

Tourism Potential Valorisation in the Cross-Border Region Galați – Southern Republic of Moldova: An Integrated Approach

Silvius Stanciu¹ and Sergiu Cornea²

¹⁾ "Dunărea de Jos" University of Galați, Galați, Romania.

²⁾ "B.P.Hasdeu" State University from Cahul, Cahul, Republic of Moldova

E-mail: silvius.stanciu@ugal.ro; E-mail: sergiu.cornea@adm.usch.md

Please cite this paper as:

Stanciu, S., & Cornea, S. (2026). Tourism Potential Valorisation in the Cross-Border Region Galați – Southern Republic of Moldova: An Integrated Approach. In C. Vasiliu, D.-C. Dabița, A. Tziner, D. Pleșea, & V. Dinu (Eds.), *Proceedings of BASIQ International Conference on New Trends in Sustainable Business and Consumption, 12th Edition* (pp. 205-213). Editura ASE.
DOI 10.24818/BASIQ/2026/12/010

Abstract

The cross-border region formed by Galați County in Romania and the southern part of the Republic of Moldova, with a focus on Cahul district, UTA Gagauzia, and Taraclia, has significant tourism potential based on the complementarity of natural, cultural, historical, spa and wellness tourism, and ethnocultural resources. This paper assesses the capacity of this emerging cross-border space to develop as an integrated tourism system. The research is based on a qualitative case study methodology, using document analysis, comparative assessment, and PESTEL and SWOT analyses as analytical tools. The study examines tourism resources, institutional cooperation, infrastructure constraints, and opportunities for joint destination development. The findings show that the region benefits from strong resource complementarity and from several cooperation initiatives, including CROSS2MAP, but remains affected by fragmented promotion, uneven infrastructure, limited international visibility, and insufficiently integrated tourism products. The paper contributes to the literature on cross-border tourism systems by showing how peripheral border regions can use institutional cooperation, digital support tools, and joint strategic planning to transform dispersed tourism resources into a more coherent destination. Strategic directions are proposed for strengthening cooperation, developing thematic routes, improving destination governance, and increasing the visibility of the region within regional and international tourism circuits.

Keywords

Cross-border tourism; tourism potential; regional development; sustainable tourism; CROSS2MAP.

DOI: 10.24818/BASIQ/2026/12/010

Introduction

Tourism is an important driver of regional development, particularly in border areas where resource complementarity may generate integrated tourism products and strengthen territorial cohesion. Recent studies emphasize that cross-border tourism systems can enhance destination competitiveness, institutional cooperation, and sustainable regional development (Pardo et al., 2024; Timothy et al., 2026).

At the same time, new approaches highlight the growing importance of political borders, governance structures, territorial fluidity, and digital connectivity in shaping tourism dynamics and regional cooperation processes (Timothy et al., 2026; Wang, 2026). Sustainability and digitalization have also transformed tourism into a strategic instrument for territorial integration and local economic resilience (Alonso-Muñoz et al., 2022; Gretzel et al., 2015).

The Galați – Southern Republic of Moldova region is characterized by geographical proximity, shared cultural heritage, and significant tourism resources (Consiliul Județean Galați, 2021; Consiliul Raional Cahul, 2023).

Galați County, Cahul district, the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia, and Taraclia district together form a complementary cross-border tourism area based on cultural diversity, natural resources, and regional connectivity. Tourism development in the area has increasingly been supported by institutional initiatives and cross-border cooperation programmes, while institutional coordination and information exchange are considered key elements in the development of integrated tourism destinations (Parfinenko et al., 2022).

A relevant example is the “VIA Cahul” tourism cluster, developed within the EU4Cahul project (VIA Cahul, 2022). In parallel, digital tools are becoming increasingly important for tourism promotion and destination visibility. In this regard, the CROSS2MAP project (ROMD 00389), implemented within the Interreg VI-A NEXT Romania–Republic of Moldova Programme, contributes to the development of an integrated digital infrastructure for promoting sustainable tourism in the cross-border region.

Despite the growing interest in cross-border tourism, relatively limited research has addressed the Galați – Cahul – Gagauzia – Taraclia area as an integrated tourism system. Existing studies generally analyse tourism resources separately, with limited attention to the interaction between tourism potential, institutional cooperation, and digital support tools. In this context, the present study aims to assess the tourism potential of the Galați – Southern Republic of Moldova cross-border region and to identify strategic directions for the development of an integrated tourism destination, with particular attention to digital promotion initiatives such as the CROSS2MAP platform. The paper is structured as follows: the first section reviews the relevant literature on tourism potential and cross-border tourism systems, followed by the research methodology, results and discussion, and concluding remarks regarding strategic directions for regional tourism development.

