



Pilgrim`s ways in Harghita county

Touristic development plan

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“The way of Mary is more than a touristic route, more than a pilgrim`s way, more than a valuable program, more than a collection of values, more than the way of the self-knowledge, more than a new point of view, more than culture, more than sacredness, more than a touristic offer, more than a spiritual experience, more than the discover of East Europe, more than the enrichment of the country- more than 1400 km...”

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Introduction

The Marketing conception of the `Pilgrim`s ways in Harghita County assists with the aims of the Recultivatur project. The aim of the project is to take the East-European religious-touristic values into the touristic circle. Our region has a really important and varied regional-touristic facility, but this is not well known in the national and international touristic market. In these days the offers for spiritual recreation are highly requested, and for this very reason our rural regions have become more attractive, and if we turn the cultural and religious heritage into a touristic product it can be beneficiary for our community. Accordingly, the aim of the Recultivatur project`s WP5 is to develop a religious-touristic product.

The partner relation established with the Recultivatur project is aimed at assuring the development of the religious-touristic product. The religious-touristic product in Harghita County has 3 main services:

- The development of the Marketing conception on the pilgrim`s ways in Harghita County;
- Șumuleu Ciuc, as the spiritual center: events and programs for the pilgrims;
- The thematic ways of the reformed churches in Transylvania – collecting information.

The present project focuses on the following issue: it is a really important expectation of the Marketing development of the Pilgrim`s ways in Harghita County that the related touristic products have to be saleable on the market. We would like to achieve that these products to be found in touristic offices, as flyers, touristic guides, and also aiming to show the sights, landscapes, the hospitality of our region to the tourists, across the accommodation possibilities.

1. The general presentation, the message and actualities of the Pilgrim`s ways in Harghita County

Harghita County is at the first place in the construction of the pilgrim`s ways nationwide. These are a new kind of religious-touristic products, offering a spiritual and eco-touristic experience. The biggest area of the country is netted by the way of Mary which is an international pilgrim`s way, connected to the Austrian-Hungarian way of Mary.

In Şumuleu Ciuc, there are short one or half-day long meditational ways, which are for the pilgrims, the local people and for the ecclesiastical persons. About this we will speak at the last part of the conception (the 8th part).

There are no other pilgrim`s ways in the county, consequently our study being about the situation of the way of Mary, by considering the expansion opportunities.

The way of Mary, Via Mariae in Latin, it is under construction, there are some parts which can be already used, while others are under different level of construction. The way of Mary is not just one way; it is a huge network, crossing the county and offering the opportunity to visit Şumuleu Ciuc by following traditional footpaths.

The way of Mary- ViaMariae project is about to collect the religious values of Central Europe in one network and to build up one religious-touristic way in Hungary and in Central Europe. This pilgrim`s way makes a connection between East and West, between the Austrian Mariazell, Budapest, Máriapócs, and Şumuleu Ciuc, and later with the North-South part, with Czestochowa, Esztergom, Budapest, Máriagyűd and Medjugorje. The way of Mary draws a cross on the map of Central Europe and combines the shrines of Mary.

In Hungary a symbol network is built up to mark the way of Mary. The image is the combination of **traditionalism and modernity**. One of the signs is the purple `m`, where the middle leg shows the cross, and the last shows the further direction on the route to follow. The purple colour marks the main route, but in Transylvania, Seklerland, we other colours are used as well (red, blue, yellow, green). **The `m` with the cross, shows stability, but also represents a bridge or a door.** The symbol can present Mary and the incarnated God in her, Jesus Christ.



**The present situation of the Way of Mary – general presentation in Harghita County
(2013 October)**

Nowadays the best situation is in Hungary, where 90% of the main and the secondary road is ready and built up. In Transylvania this level is lower than in Hungary, 50-60% is ready, but from this Harghita County is on the best place: 60-65% of the main roads and 65-70% of the secondary roads are ready to use.

The interesting fact about Harghita County, and Seklerland, is that one of the final point is situated here, and for this reason it is not built up just the main road, but some others as well (in the 2nd chapter: it can be accessible from 5 other directions too). The way in Seklerland is really important, due to the fact that the natural finesse can be a serious difficulty, and on the basis of this it is really important to build up a complex pedestrian infrastructure and a first aid network.

In Eastern and Central Europe there are no other similar pilgrim`s ways. Because of the fact that there are smaller pilgrim`s ways next to the important pilgrimage places, the way of Mary can become the most important way of the region. In the last decades a lot of people went to pilgrimage places in farther countries. These pilgrims do not know about the pilgrimage places in Central Europe, the name of Romania, as an option being

unknown yet (in Romania the only religious places are the monasteries from the Middle Age situated in Bucovina and Moldova.) The way of Mary- Via Mariae it is a footpath in the nature lying far away from the intensive traffic and noise of civilization.

The way of Mary is a more than 1400 km spiritual and cultural way crossing the Carpathian Basin; it is easy to travel it during 60 days. Next to the way of Mary around 60 pilgrimage places are situated. The way is appointed by signs and boards, there are special pilgrim`s accommodations shown on the pilgrim`s map. During the pilgrimage the pilgrims get a stamp and a special bead, suitable for making a rosary, in every station.

The open secret of the way of Mary is to renew the beautiful and old tradition about honouring Mary. The nations of Central Europe are connected in this glorious task and aim. This honour resides in every traditional Romanian, Sekler people, ... It is really important to show the world the specialty of the Mary`s pilgrimages and with their help to present Mary`s message to other nations as well. Hence, the way of Mary can establish peace between nations and religions, and it can be the way of the reconciliation. The pilgrim`s way can be a method where the believer and unbeliever people can meet and go forward to Jesus. It shows the cultural and religious facilities of the colourful Carpathian Basin, the values of local nations and cultures. The community feeling during the walk, the proximity of the nature, the experience of something new, the pleasing tiredness because of the physical capacity, are all contributing to have a new point of view. The concerned person will know better the world and him/herself at the same time, and because of this recognition, it will change his or her approach to the world.

