Regional Development Plans and within National Strategic Reference Framework 2007-2013 the development of tourism was clearly identified as a development priority, taking into account the existing tourist potential in the Regions. This potential justifies the financial support for rehabilitation of tourist infrastructure from different tourist areas and for the valorization of natural, cultural and historical heritage, with the aim of including these resources within tourist circuits and also of promoting them in order to attract tourists.

Development of tourism is fully in line with the Community Strategic Guidelines on Cohesion 2007-2013; the implementation of this priority axis will contribute to improving the Regions' attractiveness and also to the creation of more and better jobs.

Investment in tourism and culture will allow Regions to make use of advantages offered by tourist and cultural assets for the identification and strengthening of their own identity in order to improve the competitive advantages in sectors with high added value and high qualitative and cognitive content, both in traditional and emerging markets.

Tourism creates regional and local economic growth opportunities, and also contributes to job creation through the valorization of specific natural and cultural assets of each of the 8 development regions, including marginal areas, economically and socially disadvantaged. Moreover, an important aspect of the new jobs created will be a regional opportunity for female labour-force employment.

The valorization of tourist attractions existing in different areas of the country, mainly by encouraging the creation and development of local enterprises, will contribute to economic growth in deprived urban areas or peripheral rural areas and convert areas with low economic competitiveness into attractive areas for investors.

Tourist activities generate demand for a wide range of goods and services, further purchased both by tourists and tourism companies, including goods and services provided by other economic sectors (trade, buildings, transports, food & beverage, footwear & clothing, handicraft industry).

The development of tourism should take into account the principle of sustainable development, concerning the preservation of natural and cultural assets, and also the reduction of human pressure on the environment, that cannot be avoided in the practice of large-scale tourism.

The increase in the number of tourists will generate high pressure on the environment, affecting the ecosystem's balance. The pressure on the environment should be controlled in those regions with special natural assets, in order to ensure their capitalization in a sustainable manner and also to distribute balanced spatial tourism activities.

Within all the development regions, the capitalization of tourist attractions is in most of the cases limited by the quality of environment infrastructure and services in general, and of the services related to the accommodation and recreation facilities in particular, all of them representing an obstacle in tourism development.

It is expected that the implementation of this ROP priority axis, through the improvement both of tourist areas infrastructure and of services related to the accommodation and recreation facilities, will lead to a qualitative growth, according to European standards, of the entire tourism industry, with a direct impact on growth of tourist demand for Romania, as an European tourist destination.

Romania has to promote a tourism potential of great diversity, which offers all tourism products and for all seasons. Privatization in tourism has contributed to investments for tourism infrastructure modernization and, as result, to the improvement of quality and diversity of the tourism services offer. New tourism products/types, such as rural/agro, adventure tourism, spa/wellness tourism and other niche types of tourism are under development. The business tourism is also developing as a result of different activities like congresses, symposia, exhibitions, diplomatic meetings, cultural-scientific events, other business meetings (MICE products).

On the other hand, the awareness of Romanian products through tourism is an important factor for international promotion of Romanian economy and for the development of its national market. The development of the tourism brand is a priority considering its effect both on attracting foreign businesses and on the expansion of domestic tourism with its beneficial economic leverage impact.

Romania does not have yet a well-defined profile as tourism destination and the domestic promotion is insufficient and undersized compared to the demand.

Currently, neither foreign tourists nor Romanian ones may get information from specialized tourism promotion and information centres on news concerning the country, tourism attractions, cultural events or business activities, archaeological sites, accommodation, restaurants, recreation possibilities or any kind of facilities they can enjoy. In the same context, foreign tour operators also need this information available on internet or websites for creating their Romanian tourism programmes.

Promotional activities – with the aim to develop tourism as a cross-cutting economic sector- contribute to the overall competitiveness objective through the recognised spill-over effect of tourism activities on production and service sectors.

Key Areas of Intervention

- Restoration and sustainable valorization of cultural heritage and setting up/modernization of related infrastructure
- Creation, development, modernization of the tourism infrastructure for sustainable valorization of natural resources and for increasing the quality of tourism services
- Promoting the tourism potential and setting-up the needed infrastructure in order to increase Romania's attractiveness as tourism destination

These areas of intervention are aimed at supporting the valorization of important tourism resources in Romania: the cultural and the natural resources.

Restoration and sustainable valorization of cultural heritage and setting up/modernization of related infrastructure

Cultural tourism potential represents one of the highest values for tourism activities, being positioned before both the traditional markets and some tourism niches, such as arts. Research studies indicated that cultural tourists spend 38% more per day, and stay 34% longer than traditional tourists¹.

It is of critical importance to preserve what remains of the cultural heritage of the different regions of the country severely damaged in the recent decades. This includes historical buildings, monuments, museums, theatres, and historical works of art. These cultural preservation initiatives proposed by the local authorities will have to be accompanied by a consistent territorial planning for preserving (and where it is possible, restoring) historical centers in towns, maintaining traditional architectural styles and conserving medieval historical cities.

ROP will finance sites with tourism potential (both urban or rural location), which belong to UNESCO patrimony, national cultural patrimony, as well as the urban cultural patrimony, according to the Romanian Law.

Indicative operations will focus on:

- Restoring, protecting and conserving world cultural heritage and related infrastructure (Churches of Moldavia, Monastery of Horezu, the villages with fortified churches in Transylvania, the dacian fortresses of the Orastie mountains, historic centre of Sighisoara, the wooden churches of Maramures, Danube Delta, etc.);
- Restoring, protecting and conserving national cultural patrimony² and related infrastructure, with an important tourist potential (restoring buildings with traditional architectural elements, street network, cultural centres, museums, parking, roads, etc.) in order to introduce them in tourist circuits;
- Restoring, protecting and conserving the urban cultural patrimony³.