1. Literature Review

In the economic literature, tourism potential is commonly defined as the result of the interaction between natural, cultural, and socio-economic resources, together with the available infrastructure and the capacity for destination management and promotion. Within this context, tourism is increasingly associated with sustainable territorial development, being regarded as a tool for enhancing local identities and reducing regional disparities. Recent research highlights the growing role of rural, gastronomic, and wine tourism in supporting regional diversification and valorising local identities. Agritourism and gastronomy-based tourism contribute to the development of authentic tourism products and local economic resilience, while wine tourism enhances destination attractiveness through integrated cultural and recreational experiences (Knezevic, 2010; Ghenova, 2016; Staver et al., 2023; Safarov et al., 2024; Yasin & Bacsı, 2025).

Tourist perceptions, especially among international visitors, also indicate an increasing preference for authentic experiences, local gastronomy, and direct interaction with rural communities, which further strengthens the role of agritourism in local economies (Colesnicova & Italsin, 2025). Another important dimension of tourism development is represented by cultural tourism, which plays a central role in strengthening destination identity and valorising heritage resources. Studies focused on the Republic of Moldova indicate that interest in cultural heritage tourism is increasing, although the development of this segment remains constrained by institutional and management-related challenges (Stratan et al., 2015).

At the same time, infrastructure and accessibility are considered essential conditions for the development of integrated tourism systems. Major infrastructure projects, such as bridge construction and transport modernization, may contribute to the transformation of regional urban centres into tourism hubs and improve territorial connectivity (Beciu & Arghiroiu, 2019). However, the development of integrated tourism routes and products is often limited by insufficient infrastructure and weak coordination among stakeholders (Bacal & Brega, 2013).

The literature also underlines the growing importance of environmental sustainability in tourism development. Environmental and climatic factors significantly influence destination attractiveness and tourism seasonality, requiring the adaptation of tourism development strategies to sustainability principles (Mihaila et al., 2018). In parallel, recent approaches emphasize the strong connection between tourism, sustainability, and green territorial development, highlighting the importance of integrating environmental policies and sustainable governance mechanisms into tourism planning processes (Alonso-Muñoz et al., 2022; Hrechko & Jacimovic, 2024).

In a regional context, cross-border cooperation and European integration are increasingly recognized as key drivers of tourism development and territorial cohesion. Recent studies emphasize that cross-border tourism systems can enhance destination competitiveness through institutional coordination, integrated governance, and the development of joint tourism products (Parfinenko et al., 2022; Pardo et al., 2024; Timothy et al., 2026). At the same time, barriers related to administrative fragmentation, uneven infrastructure, and limited

institutional connectivity may constrain the effectiveness of cross-border tourism initiatives. In this context, tourism becomes an instrument for regional integration, destination visibility, and sustainable territorial development (Costea & Stanciu, 2022).

In Romania, the literature points to structural transformations in tourism in the context of economic transition, as well as to the role of residents' perceptions and urban branding in shaping tourism development (Light & Andone, 1996; Susanu et al., 2018; Sorcaru et al., 2022). Furthermore, the valorisation of natural resources, such as hunting and fishing tourism, is considered an important opportunity for regional development, although it is often constrained by insufficient infrastructure (Camara & Munteanu, 2016).

Despite the diversity of approaches, the literature reveals a significant gap regarding the analysis of the Galați – Cahul – Gagauzia – Taraclia area as an integrated cross-border tourism system. Most studies examine tourism resources and regional components separately, with limited attention given to the interaction between tourism potential, institutional cooperation, and digital support tools within an emerging cross-border destination. In this context, the present research aims to contribute to addressing this gap by providing an integrated assessment of tourism potential and identifying strategic directions for the development of a competitive and sustainable cross-border tourism system.

2. Research methodology

The research is based on a qualitative case study methodology, using document analysis together with PESTEL and SWOT analyses as analytical tools. The study is exploratory and applied in nature, aiming to identify tourism resources, influencing factors, and strategic development directions within an emerging cross-border tourism area. The methodological framework integrates strategic documents, official reports, statistical data, and relevant scientific literature indexed in databases such as Clarivate, Google Scholar, and ResearchGate. The bibliographic review included regional development strategies (Cahul District Council, 2023; Galați County Council, 2021), institutional reports, and cross-border cooperation programmes.

The case study focuses on the Galați – Cahul – Gagauzia – Taraclia region, selected due to its geographical proximity, resource complementarity, and the presence of cross-border cooperation initiatives. Relevant information was collected from official reports and national statistical sources, enabling the assessment of economic, social, and territorial interactions influencing tourism development.

A PESTEL analysis was conducted to identify the main political, economic, social, technological, environmental, and legal factors affecting tourism development and cross-border cooperation.