The way of Mary`s message

The religious mission

The 20th second gave many changes not just in the urban people`s life, but in the rural people`s life as well. Sedentary, bad eating-culture and the spiritual-physical straining characterize the western lifestyle. Also the electronics culture broke the people from the happiness of the production ... Due to these facts, in the elemental instincts appears the search for truth, reality, good way, the need to understand final goals and coherency. The general illness of societies lies in atomization, meaning the isolation of individuals from

each other.

The majority of people have a hunger for a physical and spiritual renewal, totally different from the slow and countable movements, restful wrenching of everyday's routine. However, the wrenching gives the opportunity to see oneself, his/her life, desire and goals from another point of view.

The pilgrimage offers the opportunity to spend time with everything that is interesting for us, to discover again the wonders of God, to meet with ourselves and with the other pilgrims, by sharing the experiences and our inside values. These things can change the life of the pilgrims, and that is why this touristic product is going to be different. The way is cognition resulting in an inside way of knowing the true Self and God.

The meeting of nature and culture

The way of Mary, similar with the other pilgrim's ways, brings closer the pilgrims with nature. It shows not just the beautiful part, but also the scarring characteristics of the landscape, the garbage what cannot be seen from the car. Owing to the fact that these pilgrimages are far away from the traffic the tourists are invited to experience small treasures or interesting, small 'happiness' and beauties of nature. The way of Mary is a special pilgrim's way, the majority of it going through the nature.

Moreover the way of Mary - similarly to other pilgrim's way- shows the cultural heritage as well. The pilgrim is not just looking for the religious experience; he or she is also looking for the spirituality in people, and of places. The majority of the built heritage is religious, but there are cultural and folk elements or artistic creations as well, which express the local people's way of thinking. For this reason the pilgrim's ways is built up to show the culture of buildings, creations, events, and so on.

The Christian mission

The most important person of the Christian life is Jesus Christ; hereby the most important religious places are related to him, to the Apostles and to Mary, the Holy Virgin. In Romania and in Hungary, there are no concrete places about his life, but due this fact, many Christian values can be found there, especially villages and places about the life of the Saint people. The Carpathian Basin is among the most important regions of expressing homage to Mary; the Christian values which are coming from this endeavour,

are inexhaustible. The honour and the indulgence have a historical tradition since starting from Saint Stephan King, fortunately these traditions are still and kept alive (Regnum Marianum). These are mainly contributing to the realization of the Mary`s way: to have a way where we can put shrines as a bead of a Rosary.

The way of Mary has 3 aims:

- The preservation of Christian values and the aim to transfer these for the future;
- To show the religious and cultural values of Central Europe to the world;
- To build up a spiritual pilgrimage network for the people who want to break out from the everyday`s routine.

Our aim with the way of Mary is to renew the tradition settled for honouring Mary. Also, we would like to share the specialty of the pilgrim`s way with the world, and to transmit the message provided by Mary. The pilgrim`s way can be a tool which helps to find the way to Jesus by believer and unbeliever people as well.

2. The road of the Via Mariae in Harghita County and its relation in Seklerland

The way of Mary in Harghita County is special, not just because this is the final point at the eastern direction, but also because here in many parts we have to go in a much harder and more dangerous way. One of the final point of the Mary`s way is Şumuleu Ciuc (Csíksomlyó) and the shrine situated there. The objective of the pilgrim`s way is to make a centre point for the ways, to modernize the pilgrim`s ways, and to make it more simple and more understandable. Nowadays there are two Transylvanian ways, which can be reached from 7-8 direction from Seklerland.

Moreover, the main and the secondary ways have to be separated also, because the Western ways are not just coming from Seklerland, the pilgrims are coming from a longer pilgrimage (more weeks), and from the secondary ways of some days long. The ways are separated in a well visible way; they have separate numbers and colours. Thus, the main and the secondary ways can be easily differentiated and noticed.

The 2 main roads:

M 05 red

Târgu Mureș – Inlăceni - Miercurea Ciuc (Șumuleu Ciuc) - Ghimeș-Făget

Târgu Mureș– Sărățeni (MS) – Șiclod, Cușmed, Atid, Inlăceni, Fırtoșu, Păuleni, Lupeni, Dealu, Zetea, Căpâlnița, Vlăhița, Miercurea Ciuc (Șumuleu Ciuc)

Păuleni Ciuc, Delnița, Bârzava, Frumoasa, Lunca de Sus, Ghimeș-Făget (județul Bacău)

M 01 purple

Cluj Napoca – Târgu Mureș – Praid - Miercurea Ciuc (Șumuleu Ciuc)

Cluj Napoca – Târgu Mureș – Sărățeni (MS) – Praid – Bucin – Borzont – Joseni – Suseni – Voșlăbeni – Ineu – Cârța – Dănești – Mădăraș Ciuc – Racu – Bârzava – Păuleni Ciuc – Miercurea Ciuc (Șumuleu Ciuc)

Beside these, there is a South Transylvanian way, but it is at under construction:

M 03 purple

... Arad – Alba Iulia – Sighișoara – Miercurea Ciuc (Șumuleu Ciuc)

Albești (MS) – Șoard – Secuieni – Filiaș – Cristuru Secuiesc – Rugănești – Șimonești – Cireșeni – Forțeni – Odorheiu Secuiesc – Băile Homorod – Căpâlnița – Vlăhița – Miercurea Ciuc (Șumuleu Ciuc)

Between the secondary ways the below enumerated are now under construction:

M 12 blue

Brașov – Sfântu Gheorghe – Miercurea Ciuc (Șumuleu Ciuc) – Toplița – Vatra Dornei

Bixad (CV) – Băile Tușnad – Tușnadu Nou – Vrabia – Cetățuia – Sânsimion – Sântimbru – Sâncrăieni – Miercurea Ciuc (Șumuleu Ciuc) – Păuleni Ciuc – Delnița – Bârzava – Racu – Mădăraș – Dănești – Cârța – Ineu – Voșlăbeni – Suseni – Joseni – Lăzarea – Ghiduț – Ditrău – Subcetate – Sărmaș – Gălăuțaș – Toplița – Bilbor – Vatra Dornei (SV).

