

## THE DETERMINATION OF THE TOURISTIC POTENTIAL FOR THE SETTLEMENTS FROM OZANA-TOPOLIȚA DEPRESSION

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**Abstract:** The touristic attractiveness of the settlements from Ozana-Topolița Depression can be pointed out through the agency of a detailed analyse concerning the sum of potentialities offered by natural, anthropological and economical premises in order to create touristic valences. The multilevels of touristic potential together with touristic valences of every locality inside a specific matrix can offer real possibilities for the relevant types of tourism practicable in this area. The analyse reveals a general composite touristic profile for the whole area besides a particular profile for every settlement in order to support a possible future capitalization.

**Key words:** potential, valences, matrix, types of tourism, touristic profile

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The identification of tourism types adequate to every locality requires the knowledge of geographical, social, cultural and economic specifications. This knowledge can help the determination of touristic profile and of the touristic attractiveness potential. These two major components are the basic elements in achieving the matrix for determining the tourism types specific to every settlement from the administrative-territorial unities inside Ozana-Topolița Depression.

The touristic potential is defined as *„the assembly of natural, historical, cultural, social, demographical, technical and economical components scientifically recognized (quantitative and qualitative) and practically proved and which confer the possibility of touristic capitalization and give a certain functionality for tourism”* (Glăvan, 1996), *„as a sum of some objective conditions, natural or social, but subjective, referring mainly to motivations and necessities which are submitted to a continuous dynamic”* (Muntele & Iațu, 2003), *“a complex of material and nonmaterial elements to provide satisfaction of needs and benefits to the tourist, offered for consumption”* (Krippendorf, 1980).

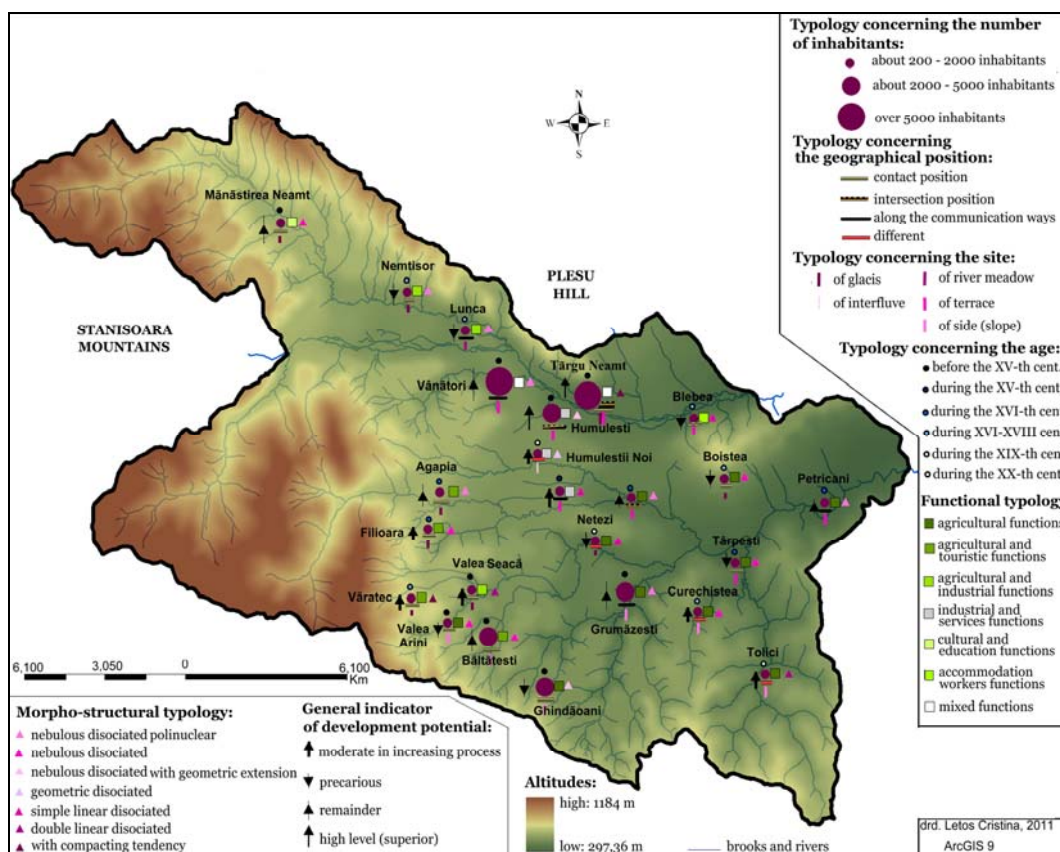
We consider that the touristic attractiveness of the settlements is conferred by the sum of potentialities and possibilities offered by the natural and human-economical

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premises in order to create touristic valences. In order to determine this indicator, it is necessary to identify and to analyze the local parameters. Potentially pointing out during an analysis detailing the substratums of touristic potential on many analytical levels.

