

THE DEVELOPMENT AND FUTURES PROSPECTS OF VEREȘTI AREA

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Abstract. *In recent years the public and political attention has turned to the development of rural areas from Romania. The main purpose of this paper is to provide a concrete example about the development of rural areas in Romania. The paper analyzes the economic and social situation of Verești community, which is located in the central-eastern part of Suceava Plateau. Following the bibliographic research and questionnaire I concluded that the area is with great economic potential, but must be operated in a more efficient manner. The local authorities established local plan of development, but many of the projects still are only in theory or just the beginning of the implementation etap. In the area there are a large number of small companies, construction companies and services, pharmacies and great agricultural potential. The Verești community is an area with a high social and economic potential, but need a large investment.*

Key words: *Development, rural areas, economic potential, future projects, investment*

INTRODUCTION

In recent years the public and political attention has turned to the development of rural areas from Romania. When Romania joined to European Union in 2007 new opportunities have opened for the development of rural areas. The new standards imposed by the EU transformed the Romanian village in a project with new perspectives of development. We can identify some major problems in village life: lack of jobs; migration of active population; low incomes; absence of modern means of production; reduced exploitation of agricultural products and low level of education.

The main purpose of this paper is to provide a concrete example about the development of rural areas in Romania. The paper analyzes the economic and social situation of Verești community, which is located in the central-eastern part of Suceava Plateau.

The paper is structured in three chapters, the first chapter will analyze elements of geography and history for the particular area taken in consideration, chapter two will present an analysis of potential agricultural, industrial, tourism and economic potential and in the third chapter investment projects and opportunities in the area will be presented.

The originality of the present paper is given by the complex analysis and interpretation of the potential for Verești community, and also development perspectives are drawn from my own vision.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

In the present study we used bibliographic material previously written by specialists in the fields analyzed: geography, history, economy, industry and tourism. In addition to bibliographic resources, methods such as questionnaires, interviews and field trips were used. All information presented is supported by representative images.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Aspects of History and Geography for Verești community:

Verești village falls into the category of regions with a recent history. Historical attestation is based on archaeological discoveries, official documents and unwritten testimonials. The first excavations were made quite recently, in 1973-1974, under the guidance of Professor Nicolae Ursuleasa and students from the Faculty of History and Geography. They revealed important historical elements. Following the archaeological evidence, it was proven that the current territory of Verești area was in the valleys of Siret and Suceava rivers. The soil was very fertile on the river valleys, so that agricultural output was sufficient to meet the needs of families in the area. Suceava and Siret valleys were ideal areas to build houses and to enjoy all the resources needed for a decent life. With time locals moved from valleys of rivers to higher platform, this explains why in the center of the village archaeological evidence was not found.

Verești area consists of four villages: Verești, Hancea, Corocăiești and Bursuceni. As we have seen, archaeological elements found territory which has been inhabited since the early centuries III-IV BC, but the first written evidence of the existence of the Verești dates from January 7, 1403. The document was written by Alexander the Good, who gave as a gift to Moldova Episcopate the village named Averești: „village Averești, which is close to Suceava river and other Hreățca village, which is close to Suceava Borough". In the document it is called Averești village, and it is neighbor to villages Dumbrău and Vlădeni.

Verești village territory is located in Suceava Plateau, specifically in the central-eastern part. If we analyze only Suceava county, Verești is located in the east, about 16 km from Suceava municipality. Dragomirnei hills edge the territory in the south Verești Commune. These are subunits of Suceava Plateau and are located between the two valleys of the rivers Siret and Suceava. Village location near the two rivers has a major influence on physical-geographical factors, which determine a temperate continental climate and a soil with a high fertility potential.



Fig. 1. Verești village location in the county of Suceava
(Reference: <http://www.comune.ro/?judet/ijud36/>)

Verești village is situated about 18 km from the city of Suceava, therefore climatic elements are similar. The climate is temperate continental and the average annual temperature

recorded at the Meteorological Station Suceava between 1961-2010 was 7.9 ° C. Average annual rainfall is between 550-600 mm.

Climatic conditions have favored the development of diverse spontaneous plants of such as beech forest (*Fagus sylvaticus*), oak (*Quercus petraea*) and *Quercus robur*, which alternate with meadows with the floristic composition of Poaceae and Fabaceae perennials.

Due to the climatic conditions, besides of forests and meadows the cultivation of plants following the categories: *Triticum aestivum*, *Avena sativa*, *Hordeum vulgare*, *Secale cereale*, *Zea mays*, *Vicia panonica*, *Vicia sativa*, *Pisum sativum*, *Phaseolus vulgaris*, *Trifolium pratense*, *Medicago sativa* and vegetables is recommended.

Verești has an area of 3950 km and a population of 7304 inhabitants (in 2011). It neighbors with 5 other communities: Corni in the NE, Dumbrăveni in NV, Fântanele in SE, Udești in the SW and Salcea in V.

Verești community potential: agriculture, industry, tourism and economy;

These four sectors are essential in defining the degree of development of the village Verești. The main activity of the inhabitants of Verești is in agriculture with two fields: crop production and animal growth.

In the local agriculture activity the same problems as at the national level are identified, arable land is fragmented and farms size is reduced, equipment of farmers is used, financial resources are low and insufficient investments can be observed. In Verești there are six medium farms around 20-100 ha and some others between 1-7 ha. The production from small farms is used for the farmers own consumption, only the excess is sold. The production from medium farm it is mainly sold in Suceava and Botosani cities. The structure of crops from Verești region can be observed in Table 2.1.

Table 1.