M28 yellow

Coșnea – Miercurea Ciuc (Șumuleu Ciuc) – Târgu Secuiesc – Sfântu Gheorghe

Coșnea (județul Bacău) – Șoimeni – Șumuleu Ciuc – Fitod – Lelicieni – Misentea – Bancu – Plăieșii de Jos – Plăieșii de Sus – Imper – Iacobeni – Cărpinenii (CV)

M29 green

Micloșoara – Baraolt (CV) – Sântimbru Băi – Băile Jigodin– Miercurea Ciuc (Șumuleu Ciuc)

We can say that in Harghita County the way of Mary is well organized rich network. Now it is just the 55-60% percent is ready but we are planning to finish it until the end of 2015. On county level Harghita County has one connection to the West direction (Praid, Targu Mures), 2 to the South , 2 to the East, one to South-East (Baraolt) and finally one connection to the North (Bilbor, Vatra Dornei).

3. The actual trends, demands and target groups of tourism

In 2010, the tourism made up the 9,2% of the GDP, 8,2% of the labour market, 6,1 % of the incomes from the export, 9,2% of the investments (based on WTTC Annual Report in 2011).

The actual touristic trends can be listed into 5 concerned problems:

- Demographical changes, highlighted to the increasing number of the 3rd class, and the changes which are occurring because of this (increasing quality, comfort, therapy).
- 2. The development of health-consciousness: in every segment we can feel that it is really diversified, and it is an opportunity not just for the `health industry`, but to the tourism and the other forms of free time activities as well.
- 3. Knowledge and qualification: there are more qualified tourists; with increased general qualification level more and more tourists have become a `qualified` tourist.
- 4. Experiences: nowadays most of the tourists are travellers, who have gained experiences, resulting in knowing more than 4-5, but sometimes even more than 10 touristic destinations abroad, and because of this, and they have a good referential point to compare the available touristic places. These pretensions contributed to the born of

really good ideas.

5. Slow tourism: this is a new general trend, many times the rich tourists change the hotels into tents and they are going on foot, not with car, or they use the simple and traditional services (spiritual ways, handmade things)

Between the 5 abovementioned touristic trends, two can be disadvantageous (demographical changes and the trend of the experiences), two can be an opportunity in the religious tourism (knowledge, qualification and healthy lifestyle) and one, the slow tourism, can be a really good base for the religious-touristic pilgrim`s way.

The knowledge and the better qualification increases the number of tourists and pilgrims who are interested in the way of Mary, because this way offers to experience and view beautiful landscapes, interesting and mysterious places, also providing the possibility to meet with a lot of interesting people.

The healthier lifestyle can be as an advantage with many prophylactic methods: wellness, gyms and etc., or with the simple walking, active motion, `more relax and less work`.

For us the most important trend is the slow tourism, because this is a totally different trend (less organized, not modern) for the people who would like to spend their time more relaxed. In the slow tourism the most important fact is to show people the small beauties, the accent being put on the details, in the centre of the attention are the animals, the spirituality, the religion, and the people. Typical travellers of this trend are:

- The tourists who like the nature more than the modern buildings. When travelling they go with a tent, and ask the help of local people. They can have really diversified interests: from the world of the plants to the lifeless nature, being actively concerned. These tourists do not use modern tools; they enjoy the calm, silence nature and free time.
- The cultural experience searchers: far away from the jangle of civilization (sometimes in the cities, but not people interested in events or famous places), to small villages, archaeological places, these people are cultural circle visitors or volunteers who are interested about everything, and they are not in a hurry. They have already knowledge about the place what they visit, but still they like to spend time there to

know the places better.

- Religious- cultural tourists, pilgrims: in this regard more types can be distinguished. One of them are tourists who are going alone without organizing the travel, and not having a high spiritual interest, because they are more interested in cultural places, and they can be religious without being part in any of the Churches. These tourists do not have any strict plan, they spend their time as how they want, and because of this reason they can accept more details about the places using also special services. The others are the `real` pilgrims, who choose the places after the pilgrim`s way. They are loyal and they usually go back several times. The service which can be offered to the pilgrims is totally different, and for this very reason the pilgrimage places should have better hosting possibilities (community and spiritual programs, accommodation, food).

The basic character of the postmodern tourism is that the traditional target segments are disappearing. The border between the categories is not strict, one person can be in a year a tourist on the beaches or in the Alps, and on next years can be an explorer tourist, who has no problem with missing the comfort. This doesn`t mean that there are needs of building up a new infrastructure; the travellers of the slow tourism have no any special need. However, there are three elements what are really important to take into consideration, in this case:

- Information: the most important thing in the case of a slow tourist is to get enough information about the programs, places and activities,
- Contents: it is not enough to present the general historical facts for the postmodern tourists; they need religious, spiritual and natural experiences and to establish connection with people.
- Security: the unorganized trip does not mean that the tourist has to feel unsecure, the personal and material security is really important during these trips. The postmodern tourism could develop in West because there are secure ways, where people can go without having any doubt. It is really important to achieve this in Eastern Europe as well, primarily in the case of the way of Mary, in order to offer for the pilgrims security that the they does not have to tackle with their secure, making possible to

freely enjoy the pilgrim`s way.

For who is the way of Mary?

- Hikers
- Searchers
- Spiritual and religious people

What does the way of Mary give to them?

To the hikers:

- A deeper knowledge about local values
- The experience of the hiking, sport and trips
- A longer program for the ones who would like to go out just for some days
- Challenge for the ones who are curious or want to achieve something.

To the searchers:

- Spiritual and community experience
- The beauty and reality of the world
- The way to the God;

To the spiritual and religious people:

- The opportunity to understand and to live the historical and ecclesiastical symbols and values
- The knowledge of the religious tradition and the opportunity to get a deeper faith.