In 2010, in the depression, there are 6 administrative-territorial units as communes: Agapia, Bălătești, Ghindăoani, Grumăzești, Petricani and Vânători Neamț. These communes include 23 of rural settlements and only one urban locality, Târgu Neamț (Neamț Regional Direction of Statistics, The register cards of localities: Agapia, Bălătești, Ghindăoani, Grumăzești, Petricani, Târgu Neamț, Vânători Neamț, 2010), (Figure 1).



**Figure 1.** The typology of the settlements in Ozana-Topolița Depression  
(Source: Dimitriu, 2007)

For the settlements from Ozana-Topolița Depression, many substratums have been identified and analyzed: the natural framework, historical, cultural, social, economical, the touristic infrastructure and the accessibility. These characteristics are detailed by on one or many levels of research that are grouped into 5 classes of values, according to the role for determining the touristic valences (Table 2). For every multilevels analyzed substratum, the final score will be done by the arithmetical average of capitalized components. The final score will place the locality on a certain level of intensity concerning the potential appreciation of touristic attractiveness.

The natural framework substratum is analyzed on 3 structural levels, the natural potential supplied by geographical position (Topographic map 1: 25.000) the complexity of relief and subsoil resources which offer touristic exploitation capacity

(Davidescu, 2000). The historical substratum is ordered by the age (Memoria Antiquitatis, vol. XIII, 1999) while the cultural substratum is determined by the ethnographic heritage (Florescu, 1983).

The economical substratum is influenced by the functional typology and the socio-economical substratum is determined by the general indicator of development potential<sup>1</sup>. The substratum of touristic infrastructure is detailed according to quantitative elements (number of touristic objectives and number of accommodation places) and qualitative elements (attractiveness and comfort degrees) in addition to the accessibility level concerning the categories of roads (Statistical Yearbook of Neamt County, 2010).

The results of grouping matrix (Table 1) take into account centered scores which cover a long value interval of about 19,50 points. From the minimum value (7,25 p.) to the maximum one (26,75 p.), having 5 levels of intensity:

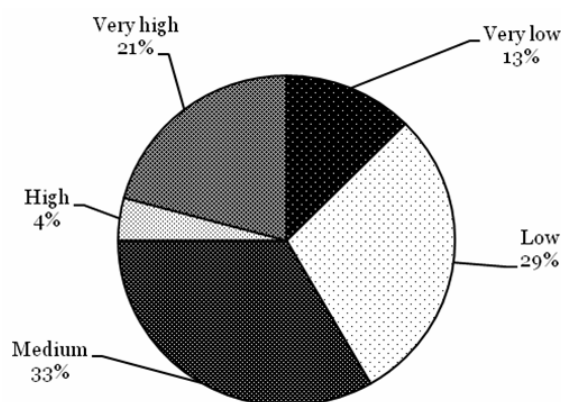
- Very low potential of touristic attractiveness (under 10 points) including 3 localities which hold together 13%: Netezi (9,25 p.), Blebea (8,25 p.), Humulești Noi (7,75 p.);

- Low potential of touristic attractiveness (about 10-13 points) including 7 localities which hold together 29%: Topolița (13 p.), Valea Arini (12,75 p.), Lunca (12,25 p.), Ghindăoani (11,75 p.), Țolici (11,75 p.), Boiștea (11 p.), Curechiștea (10,75 p.);

- Medium potential of touristic attractiveness (about 14-17 points) proper to 8 localities which hold together 33 %: Filioara (16,50 p.), Humulești (16,50 p.), Grumăzești (15,50 p.), Săcălușești (14,75 p.), Valea Seacă (14,75 p.), Petricani (14,50 p.), Nemțișor (14,50 p.), Târpești (14 p.);

- High potential of touristic attractiveness (about 18-21 points) including only one locality which hold 4%: Văratec (19,75 p.);

