



TOURIST AMENITIES OF CERTAIN CRAFTS IN ROMANIA



**INTERREG IVC project CHARTS
CLOSING CONFERENCE:
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TOURISM DEVELOPMENT***



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ROMANIAN CRAFTS

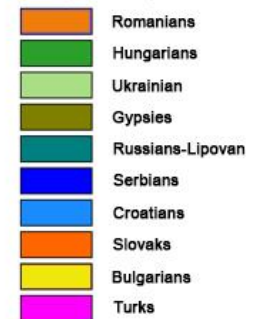
In Romania there are crafts specific to some ethnographic areas which appeared due to the natural resources and materials resulted from agriculture.

Till 1990 the crafts were intensely practiced, their products being sold on the internal and external market. The most important ones were related to: **the traditional ceramics, the art of wood traditional processing, the art of etching eggs, the art of glass icons.**

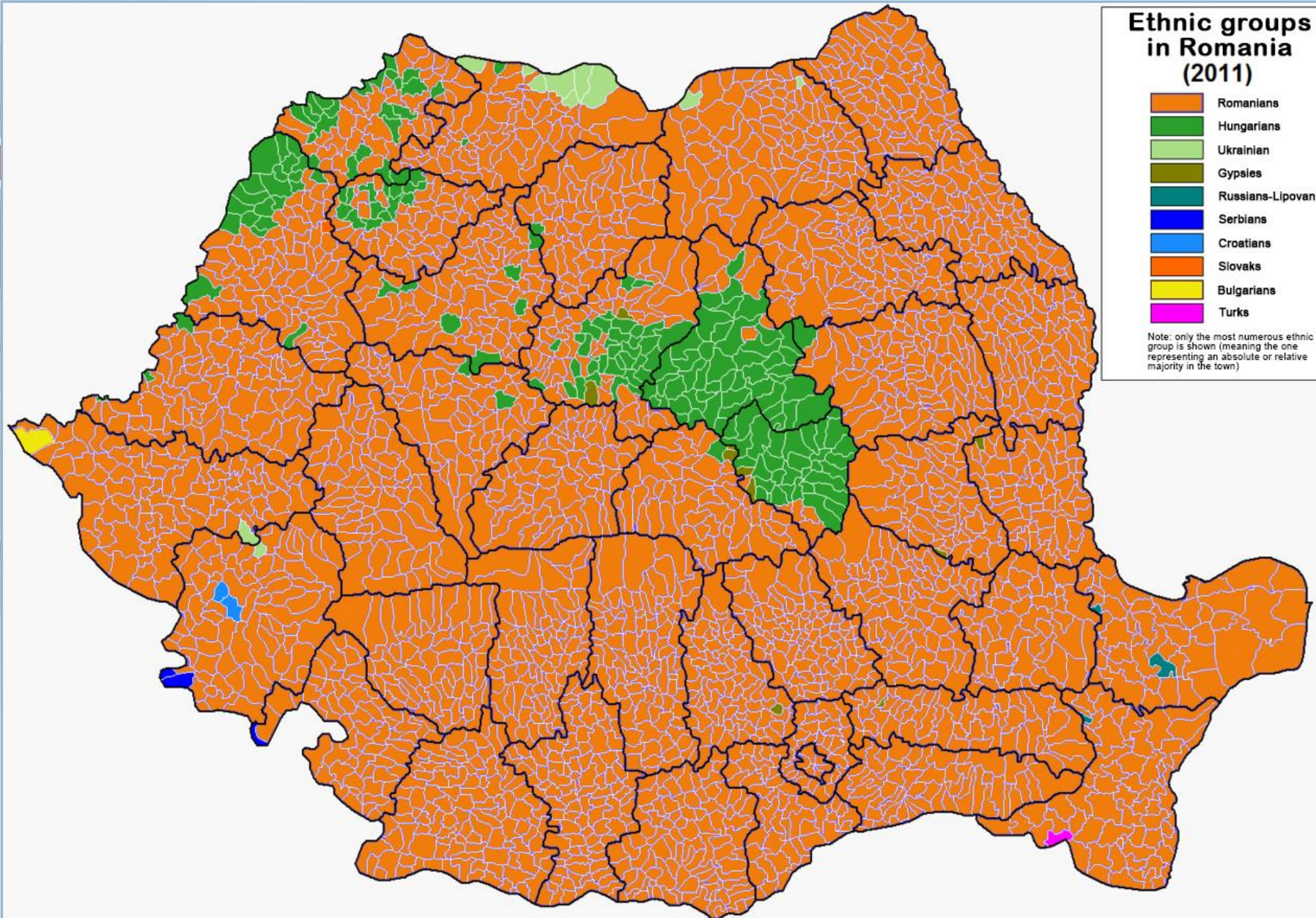
The Basic Environment for Crafts in Romania