This way, which connects seven countries, is open for people who are looking for cultural, spiritual or natural values, no matter how old they are. The pilgrims have the opportunity to choose between the short, half day tour and the long, hard pilgrimages. It can be reachable on foot or with bicycle, alone or in a group. They can walk on the whole way, or they can

choose a short one.

4. Touristic products and services

To develop the Hungarian sacred places gives the opportunity to increase the level of society's life standard in Seklerland and in Romania. There are many other sacred examples from Europe, which help us to build up the ways more carefully and accordingly make a good and organized plan. The development of the religious centres has positive effects in spiritual, social, and economical way, too.

One of the most important tasks of the Pilgrimage centres is giving back to people the faith and the lost confidence, because without these there is no future for them. The large European pilgrimage centres show the force of a good organized religious tourism.

The touristic developments are really important to make our cultural values well known, and to take care of the Hungarian cultural and heritage values. The religious tourism is a special, fast-growing branch of the tourism industry.

The planned pilgrim`s way, as a touristic product has to put into the offer the elements which make this offer attractive and irresistible:

- Spiritual and religious experience,
- Releasing from the every days,
- Going out from the `hull of the civilization` (partial or regular)
- Closeness to the nature, natural-esthetical perspectives
- Experience of the accomplishment and success (`I did it` feeling)
- Visiting the sacred places, exploring them, not just in the urban environment
- Visiting historical places, `presentation` of the past

In the building up process of the way of Mary it is really important to plan the connected touristic and other local products and services, which are essential to take into account in the case of the pilgrims:

1. Direct services:

a. Permanent services: accommodation, meal and information.

It is really important to define what kind of accommodation places can host the pilgrims, which can be the favourite places. There are three categories of the accommodations: low cost places (0-5 euro), room-renting or other middle level places (5-10 euro), better quality, middle level places, like pensions, cheaper hotels (10-25 euro). Next to the way, we have to build resting places, toilets, renovate the natural water sources, and make informational boards about the positive effects of the water.

b. Occasional services: transportation, first-aid, shopping.

The services, like rent a car, transportation, air transport are really important because the pilgrims do not come and go back on the same pilgrim`s way, usually they need transportation. The pilgrims have to know information about the first aid centres, the basic hospitalization services and about mountain rescue services as well. Also, the contacts of local producers, groceries or shops where they can find hiking kits have to be on the informative flyers.

2. Services and experiences what are connected to the pilgrims: religious events, holidays, different pictures about rural tourism, cultural attractions (divided for event, theme and place), events in the cities. Every religious holiday can be interesting for the pilgrims, because the religious-spiritual motivations are the biggest influence of the pilgrimage. On the other hand, the village days are really good opportunities for the pilgrims, who are interested in folklore, agricultural society (the animal husbandry and the cultivation are beautiful examples of the simple rural life). But, the highly commercialized accommodations and shops, loud programs (carnivals) can be too much for the pilgrims, and because of this reason, these are not recommended.

3. Easily connected services: natural values, reservation parks, some forms of the active tourism. The pilgrim is not travelling and walking for knowing more about the nature, he is not an eco-tourist. But, beside this fact, most of the pilgrim`s way are situated in the nature. The landscape, the geological forms, the water sources and

also the biodiversity can be interesting for the tourists, who are more 'spectators' (not active participants), but also, who would like to know more about the ecosystem and the biotopes. Some other eco-tourism methods can be connected with the opportunity of the pilgrim's way (if not direct with the pilgrimage), like cycling, horse riding, skiing and running in some parts. At the same time, some wellness and medical touristic services can be connected with the pilgrimages, if these are presented between the borders of the good taste.

4. Incompatible touristic products: It is important to talk about the opposite products and services as well. For this very reason it is really important to keep clear the motorized traffic and not just of the services (ATV, snowmobile, cross-motor) but also the way of the cross-motors doesn't have to traverse the pilgrim's way. The pilgrimage is neutral with other sports, like ice-skating, Alpine skiing, etc. It can be really deteriorative if the way is traversing places which are not connected to the spirituality of the pilgrimage, for example: loud places, clubs and cafés, big shopping centres, concerts, festivals, beaches, camps and other places of the business tourism sector.

The direct services of the Via Mariae road are more detailed below:

Pilgrims' accommodation:

It is really an important part of the conception to research, to divide the categories and to popularize the accommodations since this way is going through rural areas, in the villages, where there are not pilgrims' accommodations, and so we have to look for any alternatives, like parishes, parochial places or family houses. The legal background also has to be changed, to acquire the 'pilgrim's accommodation' category.

Food:

The good meal is important during the pilgrimage. The pilgrims are opened toward local products, and to experience local gastronomic specialties. The way of Mary gives the opportunity to promote the local products from the small farmers or from the small restaurants and groceries as well. It is really important to give information about the natural water sources, from the perspective of water covering.

Information:

It is really important to build informational points, non-stop receptions, where they can get information at any time. These info-points can be in a strong connection with touristic points which are already settled down, but also can be a motivation to construct new ones. The information dissemination can be solved also with informational boards, where all the important information is written down. From time to time some resting places have to be constructed, which have the adequate infrastructure. The first-aid centres, hospitals, pharmacies, transportation, exchange offices, cash points, orientation points are important parts of the information as well.

Luggage and personal transportation:

The arriving of the pilgrims, the transportation of them and their luggage are really important part of the Via Mariae conception. The local, countywide, national and international buses, trains contacts, the rent a car contacts, the reservation of the flight tickets should be available for the pilgrims. Also, for the luggage transportation there is a demand, especially for the longer pilgrimages. In the near future these can be an opportunity for the new, secondary products.

Religious and cultural programs:

The main point of the religious-touristic product's development is to make a better publicity for the local programs. An important task is to give information about the Saints' days of the villages, about the city and village days, about the bigger religious events (pilgrimages: Mary's welcome, Live Rosary, Pentecostal's day, programs: Passion- play, Charismatic meeting, CSIT, etc.) Also, it is a really an important part of the way to present the local cultural programs, museums, folklore house and the traditional community values.