- Very high potential of touristic attractiveness ( $\geq 22$  points) including 5 localities which hold together 21%: Bălțătești (23,25 p.), Vânători (22,5 p.), Agapia (22 p.), Mănăstirea Neamț (22 p.), Târgu Neamț (26,75 p.);

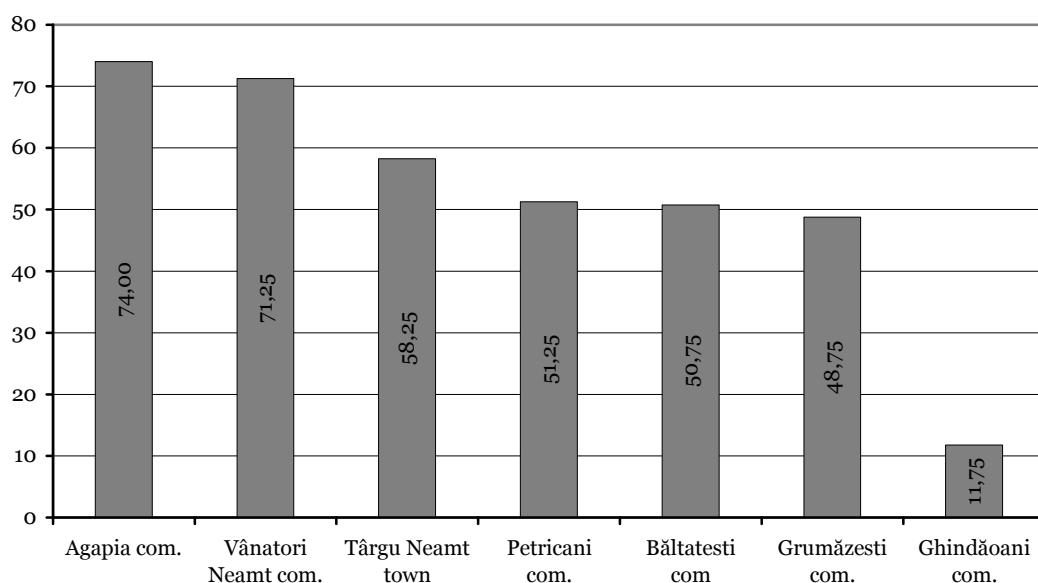


**Figure 2.** The diagram of the categories of touristic attractiveness potential referring to the settlements in Ozana-Topolița Depression  
(Source: Table 1)

<sup>1</sup> A complex indicator (counted by R. Dimitriu, 2007), resulted from the grouping of 12 standard variables: average yearly rate of population evolution (coefficient of importance 0,25), average age of population (0,75), the ration between total population and occupied population (0,75), the percentage of unagricultural population inside the total occupied population (1), the number of intellectual people inside 100 inhabitants (0,75), business count of factories (0,50), the percentage of unemployed workers inside the active population (0,75), the percentage of employers inside the occupied population (0,50), number of firms with private capital reported to 100 of active persons (1), the quotation of participation at international emigration (1), number of telephone posts at 1000 loc. (0,25), the standard number of domestic animals for every individual agricultural housekeeping (0,75).

The weight of these categories points out a big percentage for medium values class (33%) which have an uniform territorial distribution. This category covers all the sectors of the depression. Following the medium values there is the low values class (29%) covering the majority of the southern and the central-eastern parts of the depression. The high and very high values classes (25%) are grouped together mainly in the western part. This class includes the localities along the kerbstone of hill-mountain contact, having the united benefits of high and very high values of all grouped substratums. The localities with the lowest degree of touristic attractiveness have a small weight and are mainly grouped around Târgu Neamț town with an important urban influence over them. Because themselves do not have a rich history (appeared during XIX-XX centuries) they have low attractive functions for touristic field (Figure 2).