In parallel, a SWOT analysis was applied to evaluate the tourism potential of the region based on strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats identified through documentary analysis. The main limitations of the research include the predominantly qualitative nature of the analysis, the limited availability of comparable cross-border statistical data, and the lack of prior integrated studies addressing the analysed region.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Tourism Resources and Institutional Framework in Galați County

Galați County covers an area of 4,466.3 km² in the eastern part of Romania, benefiting from a strategic geographical position at the confluence of the Danube, Siret, and Prut rivers. This location supports the development of leisure tourism, river-based tourism, and cross-border tourism circuits, capitalizing on territorial connectivity and floodplain landscapes (Galați County Directorate of Statistics, n.d.).

From an analytical perspective, the tourism potential of Galați County derives from the interaction between its geographical position, cultural-historical heritage, and natural resources, although the county has not yet established itself as a major tourism destination (Galați County Council, 2021).

Among the most important natural tourism resources are the Gârboavele Forest, included in the Natura 2000 network, Lake Brateș, and the Danube Promenade in Galați city. These resources support leisure tourism, ecotourism, and recreational tourism development (Galați County Council, 2024a, 2024b).

The Zoological Garden and the Fishing Area Museum, managed by the “Răsvan Angheluță” Natural Sciences Museum Complex, further contribute to educational and family tourism activities (Natural Sciences Museum Complex “Răsvan Angheluță” Galați, n.d.).

The Danube Promenade represents an important urban tourism and leisure infrastructure asset, contributing to destination attractiveness and recreational tourism development (European Commission, 2021; UN-WTO, 2022).

Cultural heritage also represents a major component of tourism potential in Galați County. Official data indicate the existence of 263 historical monuments, including archaeological sites, architectural monuments, and memorial monuments (Galați Directorate for Culture, 2025).

Important attractions include the fortified church “Precista”, the “Paul Păltănea” History Museum, the “Casa Cuza Vodă” Museum, and the “Costache Negri” Memorial House, which support cultural, educational, memorial, and rural tourism (Galați County Council, 2024b; History Museum “Paul Păltănea” Galați, n.d.-a, n.d.-b). From a statistical perspective, Galați County has a measurable tourism base undergoing gradual consolidation. Local statistical data indicate a steady increase in accommodation facilities and tourism infrastructure development, while tourism demand remains predominantly domestic and seasonal (Galați County Directorate of Statistics, n.d.).

At the same time, tourism promotion and territorial valorisation are supported by institutional initiatives and strategic planning documents developed by Galați County Council (Galați County Council, 2021, 2024b, 2024c). Consequently, the county’s tourism competitiveness is based on the integration of cultural, leisure, memorial, educational, and nature-based tourism resources into a coherent regional tourism product.

3.2. Tourism Potential in Southern Republic of Moldova

The southern regions of the Republic of Moldova, particularly Cahul, the Autonomous Territorial Unit of Gagauzia, and Taraclia district, contribute significantly to the development of an integrated cross-border tourism system through the complementarity of their natural, spa and wellness tourism, cultural, and ethnocultural resources. The Cahul region represents one of the most dynamic tourism areas in southern Republic of Moldova due to its favourable geographical position near the Romanian border and its indirect access to the Danube through the Giurgiulești port (Cahul District Council, 2023).

The region benefits from valuable natural resources, including the “Lower Prut” Scientific Reserve, Lake Beleu, and Lake Manta, which support ecotourism, birdwatching, and educational tourism (VIA Cahul, 2022). In addition, the “Nufărul Alb” Sanatorium supports the development of health and wellness tourism based on local mineral water resources (Cahul District Council, 2023). Tourism development is also supported institutionally through the “VIA Cahul” tourism cluster, which promotes integrated tourism products and collaborative governance models (VIA Cahul, 2022).

Gagauzia contributes to regional tourism development through its ethnocultural diversity, local traditions, gastronomy, wine-related activities, and cultural festivals. Strategic documents emphasize the importance of tourism infrastructure development, integrated destination promotion, and cross-border cooperation in increasing tourism competitiveness (Cașcaval et al., 2019). Taraclia District contributes to the regional tourism offer through its ethnocultural identity, Bulgarian heritage, local traditions, and gastronomic resources. However, tourism development remains constrained by limited infrastructure and insufficient promotion, making cross-border cooperation an important development opportunity.

Overall, the complementarities among these regions create favourable conditions for the development of integrated tourism routes and cross-border tourism experiences within the Galați – Southern Republic of Moldova area.

3.3. Analysis of Cross-Border Tourism Potential: Galați – Southern Republic of Moldova

The comparative analysis of Galați County and the southern regions of the Republic of Moldova highlights the existence of complementary tourism resources that can support the development of an integrated cross-border tourism destination (Table no. 1).