The presentation of the constructed and the natural places:

The pilgrimage tourism is in a strong relation with knowing the local values. The motto of the way of Mary is `Next to the values` reflects this perspective. Everybody's task is to present these values in more languages. Unfortunately this is unavailable in many locations. For this a solution can be to connect with the touristic guide and pilgrim's guide, what can be a secondary product as well.

Connection with other thematic ways:

In Harghita County the next thematic ways are traversed by the way of Mary: The way of the Salt, The way of the Sparkling Mineral Water (called Borvív), the way of the Fruit, and other touristic ways. The presentation of the green ways in the county helps to increase the number of tourists: The way of the Sparkling Mineral Water, the way of the Fir-tree, Vărşag`s way, the way of the Linden, The way of the Fruit. Here the nature trails, like Siculicidium, The bicycle nature trail of Corund, The Nature Trail in Mohos, Franciscan Meditation Ways and bicycle ways (this is important for the pilgrims who would like to take the pilgrimage with bicycle) can be connected and reached.

Connection with other touristic services:

The forms of the active tourisms are: horse riding, skiing, cycling, running. Ice-skating, swimming can be regarded as complementary services, and should be informed as well.

Hosting of the pilgrims:

This tradition is almost forgotten, except some elements, which can be found during the Pentecostal Pilgrimage. Potential opportunities have to wait the pilgrims at the entrance of the village, to welcome them, to go inside the church together, to get blessing, to say good bye.

5. Partners and other persons involved in the way of Mary

The way of Mary Association was founded in 2006 in Hungary, since that time they have organized the ways in Hungary and they coordinated them in other countries as well. The implementation of the way in Transylvania is coordinated by the Transylvanian Way of Mary Association, which was founded in 2012 together with other partner-organizations, with the Caritas Alba Iulia and the Transylvanian Carpathians Association.

In general we can say that the implementing the way of Mary it has been made in a quartet partnership: Churches (Christian Historical churches), political actors and local governments,

companies (touristic, non-touristic) and organizations/associations.

Among the churches, the most important is the Roman-Catholic church (the cult of Mary is the most important with the Catholics) and the Franciscan Monks from Șumuleu Ciuc (but not just). The role of the churches is to fill up the pilgrimages with religious contents, organizing meetings between the pilgrims, making a `spiritual viaticum`. A secondary role is to build pilgrim`s accommodations next to the way, where is no touristic infrastructure and to give information about local religious and sacred values. Also they can help with the volunteers to paint the way`s informative boards.

The political actors and local governments are two really important and involved actors in the financial and in the organizing part as well. The local governments give a remarkable support, from the first hand with the Development Organization of Harghita County, because it gave the financial support to the way of Mary. The role of local governments is also significant in the logistic part and in other organizational department as well. Besides local governments, also the politics has a really essential role, because of the administrative help and overcoming political barriers (helping with the classification of the way, legal background for the pilgrim`s accommodation, lobby activities, etc.)

The companies, namely the local businesses have a bigger role than it was expected. Firstly, the touristic companies have an important role, while they have to assure accommodation, food and other services which are connected to the pilgrims. Also some non-touristic businesses are relevant, like the producers of handmade products, food products, other shops (hiking kits, clothing shops, personal services), and the transportation-, rent a car companies and travel agencies can thereby have new opportunities, too. But from the other hand the companies which are not connected directly with tourism can be the sponsors of the way.

Non-governmental organizations, associations also have a really important role, because they can support the way of Mary with volunteers, what is a really help during the implementation of the way, but it will be important also with the permanent functioning. The most important between these is the Transylvanian Carpathian Association, because it gave many experts and volunteers with the designation part of the work. The Scout Association also helped us with a lot of enthusiastic young people. It is of great importance to develop new relations with the green associations, especially with the ones who are

taking care of the ways traversed by the way of Mary.

There are more associations as well, which can help with physical or psychological work, or with financial support. We can't miss out the Associations of the Communities, because many of them already supported the implementation with financial support and wood materials.

The implementation of the way of Mary will involve more persons, not just the 4 abovementioned, but also will have the result of a community alliance. Because of this the role of the media is indeed a highly significant one as well as the volunteers who are not part of any organizations, merely willing to offer help with the realization and the promotion activities, driven by personal motivations.

6. Actual requisitioning opportunities, product modelling

The question of the conception - but this is an operational task – is to resort the complete part of the Way for the average tourists.

The way of Mary is not just a signed way; it is a complex experience with different services. The following sights will be the parts of the touristic package:

- monuments, and other sacred heritages;
- folklore values;
- natural, ecological values, reservation areas, ecosystems;
- historical heritage: archaeological places, historical buildings, monuments of historical events, memories of the industrial heritage;
- events (folklore, cultural, religious), recurrent and occasional programs (see the 4th capitol).

It is important to note that these attractions will be in the tourist guide of the Via Mariae. Because of this, this conception is not presenting detailed the attractions being under discussion and other touristic values broken down for locations.

Another question related to conception is the following: this essay does not refer to the

detailed target groups' analysis. This will be briefly tackled in the 1st and 3rd capitol, and a more detailed discussion will be included in the Marketing plan.

We plan to make the way of Mary a touristic offer in two ways. The first is by the period, and the second is by the pilgrimages organized for a religious event.

6.1. Touristic programs for a day

All the time the travelling days should be counted.

1st package: M05 Sărățeni - Inlăceni - Dealu - Vlăhița– Șumuleu Ciuc: 4 days/ 99, 5 km

0. day: arriving to Sărățeni - Sihăstria Sfântul Ioan Botezătorul 2,2 km, 0, 50 h.

1st day: Sărățeni – Șiclod – Cușmed – Atid – Inlăceni: 20,3 km, 7.30 h.

2nd day: Inlăceni –Firtușu – Păuleni – Lupeni – Dealu: 25. 5 km, 8 h.