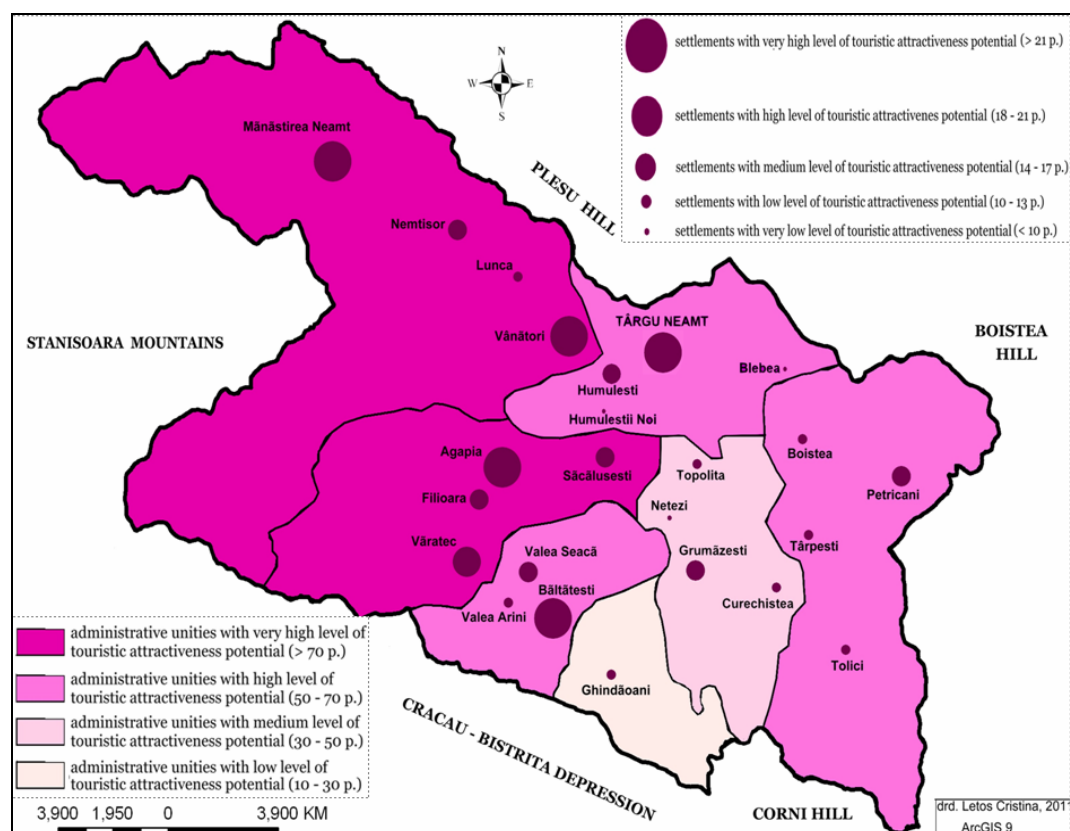
The degree of components' participation for construction of the total score is important, because the localities with high and very high touristic potential stand out evidently with almost a balanced distribution (a small exception for Neamț Monastery) on the maximal values range. This distribution gives them a real perspective for supporting the growth of touristic attractiveness, while also giving conditions of compositional stability and homogeneity. A zigzag distribution of the components' values can offer a suggestive image in analyzing the sectors with good perspective and also those with deficiency for investment needs. The case of the Filioara locality it is clear that having sectors with very high potential (geographical position and functional typology) with a low degree of accessibility can result in small attraction power for the touristic objectives. This compositional heterogeneity with a large spread for the majority of the localities gives them a sort of vulnerability in development of touristic sector but also good possibilities for identifying and remediating them fastly. It is interesting to point out that there is no rural locality which is defined by the homogeneity of minimal values. There exist in every locality some elements with high or very high touristic potential which offer touristic attractiveness, even though they are singular (Țolici, Netezi) or double-associated with (Târpești, Valea Arini).



**Figure 3.** The graph of the hierarchy referring to the touristic attractiveness potential of the administrative units in the Ozana-Topolița Depression  
(Source: Table 1)

From the total maximum virtual potential concerning to the touristic attractiveness (672 points), that counted as a total maximal potential sum for all localities, the total real score for those localities in Ozana-Topolița Depression is recorded at 54,58% (366,75 p.). This locality has wide perspectives for a sectorial development in such fields as: cultural, economical and touristic one.

The touristic attractiveness on the communes' level (Figure3), that counts as a sum of the scores of all component localities, stands out evidently. These scores range from minimal values of about 11,75 points to maximal values of over 70 points. The distribution of values at the level of the administrative units is not unbalanced because on the determination values scale there are 4 distinct categories. These categories include: administrative unities with very high touristic attractiveness potential (over 70 points) such as Agapia (74 p.) and Vânători Neamț (71,25 p.); administrative unities with high touristic attractiveness potential (about 50-70 points) such as: Târgu Neamț (59,25 p.), Petricani (51,25 p.) and Bălătești (50,75 points); a commune with medium touristic attractiveness potential (about 30-50 points) such as Grumăzești (48,50 points); and a commune with low touristic attractiveness potential (about 10-30 points) such as Ghindăoani (11,75 points).