- ◆ The Romanian rural environment comprises 87.1% of the national territory, 46% of the stable population, 29.1% of the employed population.
- ◆ In Romania, 89.5% of the population is represented by Romanians and the rest by 20 ethnic groups, of which 13 range between 6.0-0.5% of the population – Hungarians, Gypsies, Germans, Ukrainian, Russians-Lipovan, Turks, Tatars, Serbians, Slovaks, Bulgarians, Croats, Jewish.
- ◆ The other minorities have under 5000 inhabitants - Czechs, Poles, Italians, Greeks, Armenians, Hungarian origin Romanians in Moldavia (2012).
- ◆ From the historic point of view there are 8 provinces while administratively, there are 41 counties, with 2959 localities and 12751 villages (2012).

Ethnic groups in Romania (2011)



Note: only the most numerous ethnic group is shown (meaning the one representing an absolute or relative majority in the town)



The Characteristics of the Ethnographic Areas

The specificity, authenticity of the ethnographic areas is given by the following *elements*, with unitary character:

- historical age of human settlements in the rural regions;
- conservation of agriculture and crafts occupations;
- the building and traditional ornamentation of the house;
- traditional crafts;
- the conservation of the specific traditional costume;
- the continuity of some religious and lay customs, related to farming activities and family events (birth, baptism, wedding, etc.);
- diverse and old artistic events.

The Craft Concept

6 essential elements

the geographic
space of
historical age

local community
– occupations
and traditions

natural
resources that
can be
processed

the inheritance
of forms, colours
and decorations

the craftsman's
talent and
creativity

household items
and handicrafts



Traditional Ceramics

- many clay deposits in the hillock and plateau areas;
- wheel processing of the clay - Romanian pottery is still made mainly on traditional kick-wheels with simple finishing tools;
- covering 6 working steps – growing, tempering, cleaning the impurities away, shaping, finishing, decorating, burning in kilns;
- two types of ceramics – enamelled and non-enamelled;
- ornamenting through drawings and colours, graffiti technique, polishing with a stone, through bas-relief decorations;
- great variety of forms and sizes – jugs, flower vases, plates, cooking pots, rushlights, clay vessels, cake moulds, figurines, ornaments, ceramic tiles;
- many ornaments are of Romanian, Greek and Byzantine origin;
- the prevalent colours are green, blue (Byzantine influence), brown, red (Roman influence) and black;
- colour glazes and decorations vary from strong geometrics, to delicate flowers, animals and humans.



Traditional Ceramics



- ❖ Folk ceramics represents the proof of continuity and unity of the Romanian people in the Carpathian-Danube-Black Sea space.
- ❖ There are a great many pottery centres throughout the country, each with its own distinctive style, but the main areas are in Horezu (Oltenia), Miercurea-Ciuc and Corund (Transylvania), Baia Mare (northern border) and Radauti and Marginea (Moldavia).