3rd day: Dealu – Zetea – Căpâlnița – Vlăhița: 24 km, 10 h.

4th day: Vlăhița – Pasul Vlăhița (Tolvajos-tető) – Șumuleu Ciuc 30,3 km, 10 h.

2nd package: M05 Ghimes Faget – Apahavas - Pârâul Ugra -Muntele Frumos – Frumoasa – Bârzava – Delnița – Păuleni Ciuc – Șumuleu Ciuc 2 days/47, 5 km

1st day: Contumaț chapel- Apahavas - Pârâul Ugra – church at Lunca de Sus / Saint Elisabeta Gymnasium 20,7 km, 8, 00 - 9,00 h.

2nd day: Lunca de Sus – Muntele Frumos – Muntele Păgânilor – Frumoasa – Bârzava – Delnița– Păuleni Ciuc – Șumuleu Ciuc 26,8 km, 9,45 h.

3rd package:M01 -M05, Târgu Mureș – Șumuleu Ciuc, 8 days

Târgu Mureș – Sărățeni – Inlăceni – Dealu – Șumuleu Ciuc

1st day: Târgu Mureș aeroport – Sângeorgiu de Mureș (the city district)

2nd day: Sângeorgiu de Mureș – Valea – Vărgata 20 km, 6 h.

3rd day: Vărgata – Sihăstria din Sărățeni 28 km, 8-9 h.

4th day: Sărățeni – Șiclod – Cușmed – Atid – Inlăceni: 20,3 km, 7.30 h.

5th day:Inlăceni –Firtușu – Păuleni – Lupeni – Dealu: 25. 5 km, 8 h.

6th day: Dealu – Zetea – Căpâlnița – Vlăhița: 24 km, 10 h.

7th day: Vlăhița – Pasul Vlăhița (Tolvajos-tető) – Șumuleu Ciuc 30,3 km, 10 h.

8th day: Travelling back to Târgu Mureș, sightseeing, airport.

4th package: M01, Sărățeni – Praid – Culmea Bucin – Șumuleu Ciuc: 5 days/120 km

1st day: Sărățeni – Praid 14 km, 4.30 h.

2nd day: Praid – Culmea Bucin 30 km, 11 h.

3rd day: culmea Bucin – Borzont – Joseni – Ciumani – Suseni 24 km, 8 h.

4th day: Suseni – Voșlăbeni – Cârța 26,6 km, 9 h.

5. zi: Cârța – Dănești – Mădăraș - Racu– Delnița – Păuleni Ciuc – Șumuleu Ciuc 25.7 km, 8.30 h.

5th package: M03, Sighișoara – Șumuleu Ciuc 4 days/110 km

1st day: Sighișoara – Albești – Boiu Mic – Șoard - Secuieni – Filiaș – Cristuru Secuiesc 25.6 km, 8,00 h.

2nd day: Cristuru Secuiesc – Rugănești – Șimonești – Cireșeni – Forțeni – Odorheiu Secuiesc 28,3 km, 9 h.

3rd day: Odorheiu Secuiesc – Szarkakő – Băile Homorod – Căpâlnița – Vlăhița 25.5 km, 8 h.

4th day: Vlăhița – Pasul Vlăhița (Tolvajos-tető) – Șumuleu Ciuc 30,3 km, 10 h.

6th package: M12, Micloșoara – Șumuleu Ciuc 2 days/ 53 km

1st day: Micloșoara – Bixad – Băile Tușnad – Tușnadu Nou – Tușnad 28 km cca. 9,00 h.

3rd day: Tușnad – Vrabia – Cetățuia – Sânsimion – Sâncrăieni – Șumuleu Ciuc 25 km cca. 8,00 h.

7th package: M12, Bilbor – Șumuleu Ciuc 5 days/126,5 km

1st day: Bilbor – Toplița 24,4 km 8 h.

2nd day: Toplița – Gălăuțaș – Sărmaș – Subcetate – Remetea -Ditrău 27,2 km, 9 h.

3rd day: Ditrău –Ghiduț - Lăzarea– Joseni - Ciumani - Suseni 22,6 km, 7,30 h.

4th day: Suseni – Voșlăbeni – Cârța 26,6 km, 9 h.

5th day:Cârța – Dănești – Mădăraș - Racu– Delnița – Păuleni Ciuc – Șumuleu Ciuc 25.7 km, 8.30 h.

8th package: M28, Estelnic - Miercurea Ciuc (Șumuleu Ciuc) 3 days/71,8 km

1st day: Estelnic - Carpineni - Iacobeni - Plăieșii de Jos 23, 8 km, 8 h.

2nd day: Plăieșii de Jos– Cinod – Ciucsângeorgiu 30,7 km, 10 h.

3rd day: Ciucsângeorgiu – Misentea – Leliceni – Șumuleu Ciuc 15,5 km, 5 h.

9th package: M28, Coșnea– Șumuleu

1st day: Coșnea– Vf. Viscol – Soimeni – Șumuleu Ciuc 27.5 km, 9 h.

10th package: M29, Micloșoara – Baraolt– Sântimbru Băi – Miercurea Ciuc 3 days/61, 8 km

1st day: Micloșoara – Căpeni – Baraolt – Filia 20 km 7 h.

2nd day: Filia – Sântimbru Băi 24,8 km, 8 h.

3rd day: Sântimbru Băi – Șumuleu Ciuc 17 km 5, 30 h.

We suggest these packages for nature-friendly, hiking tourists. The beautiful landscapes and the local people give a unique experience. We suggest this for experienced hikers. Children,

under 12 years old, and for injured persons it is not recommended.

Instead, the following packages are suggested for children, less experienced tourists and for older people:

11th package: M12, 1 day, 26 km

1st day: Cârța - – Dănești – Mădăraș – Racu – Delnița – PăuleniCiuc – MiercureaCiuc (Șumuleu) 25,7 km, 8, 30 h

12th package: M28, 1 day, 16 km

1st day: Ciucsângeorgiu – Minsentea – Leliceni - Miercurea Ciuc (Șumuleu Ciuc), 16 km, 5 h

These thematic ways can be used as natural trails. Next to the way there are many churches for the act of honouring Mary, also the tourists can meet with the traditions of the local communities.