**Figure 4.** The map of touristic attractiveness potential on settlements and administrative unities in Ozana-Topolița Depression  
(Source: Table 1)

The very high scores recorded by communes Agapia and Vânători Neamț explained by the fact that these communes include localities with very high touristic potential. These communes have a good touristic infrastructure and hold over 50% of

all accommodation (54,09%). Among these accommodations, 40,23% of places have high level of comfort (3 or 4 stars) but most of them have the deficient of accessibility. Even though the communes Petricani and Bălțătești have about the same score as the previous, their inner typological distribution of component localities has some contrasts. While the first points out a homogeneity, the second brings more heterogeneity (every component locality belongs to other distinct category). Much contrast is pointed out in territorial distribution of Grumăzești commune as its component localities have oscillations of scores close to medium and low categories, while Ghindăoani commune, recently set up (2003), has a disadvantage concerning to contain only one locality, that been appreciated with a low level of attractiveness potential. Târgu Neamț has a difference from the other administrative units concerning the structure of accommodation units standing out with their diversity and addressability besides the concentration of different categories of touristic objectives.

The territorial distribution of administrative units' typology points out in evidence a clear contrast between the western sector of depression with a very high level of attractiveness potential and the central-eastern one with a low level of attractiveness potential. This contrast expresses in fact that the geomorphological and cultural-religious contrast and also to the natural resources between the two sectors (Figure 4).

Table 1. Partial and final results of bonitation matrix for determination the touristic attractiveness level of the settlements

(Data source: Categories of touristic attractiveness potential: Very low <10 p.; Low=10-13 p.; Medium=14-17 p.; High=18-21 p.; Very high ≥21)

Rural settlements	I				I. (final)	II	III	IV	V	VI					VII	Total	Categories of attractiveness potential
	I.1	I.2	I.3	I.4						VI.1	VI.2	VI.3	VI.4	VI (final)			
Agapia	4	4	2	0	2,50	3	4	4	3	4	3	4	3	3,50	2	22	Very high
Bălțătești	4	1	3	4	3	4	4	4	3	3	2	4	0	2,25	3	23,25	Very high
Blebea	4	3	2	0	2,25	3	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	8,25	Very low
Boiștea	4	4	0	0	2	2	3	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	11	Low
Curechiștea	1	1	1	0	0,75	2	3	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	10,75	Low
Filioara	4	4	2	0	2,50	3	3	4	2	0	0	2	2	1	1	16,50	Medium
Ghindăoani	4	1	2	0	1,75	4	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	11,75	Low
Grumăzești	2	1	2	0	1,25	4	3	1	3	3	2	0	0	1,25	2	15,50	Medium
Humulești	3	3	0	0	1,50	4	1	2	4	1	3	0	0	1	3	16,50	Medium
Humuleștii Noi	1	2	0	0	0,75	0	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	3	7,75	Very low
Lunca	2	0	1	0	0,75	2	4	2	1	3	2	1	0	1,50	1	12,25	Low
Mănăstirea Neamț	4	4	1	4	3,25	4	4	3	3	4	3	4	0	2,75	2	22	Very high
Nemțișor	4	4	1	0	2,25	2	4	2	1	1	2	2	4	2,25	1	14,50	Medium
Netezi	1	4	1	0	1,50	1	2	1	1	1	2	0	0	0,75	2	9,25	Very low
Petricani	4	3	0	0	1,75	3	3	1	3	1	2	0	0	0,75	2	14,50	Medium
Săcălușești	2	3	0	0	1,25	3	3	2	2	0	0	2	4	1,5	2	14,75	Medium
Târgu Neamț	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	3,75	3	26,75	Very high
Târpești	4	3	1	0	2	3	4	1	1	2	2	0	0	1	2	14	Medium
Topolița	3	3	0	0	1,50	3	2	2	2	1	1	0	0	0,50	2	13	Low
Țolici	1	1	1	0	0,75	1	4	1	2	2	2	0	0	1	2	11,75	Low
Valea Arini	4	1	2	0	1,75	4	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	1	12,75	Low
Valea Seacă	4	4	2	0	2,50	4	3	2	1	0	0	1	0	0,25	2	14,75	Medium
Vânători	2	3	3	0	2	4	4	3	3	4	3	3	4	3,5	3	22,5	Very high
Văratec	4	4	2	0	2,50	2	4	4	2	4	3	2	4	3,25	2	19,75	High