Traditional Ceramics



Horezu Ceramics, Vâlcea county

Since 2012 on the Representative List of UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity



Corund Ceramics, Harghita county



Cucuteni Ceramics, Iasi county



Vama Ceramics, Satu Mare county

Traditional Ceramics



Non-enamelled black ceramics from ***Marginea , Suceava county***



Red ceramics from ***Săcel, Maramureș county***



Non-enamelled ceramics from ***Biniș, Caraș-Severin county***



Enamelled white ceramics from ***Vlădești, Vâlcea county***

Traditional Ceramics



Clay figurines made by Nicolae Diaconu,
Codlea town, Braşov county



Kuty Ceramics – craftsman Florin Colibaba from
a pottery family with a 240 years tradition, from
Rădăuţi, Suceava county

The Art of Wood Traditional Processing

- The art of woodwork has a long tradition in Romania and craftsmen have put both skill and artistic feeling in this unique material.
- Romania has a rich forest fund which represents 27% of the national territory surface (2013);
- The wood use and processing art belong to the Romanian traditional culture as a part of an original combination between the Carpathian-Danube-Pontic culture, pre-historic tradition and Dacian, Roman and Byzantine elements;
- The traditional wood processing is specific to the rural environment from mountain and hillock regions and implies the use of specific processing techniques and instruments. The most widely used is the wood from fir tree, lime, oak, poplar and alder.



The Art of Wood Traditional Processing

Specific Typology



Traditionally, wood is used:

- to build wood churches, houses, households annexes and building elements;
- traditional means of transport – cart, sleigh, dog cart;
- household furniture with sculpted, incised motifs;
- painted furniture, from the XVII-th century, of Transylvanian Saxon influence, specific for the Rupea, Sighisoara, Sibiu, Sebes, Tara Barsei, Varghis, Bistrita, Bran regions; objects used as supports: wood panels, spoons, salt cellars, boxes, chests, mortars, plates, plate-racks, pegs, trays;
- wood painting includes floral, geometric, astral, anthropomorphic, zoomorphic or phytomorphic motifs that are painted against an olive green or dark blue background;
- agricultural and house tools – for processing and weaving textiles, kitchen;
- church furniture – iconostases, benches, wood crosses and painted icons;
- manufacturing musical instruments – whistles, panpipes, violins, lutes, etc.;
- making toys for children and games for adults (chess, backgammon):

The Art of Wood Traditional Processing

Processing and ornamenting

- there are modern methods to extract wood from forests, but the processing is done traditionally;
- processing means sculpting, bending, perforating, fret-sawing for which craftsmen use old, traditional methods;
- ornamenting implies notching, etching, excising and incising, smoking, painting with colours;
- the decoration is done with simple tools, such as: saws, axes, hatchets or chisels having different forms and sizes;
- they have different specialisations depending on the objects they create – carpenters, coopers, wheelwrights, spoon-makers, etc.



The Art of Wood Traditional Processing



**The Wooden Church of Bârsana
(1711),
Maramureș county,
on the UNESCO World Heritage List**



Wooden gate, Maramureș county – Vișeu



Wooden gate, Covasna county – Vârgheș

The Art of Wood Traditional Processing



Transylvanian Saxon Hand Painted Furniture

The Art of Wood Traditional Processing



Traditional toys in the Village Museum, Bucharest – carved and polished wood dolls



Weaving loom made of wood – Oltenia Region.

Such weaving looms function in Maramureș, Bucovina, Transylvania

The Art of Wood Traditional Processing



Household wood items

The Art of Etching Eggs

- ❖ The artistic painting of eggs represents an old custom in Romanian traditions. This custom is a proof of the Easter habits, beliefs and traditions, representing an element of Romanian spiritual culture. Geographically, this tradition covers the whole surface of the country.
- ❖ The **symbol of red eggs** is connected to Jesus Christ's life, to the crucifixion and resurrection moments. The egg symbolises the resurrection of nature and resuming of agricultural activities in spring. The legend says that when Jesus was beaten with stones, they turned into red eggs.
- ❖ **The most popular motifs are:**
 - animal motifs: bee, frog, snake, butterfly, lamb
 - vegetal motifs: fir needle, carnation, wheat ear
 - anthropomorphic motifs: rake, ploughshare, star, Romanian cross;
 - geometrical motifs
- ❖ **The most widely used colours**— red, green, black, blue, yellow.
- ❖ Each ethnographic area of the country has its own egg models and these represent a real religious, artistic and



The Painting and Ornamenting Processes

The method of painting eggs starts in the pre-Christian period, as a form of celebrating life.