Situation of crops areas in Verești in 2012

Nr. crt.	Name	Ha
1.	Agricol land	3346
2.	Arable land	3069
3.	Pasture and meadow	271
4.	Forest	6
	Tipy of crops	Ha
1.	Cereals	1528
2.	Maize	803
3.	Legumes	15
4.	Suger beet	10
5.	Patatoes	793
6.	Vegetables	194

(Reference: <http://comuna-veresti.blogspot.ro/>)

In Bursuceni village there is a farm that practices organic farming. The farm belongs to Mr. Vasile Mătrășoiaie, a farmer that is 59 years old. The farm is located outside the village

limits, between the villages Bursuceni and Dumbraveni and occupies a total area of 0.30 ha. In the greenhouse onions, tomatoes, peppers, lettuce and eggplant are grown, all products are produced in conformity with organic farming practices.



Fig. 2. Organic vegetables

(Reference: <http://www.monitorulsv.ro/Reportaj/2013-04-19/Legumele-ecologice-de-la-Bursuceni-o-afacere-de-succes>)

Animal breeding is the second activity in this particular agricultural sector and it provides important income for the residents. There are three farms dealing with cattle farming, each with a herd of approximately 20-30 heads. Some farmers turned to sheep growth seeing that this activity in this area seems to be more profitable. Across the village there are about 35 such farms, which have approximately 100-1000 heads.

In Verești there is also a pig farm on a private property at S.C. TRAGRO S.R.L. from Iași. The total area of the complex is 227 554 m², from which the buildings take up 100 520 m².



Fig. 3. Farnes from Verești
(Referance: Original)

In the area there aren't any touristic attractions, much of the old industry was destroyed immediately after the fall of communism regime. The most important industrial points are: four bakeries, a company for bottling gas, factory of bricks and pavers.

Table 2

Companies in the Verești region

Nr. Ctr.	Name	Number	Number of employeess
1.	Shop	24	48
2.	Pubs	7	12
3.	Gravel and sand exploitation	3	63
4.	Electricity Companies	1	4
5.	Brick production companies	2	15
6.	Paving Company	1	40
7.	Construction Company	8	42
8.	Deposits with building materials	3	6

(Referance: Original)

Perspective for future development:

Prospects of development should proceed to a few main directions, such as agriculture, trade, infrastructure, industry and tourism.

Agriculture:

The main investments should be made in terms of modernization and purchase of required equipment. It is highly necessary to reorganize the land in the area, because it is highly fragmented. This fragmentation affects mainly the production and leads to a higher consumption of energy. The type of farming in the area is semi-subsistence farming and farmers are aged between 45 and 75 years old. The most effective forms of organization is by associations, they may be able to transform the agricultural sector from Verești into a profitable and sustainable one.

The agricultural machinery are used, and the seeds used by the majority of farmers have a low quality. Many farmers don't have a proper education regarding agriculture and animal growth, this can be reflected in the obtained yields. If agricultural land is to be held in an association, administered by a competent persons, we believe that agriculture is an important niche to enhance the development of the village.

Development projects for establishment of fruit orchards would be another way to exploit the area. This project is feasible because it already exists about 20 ha of land available to plant fruit trees.

In addition to land investments projects can be developed in the livestock sector. Farmers should introduce modern technology in the production process in order to increase efficiency and quality and quantity of the production. Increased production by using modern technology leads to increased competitiveness on the market.

The rehabilitation of old farm form communist age is another opportunity for local farmers. They can establish cattle, pig or sheep farms.

Organic farming is a branch that can be easily exploited. In the village there are only 0.30 ha greenhouses applying organic practices.

In the area production of bee products is absent, this may encourage locals and other people to invest in this area.

Infrastructure requires a series of serious improvements. In the recent years funds have been allocated for the refurbishment of main roads and there is an ongoing project for asphaltting of the road Corocaiesti-Dumbraveni. Arranging the lanes would encourage young people and investors to set up businesses in the village.

Industry:

The area provides good conditions for opening a processing factory which can focus on the production of canned food, pickles, sauces, jams, stewed fruits. The opening of this factory could create new jobs and can effectively capitalize on local agricultural production. There are many benefits such as cheap labor, cheap raw materials, land can be provided by the local authorities and buildings of the former IAS can be used.

In the village there was a slaughterhouse, but it has been closed because it wasn't functioning according to European standards. The building can be taken by new investors and re-open. Another solution for the re-opening of the slaughterhouse is accessing European funds.

Another viable project could be a factory that produces clothing materials seeing that the textile industry is not at all present in the area.

Consulting :

In the area there are no private offices for consulting in terms of agriculture or projects accessing European funds.

Tourism:

It would be a great loss not to capitalize the beauty of natural landscapes, traditions and customs of the area. A series of investments in the development of private agrotourism farms can capitalize the potential of the area. In addition to agrotourism investments can be made in the development of a leisure park on the course of the two rivers Siret and Suceava.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis made in the present paper achieved the purpose to provide the degree of development and future prospects for the Verești area. By treating the characteristics reflecting the development of the area (geographical, agricultural, industrial and in terms of tourism and economy) we have managed to identify the problems for this particular area and also we have proposed solutions to them. Verești is an area with high economical potential and many development possibilities. Although the village is facing some problems (lack of sewers, lack of running water, gas and other utilities), we can say that it is a developed area in comparison with the situation at the national level. The previous statement is supported by the fact that populations have a intensive agricultural activity favored by the existence of a rich hydrographic network and climate; large number of companies; proximity to both urban centers Suceava and Botosani; exploiting natural resources efficiently; administrative body is complex and the population is still fairly large in number.

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