Table 2. The matrix of determination the touristic attractiveness level for the settlements from Ozana-Topolița Depression

(Data source: Dimitriu, 2007; Neamț Regional Direction of Statistics, The register cards of localities, 2010 (Agapia, Bălătești, Ghindăoani, Grumăzești, Petricani, Târgu Neamț, Vânători Neamț); Tourist Breviary Neamț County, 2010; The list of historical monuments approved by HG no. 1160/1955, "Architectural monuments", 2004)

<b>Bonitated Parameter</b>	<b>Vary high value (4)</b>	<b>High value (3)</b>	<b>Medium value (2)</b>	<b>Low value (1)</b>	<b>Very low value (0)</b>
<b>I.Natural potential substratum</b>					
<b>I.1.</b> Geographical position	Of contact	Of intersection	Along of the communication ways	Indifferent to major geographical elements	
<b>I.2.</b> Site	Of glacis	Of terrace	Of interfluve	Of a side (slope)	High bank of river
<b>I.3.</b> Placement according to the relief complexity	Placement in areas of relief with very high level of complexity	Placement in areas of relief with high level of complexity	Placement in areas of relief with medium level of complexity	Placement in areas of relief with low level of complexity	Placement in areas of relief with very low level of complexity
<b>I.4.</b> Placement according to subsoil resources with touristic exploitation potential	Resources with very high potential of exploitation	Resources with high potential of exploitation	Resources with medium potential of exploitation	Resources with low potential of exploitation	Resources with very low potential of exploitation
<b>II. Historical substratum</b> (age)	Before XV-th century	Since.XV-XVI centuries	Since XVII-XVIII centuries	Since.XIX-th century	Since.XX-th century
<b>III. Cultural-ethnographical substratum</b> (Preservation and capitalization of ethnographic traditions)	Very high degree (with active ethnographical manifestations, popular handicraft masters)	High degree (High level of preservation of traditions and of local architectural style but without active folklore manifestations)	Medium degree (Medium level of preservation of traditions, medium influence of the urban factor)	Low degree (Much influence of the urban factor)	Very low degree; (localities founded during the.XX-th century)
<b>IV. Economical substratum</b> Functional typology	Touristic functions;	Cultural, education and agricultural functions Mixed functions;	Agricultural and industrial functions or industrial and services functions;	Only agricultural;	Accommodation for workers;
<b>V. General index of development potential</b>	High level of development potential	Remainder potential of development	Remainder potential of development in increasing process	Precarious potential of development	-
<b>VI. Touristic infrastructure substratum</b>					
<b>VI.1.</b> Number of Touristic objectives	≥ 4	3	2	1	0
<b>VI.2.</b> Level of interest for touristic objectives	International (preserved areas of international interest, UNESCO monuments)	National (preserved areas of national interest, historical monuments in A category)	Regional (balnearies and climatic resorts with regional attractiveness; historical monuments in B category; ethnographical centres)	County level (preserved areas with county and local interest, anthropologic objectives with low degree of interest)	No objectives
<b>VI.3.</b> Number of accommodation places	>100	68-100	34-67	1-33	0

<b>VI.4.</b> Degree of comfort (percentage of places with 3 or 4 daisies)	>50%	35-50%	18-34%	1-17%	0%
<b>VII. Accessibility</b>	International rank way	National rank way	County rank way	Commune rank way	Unmodernized way

The second major component for determination of the tourism types that can be applied in Ozana-Topolița Depression is represented by the touristic valences of the localities. There were six relevant categories for establishing the touristic profile with a large area of inclusion: landscape value, ethnographical, cultural (including also religious sector), handicraft, balnery and agricultural valences (Table 3).