6.2 Organizing thematic ways

The thematic ways are more about spirituality, religion, and less about the physicality and physical world. There are more and more religious programs and events in the church`s life, what just have to be included into the network of the way of Mary. Beside these, the prosperity of the way will make new religious events, products, which will be useful for the tourists and for the local communities, as well. With the help of national and international pilgrimages, the way will be more `alive`:

- Pedestrian:
 - Pilgrimage for the Pentecostal`s day – it starts in Budapest to Sumuleu Ciuc, 40 days before Pentecostal
 - Pilgrimage for the `Holy Right`- goes from Ghimes Făgeț (9th of July) to Budapest (20th of August)
 - CSIT- around 15th of August, around 11-17
 - On one way – all the time starts at the first Saturday after 15th of August from Șumuleu Ciuc to Mariazell, there are 1-2 days pilgrimages organized to visiting the Mary`s shrines.

- Bicycle: Pilgrimage on the way of Mary – Ferbit – www.ferbit.ro
- Local pilgrimages: Live Rosary in Miercurea Ciuc, Welcoming Mary, Way of the Cross at Easter on the Jesus hill.
- Thematic pilgrimages:
 - For children it can be used the nature trail from Şumuleu Ciuc – Cârța, which traverses 4 really beautiful churches at Şumuleu Ciuc, Delnița, Gârciu and Cârța. For knowing better the nature the next trails are really good: Şumuleu Ciuc – Tolvajostető, Şumuleu Ciuc – Szellőtető. A really important task is to wake up the desire in the people, to go and take part in pilgrimages. It is for sure that who has already experienced the pilgrimage`s feeling, will look for the opportunity to go again. This is the key of the development of the pilgrimages.

6.3. The steps of the product`s modelling

The elements of the product`s modelling are:

- To extend and to work-out detailed the available opportunities
- To build up relationships with the `direct` service suppliers
- To contact travel agencies, develop collaborations with them, based on the contracts
- Promotion, marketing, selling the products and services (see the Marketing plan)
- To develop the products, making new experience elements.

7. Expected results and developing opportunities

The religious centres and pilgrim`s ways (for example the conception of the way of Mary) give a huge economic and social opportunity to local communities, give a new power for the pilgrims and other incomes. The development of the pilgrim`s ways and the centres will involve the development of the economics at local level. Most of the local small and medium-sized enterprises are from the tourism, catering, construction, press, transportation

sectors, which will be directly influenced. The well-built ways will also help to contribute to the development of Harghita County's economy; will connect the local Seklers with the people from Hungary as well as with other Hungarians outside the Hungarian border. It can help with complex tasks as the adult education and spiritual workshops (it is enough if we think on Şumuleu Ciuc).

Expected general results and effects

- Primary effects: in the case of a successful implementation – for the pilgrims and the tourists gives spiritual, religious, self-consciousness and relaxing opportunities, providing a good opportunity to enjoy an organized, civilized experience.
- Indirect effects: the local sacred and religious places will be visited in another, deeper form by other target groups as well. The results will be to have better publicity for the local communities, which can be successful even on international level.
- Other effects: the way of Mary will establish a stronger relation between the Christians, with the cohesion of the Central Europeans, the way can become the tool of the peace and the comprehension between visitors and local people, and it can help with the promotion of the postmodern Christian values, through the traditional way.

Economic effects in Harghita County:

- Next to the Western pilgrim's ways the hotels and other accommodations will present better performance indicators.
- The local handicraftsmen, food producers and sellers will increase the income results, because of the pilgrims and their shopping.
- The bigger tourist `traffic` will increase the infrastructure and will help with other services which will influence positively the economic development of the county.

Social effects in Harghita County:

- To take care of local cultural-architectural values, to renovate and to construct.
- Religious `recultivation`, to see ourselves through the `glass` of the tourists.
- Social exchanges, to see the world with the help of the tourists, to develop the

tolerance for balancing the spiritual and national differences.

Environmental effects in Harghita County:

- Many areas will be used more often than before, and because of this reason, probably most of the illegal activities will disappear.
- The publicity of the natural and ecological values will be improved thanks to the visitors.
- Minimal damage of the fields, the pilgrims are disciplined, intentional damage is not typical, but because of the intensive usage of the trails, we will have to count with some level of damage also.
- More intensive traffic: due to the fact that the pilgrims are going on foot, the transportation has to be solved by transportation companies.

Opportunities to develop

One of the most important elements of the way of Mary is to increase the number of the network in the future. From another perspective, the way of Mary has to be developed, because it is not just a long walking way, it is like the traffic – a network, a traffic system – where if the area is bigger, than the way is more frequently used. The aim of developing the quantity is to give the opportunity for potential pilgrims to go to the way as they would like to (to decrease the travelling part, to go to the pilgrimage from their home on the way of Mary). The aim of developing the quality is to have more secure, easily reachable places, and to have parking sites, resting places and toilets as well.

Another developing way is to combine and clarify the informational system. In every resting place has to be given information about local interesting places and attractions. The easiest method is to make flyers, what can be offered for the tourists on boards, or in a bag. The pilgrims can choose between the 10-20-30 flyers, the ones concerning them, and would like to try and visit during the pilgrimage (churches, castles, museums, and ecosystems).

The aim of the conception is to find the most adequate target group. Without the pilgrims, this way will not be `alive` and will not be self-supporting. This can be achieved with giving information and establishing an efficient and constant communication (see the Marketing

Conception).

The plan is to filter the accommodations after the given periods, when there will appear many hotels and other accommodation forms. The method is to build up a network for the way of Mary, where all the accepted accommodations will be enlisted. Also the webpage of the way of Mary will be developed, there will be downloadable programs and information, helping tourists and pilgrims spend useful the pilgrimage, enjoy it and go through a spiritual renewal.