- ❑ they paint the eggs using wax and natural paints which are applied gradually on the egg;
- ❑ the procedure is repeated depending on the number of colours, starting from lighter colours to darker ones;
- ❑ the tradition says that the egg can be painted and etched on Thursday and Saturday during the Holy Week, the craft of painting the eggs being reserved exclusively to women.
 - The Hungarian and Szeckler eggs are decorated with two colours: the egg natural colour and red;
 - Romanian eggs are painted in 4 colours: egg natural colour, yellow, red and black;
 - With the urban modern influences, craftsmen started to paint eggs with a brush, to stick small glass beads, to use plant leaves, with new motifs – icons, flowers, landscapes.

Egg painting is a moment of great joy, fully attained by the entire family.



Etched eggs



**Tara Bârsei region, Braşov
county**

**Ciocăneşti village,
Suceava county,
Bucovina historical**

**Moldoviţa, Suceava
county**

Etched eggs



Olt county, Dolj county

Eggs with glass beads decorations



Salva village, the Bistrița Năsăud county

The Art of Glass Icons

- ❖ This craft belongs to the naive rural painting which developed in Transylvania and the north of Moldova;
- ❖ Its existence was due to the presence of several workshops of traditional glass processing;
- ❖ It appeared at the end of the XVII-th century, under a direct influence from Austria and the Czech Republic – Bohemia;
- ❖ The Romanian glass painting in Transylvania is an original artistic creation, specifically belonging to the Romanian rural art;



- ❖ the drawings are applied on the back of the glass, with paper patterns and the outline is made with a thin brush, goose feathers and later, with steel pens;
- ❖ the colours are prepared with natural pigments and have a certain transparency; for the basis they use an emulsion made of natural substances (vegetal glue, egg yoke, etc.);
- ❖ for the final decorations they use a golden thin paper to make the halos bright; in the end, the entire icon is ointed with turpentine to be protected from humidity;
- ❖ these icons were meant to trim the peasants' houses and were created by peasant craftsmen.

Motifs and Glass Icons Workshops

- the main motifs are the religious ones connected to events in the lives of Saint Mary and the Holy Baby, Jesus Christ, saints Nicholas, Haralambie, Gheorghe, John the Baptist, Stelian, Ilie for their significance and importance in religion;
- painters inspired from the mural paintings in churches and wood icons; glass painting was not their main occupation; after working in the fields, they manufactured such art objects;
- there are 25 centres in Romania where such objects are made, the craft being transmitted in the family;
- the most famous centres lie in the Nicula locality, Cluj county, Fagaras town and Șcheii Brașovului, a district of Brasov-both in Brasov county, Iernuțeni locality – Mures county, Alba Iulia municipality, Laz main village, Alba county.



Glass Icons



Glass icons from Scheii Braşovului



**The Fr. Zosim Oancea Museum of the
Icons on Glass at Sibiel**

Tourist Amenities of the presented Romanian Crafts

- the evolution of Romanian pottery is linked to the life necessities and taste of different epochs, conditioned by the economic and social relations between the urban and rural centres;
- traditional products are more and more requested in urban households and for interior design;
- currently, the analysed crafts have become more applicable and stable, the number of craftsmen has increased;
- the wood objects craft has returned through the use of wood items in the kitchen, as ornaments for handicrafts or as multifunctional toys for kids;
- decorated eggs and glass icons have become interior design objects in many urban houses, many people owning real collections;
- these objects are sold at national level in fairs connected to certain religious holidays (important saints, Summer alms fair and Winter alms fair in the Greek-orthodox calendar);
- the promotion and marketing of traditional ceramics products in fairs and expositions, at international level or in national tourist souvenir shops is limited and insufficient.

Conclusions

- The artistic crafts production can develop and evolve well if artisans are rediscovered and appreciated by culture lovers and not only; more than that, it is essential for craftsmen to collaborate with local governmental representatives and bodies involved in cultural activities (including universities).
- No matter their type, crafts are a blending of practicality and art and an expression of people's inspiration; through all these traditional jewels, Romanians tell wonderful old stories that otherwise would be forgotten.



A story to be shared...

Thank you for your attention!



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