Table 3. The determination of practicable tourism types in Ozana-Topolița Depression

	Touristic potential					Touristic valences						Practicable types of tourism (according to the followed reason)
Locality	Very low	Low	Medium	High	Very high	Landscape attraction	Ethnographical	Cultural (including religious)	Handicraft	Balnery	Fruit-growing	
Agapia					X	X	X	X	X		X	cultural-religious, ecotourism, rural tourism, agrotourism, for business, scientific
Bălătești					X		X		X	X	X	balnery, ecotourism, rural tourism, agrotourism
Blebea	X										X	rural tourism
Boiștea		X									X	rural tourism
Curechiștea		X										rural tourism
Filioara			X			X	X				X	ecotourism, rural tourism, agrotourism, scientific
Ghindăoani		X					X		X		X	cultural, rural tourism
Grumăzești			X				X		X		X	rural tourism
Humulești			X				X	X	X			cultural, rural tourism, agrotourism
Humuleștii Noi	X											rural tourism
Lunca		X					X		X			rural tourism
Mănăstirea Neamț					X	X	X	X	X		X	cultural-religious, ecotourism, rural tourism, agrotourism, for business, scientific, educational
Nemțișor			X				X				X	ecotourism, rural tourism, agrotourism, educational
Netezi	X										X	rural tourism
Petricani			X				X					rural tourism
Săcălușești			X									rural tourism, agrotourism, for business
Târpești			X				X		X		X	rural tourism
Topolița		X					X					rural tourism
Țolici		X					X		X			rural tourism
Valea Arini		X									X	rural tourism

Valea Seacă			X				X					ecotourism, rural tourism, agrotourism
Vânători					X	X	X	X	X		X	cultural-religious, ecotourism, rural tourism, agrotourism, for business, scientific
Văratec				X		X	X	X	X		X	cultural-religious, ecotourism, rural tourism, agrotourism, for business
Târgu Neamț					X	X	X	X	X	X	X	cultural, (including cultural-religious), balnery, ecotourism, for business, scientific, educational

The results inside the matrix of determination of practicable tourism types in Ozana-Topolița Depression lead to distinguish 5 distinct categories of localities:

- Localities with high and very high touristic potential which have a complex touristic profile and hold 25% among all, as: Agapia, Bălătești, Neamț Monastery, Vânători, Văratec and Târgu Neamț. These localities have multiple touristic valences which favour types of tourism, covering very many fields like: cultural (including cultural-religious), ecotourism, rural tourism, agrotourism, balnery (specific only to Bălătești and Târgu Neamț town), for business and educational.

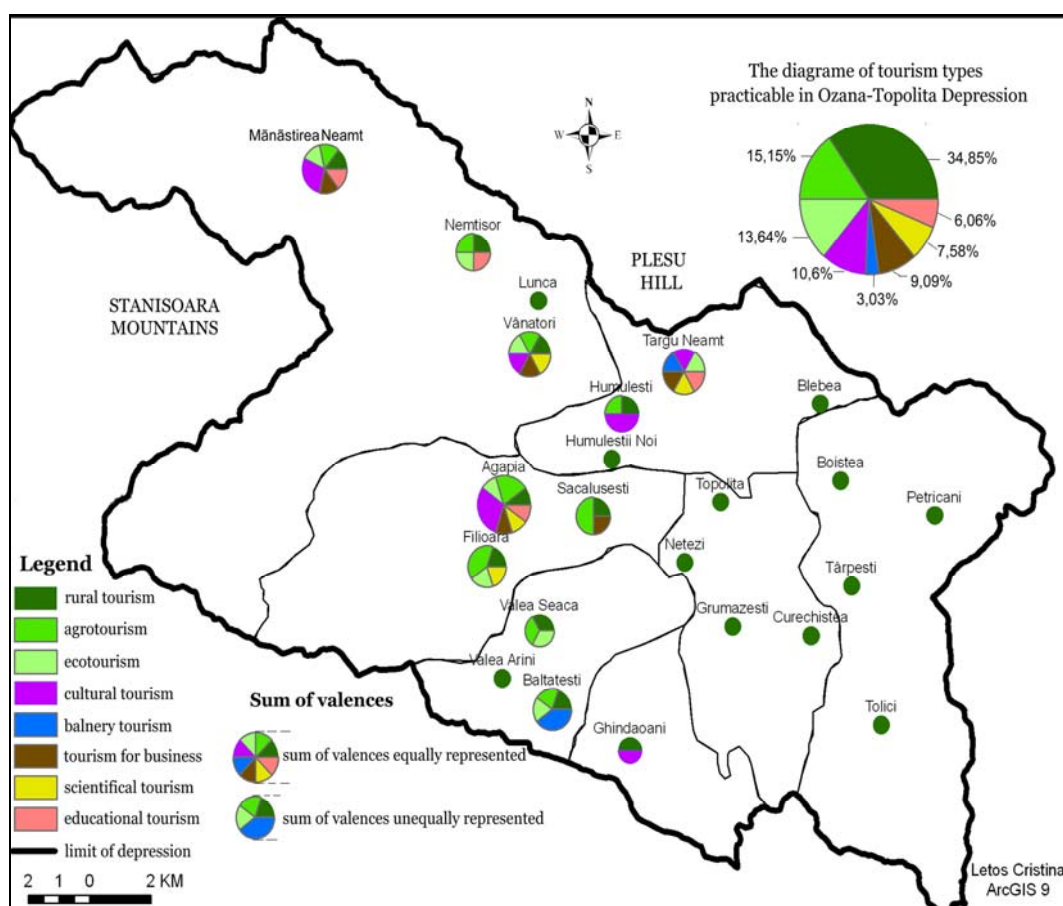
- Localities with medium touristic potential associated to a diversified touristic profile ( $\geq 3$  touristic valences) which hold 16,67% including: Filioara, Grumăzești, Humulești and Târpești, having the ethnographical element as a common valence and put together with agriculture as partial valences besides some particular elements like the landscape valence for Filioara and the cultural one for Humulești. This type of locality is a category which capitalizes on diversified types of tourism like: cultural, rural tourism, agrotourism, ecotourism, scientific, opening true perspectives of penetration the local and regional touristic market.