We would like to organize a course for the Pilgrim`s Leaders, which will help the pilgrims to get the best spiritual and cultural experience.

The pilgrimage way will be completed, if not just the final points, the middle points as well, will be more religious, spiritual, owned to the events, programs and thematic weekends organized in the whole year. These will be part of the offer slowly, making this way more attractive. The pilgrimages also mean loneliness, and we have to take care to do not disturb too much the pilgrims.

8. Other pilgrim`s ways: the Franciscan meditation ways in Şumuleu Ciuc

Şumuleu Ciuc– as the most important destination of the pilgrims – has many small pilgrim`s ways, with the aim to give opportunity for the people, who are coming for some days, to spend a half day with spiritual filling in the nature, without going to a longer pilgrimage.

The aim of these small ways are to offer the possibility for local people and for the tourists to get a whole spiritual-psychical-physical relax, in the hills of Small-Şumuleu, the Big-Şumuleu and Hosszúasszó valley. In the followings, these will be brought into discussion.

1. Joannes Kajoni meditation way (Black K)

It is an around half day long way, which goes from the pilgrimage church of Şumuleu Ciuc, traversing the Sparkling Mineral Water Source, on the car-road bypasses the two Şumuleu plateau, from there goes from the West to the Big-Şumuleu mountain, and from there on a small trail the second peak of the Big-Şumuleu mountain has to be reached. A long time ago there was a monastery, and by taking a small circuit we can see the ruins. Then in the forest with beeches has to go down into the Small-

Şumuleu mountain (here is organized the ceremony at the Pentecostal`s day), and by crossing the chapels we will arrive back to the Water Source. This is a medium level way, for children under 12 years old and for beginners we do not suggest.

2. János Écsy meditation way (Brown T)

The way is the same with the Joannes Kájoni way, with the difference that until the second Şumuleu plateau (from the Sparkling Mineral Water Source until the two Sumuleu plateaus, and from the part of the city we will arrive to the Sumuleu mountain), but after reaching this, the way goes to the mountain (to the south), going around the Big-Şumuleu without any bigger effort. This is an easier way, but with the time it can be expanded. We suggest this for children and beginners as well!

3. János Xántus meditation way (green X)

This is one day long route, really similar with the ones enumerated above, but from the second Şumuleu plateau this goes to the Eastern direction, reaching the way of Hosszúasszó valley, where the ruins of the Xantus chapel and house can be found. Here we can eat, and then turn back to the way of Leliceni. Next to the church of Leliceni, we can see the old Linden and the Bloody Image (the monument of the Tatar`s battle in 1694), and by crossing Fitod we will return back to Sumuleu. This is a medium level meditation way, it is not suggested for the children and beginners.

9. Conclusions, connections

The pilgrim`s ways of Harghita County are strongly connected with the way of Mary. Later, the way of Mary will be still the most important pilgrimage network of Harghita County, even if there will be new ways developed.

The way of Mary is an under implementation Eastern-European pilgrim`s way, which will be a successful Central – European story about partnership collaborations. The signal system of the implementation is in a really good level, but many other services are just in the organizational phase or have a conception dilemma. The way will give spiritual, cultural, psychical experience for the visitors, together with the authentic and native local people. The way already has built and signed parts, developed with individual image elements.

Beside this, the pilgrims are the `pilgrimage` themselves, after a long `walking` they will find the success. And after the implementation, there will be new opportunities for new pilgrimages. In the process there will be many governmental and individual persons, as it has been before. The parts from Harghita County will be interesting because they offer not just one way, but there are 5-6 ways from where you can go to Sumuleu Ciuc, to the final point of the pilgrim`s way.

A pilgrimage way will be alive and enjoyable; if there will be interested people and pilgrims. The pilgrimage is a lonely and a social experience, which offers different opportunities for the visitors. But, it is really important to have pilgrims on the ways, otherwise they will disappear. This can be achieved with organized programs, services, and good communicational competences.

Harghita County Council will have a really important role in the real future, in one hand with the help to build up the way of Mary and other pilgrim`s ways, and from the second hand with the facilities of the pilgrimages, informational systems, and on the last hand with the promotion of the pilgrim`s way, not just for the tourists but for the local people as well.

This conception presents the main and the initial points of the planning and implementing parts of the ways. The parts after the conception – which are shown in the Recultivatur project – will be written in the next steps:

- Making and socializing the Development Conception;
- Planning the ways, making
- Writing Touristic guides (Pilgrim`s guide);*
- Making the Marketing plan with the marketing tools;
- Making the webpage as a marketing too;
- Making an informational book.

*Observation: it is possible that the touristic guide or the Pilgrim`s guide to be presented in more parts, it will be composed by more books, because the detailed presentation of the pilgrimage cannot be presented just in one book, however in this way this will be too

complicated.

Beside this, the present development project, the way of Mary's project is in a relation with another 'sacred' project, which has the goal to organize spiritual, religious programs and events during the whole year. The project has more elements, like honouring Mary, spiritual weekends, thematic pilgrimages, for example the pilgrimage of the Young People, the Ill people, which are connected to Şumuleu Ciuc, giving hereby an added value to this place, and it can find the condign place between the pilgrimage places of Europe. The pilgrim comes to Şumuleu Ciuc on the way of Mary (on foot, by bicycle, with horse, or by car), and gets prepared to find the answers for the questions of his/her life. Arriving to Şumuleu Ciuc, the pilgrims can join the programs organized at the shrine, where can fill up spiritually and psychically. The pilgrims after going back from the pilgrimage bring with them a positive affection to their families and to the society.

Both projects are really interesting and valuable, from religious and cultural points of view will change Şumuleu Ciuc into a rich destination. Also, not just Şumuleu Ciuc but also Harghita County will become a touristic destination: in the county there are more pilgrim's ways, and the way of Mary is 550 km long. If the communication tools and the implementation will be successful this region will become the most important pilgrimage and eco-touristic destination.

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