¹ US tourist figures 2001

² Group A: Monuments of universal and national value according to the list done by the Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs

³ Group B: Monuments for local cultural patrimony according to the list done by the Ministry of Culture and Religious Affairs)

Creation, development, modernization of the tourism infrastructure for sustainable valorization of natural resources and for increasing the quality of tourism services

The tourism practiced in nature in a sustainable manner, generates various activities and allows for the increase of economic and environmental sustainability of tourist activities.

Taking into account that 30% of Romania's surface is occupied by mountains, it can be considered that mountain tourism represents an important opportunity to practice during the entire year different tourist activities, some of them with niche character.

Sustainable tourist use of the protected areas could be realized by practicing a controlled tourism regime, in order to have a balanced distribution of tourists in all periods of the year (thus reducing the seasonality effect). Moreover, this objective will be achieved by implementing an efficient booking-system, which will give knowledge of the real number of tourists that wish to visit a protected area and to have an adequate and continuous monitoring of the pressure on the environment. All these activities will be developed according to the management plans for the NATURA 2000 network.

At the moment, Romania has a sufficient accommodation capacity, but in many cases superseded/outdated, correlated with a low level of modernization, especially the two-three stars accommodation structures built between 1975-1980.

Taking into account global tourism market evolutions, it is of critical importance to improve the quality of accommodation, such as hotels, motels and campsites, chalets and youth hostels, and accommodation units on the ships/pontoons. The same problems occur in the area of entertainment facilities.

Indicative operations will focus on:

- Improvement of natural sites with tourism potential (e.g.: canyons, gorges, caves, glacial lakes, etc).
- Valorization of mountain tourist potential by construction of the necessary infrastructure: rehabilitation and arrangement of access ways to the main tourist natural objectives, alpine refuges, signposting hiking paths, informative board, camping platforms, mountain rescue posts (Salvamont) etc.
- Development of spa tourism - improvement, modernization and endowment of treatment facilities, including therapeutic salinas, development of captivation and/or transport networks for mineral and saline springs etc.
- Rehabilitation, modernization and extension of accommodation structures and related utilities (e.g. hotels, motels and camping, chalets and youth hostels, accommodation units on the ships/pontoons);
- Creation, rehabilitation, and extension leisure tourist infrastructure and related utilities (e.g. swimming-pools, mini-golf grounds, tennis, paint-ball, railway transport of tourist interest on narrow gauge railway, in hill and mountain areas etc).

ROP will finance projects related to the valorization of natural resources with tourism potential and the rehabilitation, modernization and extension of accommodation structures and related utilities, as well as leisure tourism infrastructure, implemented in urban areas; in the case of spa resorts, projects can be located both in urban and rural areas.

Promoting the tourism potential and setting-up the needed infrastructure in order to increase Romania's attractiveness as tourism destination

This key area of intervention addresses activities meant to make Romania an attractive destination for tourism and business, together with the sustainable development of tourism products, the increase of internet use in promoting and booking tourism services (E-tourism).

Moreover, there will be supported the tourism information and promotion infrastructure in the country and the supply of tourism information to and from tourists and tour operators. The main aim of this key area of intervention is to build a national level network of tourism information and promotion centres (NTIPC) in urban spatial administrative units with high and very high concentration of natural/anthropic tourism resources⁴ and in the holiday resorts⁵.

Indicative operations will focus on:

- Creation of a positive image of Romania as a tourism destination by defining and promoting the national tourism brand, attracting business investors and other strategic partners in order to develop the tourism industry and to increase its attractiveness. Introducing new promotion methods and diversifying promotion materials for creating a real and complex tourism image..
- Development and consolidation of domestic tourism by supporting tourism promotion of specific products and specific marketing activities. The aim is to develop the concept of tourism recreation in Romania, to increase the number of holidays in Romania by promoting specific tourism products.
- Investments in NTIPCs set up – activities such as building/modernising, purchase of equipment, IT and software in order to create a unitary tourism information and statistics system with public on-line access, setting up a national tourism information database, setting up an integrated national system, with on-line access, for collecting and distributing tourism information.

The operation will be complemented by support for local tourism info centres in rural areas under the National Rural Development Programme.

⁴ As they appear in the National Spatial Plan, Section 8 "Touristic Areas", Law no.190/2009 for the approval of the Emergency Ordinance no.142/2008

⁵ As they appear in the Government Decision no.852/2008 on the Regulations and Criteria Concerning Resorts Licensing.

Quantified objectives - Indicators

Indicator	Unit	Baseline	Baseline Year	Source	Target (2015)
OUTPUT					
Projects in tourism	No.	0	-	ROP Monitoring System -SMIS	400
SMEs assisted	No.	0	-	ROP Monitoring System -SMIS	350
Promotional campaigns for advertising the tourism brand	No.	0	-	ROP Monitoring System -SMIS	10
National Tourism Information and Promotion Centres supported	No.	0	-	ROP Monitoring System -SMIS	35
RESULT					
Tourists arrived in rehabilitated / modernized / equipped accommodation structures	No.	0	-	Survey	400,000
Overnights-staying in rehabilitated / modernized / equipped accommodation infrastructure /	No.	0	-	Survey	800,000
Jobs created / saved	No.	-	-	Survey	1,000
Visitors at the Information and Promotion Centres	No.	-	-	SMIS / MRDT	2.5 mil.
Web site visits	No.	-	-	SMIS / MRDT	1.5 mil.