- Localities with medium touristic potential associated to a restricted touristic profile ( $\leq 2$  touristic valences) holding 16,67% and including: Nemțisor, Petricani, Săcălușești and Valea Seacă. Among them, Nemțisor is double valenced, having true conditions for developing complementary tourism types. Săcălușești and Valea Seacă have the advantages of the favourable neighbourhood and a high level of accessibility. The presence of touristic accommodation structures (excepting Petricani) confer the possibility of extension on the landing of „green tourism”. For Nemțisor, a new category of tourism is distinguished. This category is the educational and religious one which borrows the religious camps model from Tismana (starting since 2006), addressed to gymnasium and high school learners (model inaugurated on 2009 and prefigured to be carried on yearly).

- Localities with low touristic potential associated to diverse touristic valences (2-3) hold 12,5% including: Ghindăoani, Lunca and Țolici, which have common elements concerning ethnographic valences together with those referring to creative handicraft, especially by wood. These point out in evidence a monotouristic profile, respectively the rural one, with the exception of Ghindăoani, which can diversify its profile by using its cultural anthropogenic objective. This category has a medium chance to assert on touristic market because of the limited offer and slightly adapted to the tourists expectations, taking into account the lack of touristic accommodation structures.

- Localities with low and very low touristic potential associated to reduced touristic valences ( $\leq 2$ ) hold the most percentage (29,16%) including 7 villages (Blebea, Boiștea, Curechiștea, Humuleștii Noi, Netezi, Topolița, Valea Arini) offering only one perspective. The rural tourism imposed by the agricultural valence which often is the only motivating element for developing that recess landing of tourism.

The typological analysis for the whole depression certifies the main role of „green tourism” which holds 63,64% among all types. Included in this type of tourism are three main components: rural tourism (34,85%), agrotourism (15,15%) and ecotourism (13,64%). These components are practiced mostly inside of the preserved areas like Vanatori Neamț Natural Park (Figure 5), V-th category according IUCN, which the certification of forest management in Park area was a premiere in Roumania (Deju & Cătănoiu, 2005), where „the landscape maintains intact and visible traces of its traditional land-use forms over several hundred years, and illustrates the harmonious interaction between people, nature and spirituality in Carpathian Mountains” (Cătănoiu et al., 2009). In second place, there is the cultural tourism (10,61%), which has a very good territorial representation through cultural-religious sector, followed by business tourism (9,09%), scientific (7,58%), educational (6,06%) and in the last place balnery tourism (3,03%) that is practiced in only two localities (Bălătești and Oglinzi).



**Figure 5.** The map of practicable tourism types according to touristic potential and touristic valences of the settlements from Ozana-Topolița Depression (Neamț Regional Direction of Statistics, 2010)

### Aknowlegments

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