Table no. 1. Comparative analysis of tourism potential

Indicator	Galați	Cahul	UTA Gagauzia	Taraclia
Dominant tourism type	Cultural, urban	Spa and wellness tourism	Cultural, gastronomic	Ethnocultural
Natural resources	Medium	High	Medium	Low
Infrastructure	Medium	Developing	Low	Low
Promotion	Limited	Increasing	Limited	Very limited
Cooperation	Moderate	High (VIA Cahul Cluster)	Low	Low

Source: Authors’ own elaboration based on Galați County Council (2021), Cahul District Council (2023), VIA Cahul (2022), and Cașcaval et al. (2019).

Galați County contributes through cultural heritage, urban infrastructure, and Danube accessibility, while Cahul, Gagauzia, and Taraclia provide natural resources, spa and wellness tourism, rural tourism, and eth-

nocultural diversity (Galați County Council, 2021; Cahul District Council, 2023). The region has the capacity to support integrated tourism products combining cultural, ecotourism, spa and wellness tourism, gastronomic, educational, and memorial tourism.

At the same time, the analysis highlights several constraints, including insufficient infrastructure, fragmented tourism promotion, and limited institutional connectivity. Consequently, the development of a competitive cross-border tourism destination requires integrated governance, infrastructure investments, and coordinated tourism promotion. These findings confirm that the analysed cross-border region has the potential to evolve into a more coherent and competitive tourism destination through coordinated governance and integrated territorial promotion strategies.

3.4. PESTEL Analysis of the Cross-Border Tourism System

The development of tourism in the Galați – Southern Republic of Moldova cross-border region is influenced by multiple external factors, systematically evaluated through the PESTEL framework presented in Table no. 2.

Table no. 2. PESTEL analysis of the cross-border tourism system Galați – Southern Republic of Moldova

Factor	Key elements
Political	EU–Republic of Moldova cooperation; Interreg programmes; cross-border partnerships; administrative differences
Economic	Access to EU funding; infrastructure investments; regional disparities; limited private investment
Social	Strong cultural identity; traditions; community involvement; demographic decline and migration
Technological	Digitalization of tourism; online platforms; mobile applications (e.g., CROSS2MAP); uneven digital adoption
Environmental	Natural resources (wetlands, protected areas); ecotourism potential; climate change risks
Legal	EU regulations; national tourism legislation; cross-border cooperation frameworks; regulatory differences

Source: Authors' own elaboration based on Galați County Council (2021), Cahul District Council (2023), Interreg NEXT România–Republica Moldova (2024), and Stanciu (2025).

The analysis indicates that political cooperation and European funding programmes create favourable conditions for tourism development and institutional collaboration. At the same time, regional disparities, uneven infrastructure development, demographic decline, and administrative fragmentation remain important constraints.

Digitalization and online tourism platforms contribute to destination visibility and tourist engagement, while environmental resources support ecotourism and sustainable tourism development. However, climate-related risks and regulatory differences between Romania and the Republic of Moldova may limit the effectiveness of cross-border initiatives.

3.5. SWOT Analysis of Tourism Potential in the Cross-Border Region

The SWOT analysis presented in Table no. 3 provides an integrated perspective on the internal and external factors influencing the competitiveness of the cross-border tourism system.

Table no. 3. SWOT analysis of tourism potential in the cross-border region

Category	Key elements
Strengths	Complementary tourism resources; cultural and natural heritage; tourism clusters (VIA Cahul); cross-border cooperation initiatives
Weaknesses	Insufficient infrastructure; limited promotion; fragmented tourism offer; dependence on domestic tourism
Opportunities	EU funding; growing demand for sustainable tourism; digital tools (interactive maps, apps); development of integrated routes
Threats	Regional competition; economic instability; demographic decline; environmental risks; institutional barriers

Source: Authors' own elaboration based on Galați County Council (2021), Cahul District Council (2023), VIA Cahul (2022), and Cașcaval et al. (2019).

The analysis highlights that the region benefits from complementary tourism resources combining urban, cultural, natural, balneal, rural, and ethnocultural tourism. Cross-border cooperation initiatives and tourism clusters further strengthen regional competitiveness.

Nevertheless, infrastructure deficiencies, fragmented tourism products, and limited international visibility remain significant weaknesses. At the same time, European funding programmes, sustainable tourism

trends, and digital tourism tools create important opportunities for integrated tourism development. However, regional competition, demographic decline, and institutional barriers continue to represent relevant risks for long-term tourism competitiveness.

3.6. Digital Tourism Tools and CROSS2MAP

The development of digital tools for tourism promotion represents an important strategic direction for the Galați – Southern Republic of Moldova cross-border region. In this context, the CROSS2MAP project (ROMD 00389), financed under the Interreg VI-A NEXT Romania–Republic of Moldova Programme, contributes to the creation of an integrated digital infrastructure based on an online platform and mobile application designed to promote sustainable tourism (Stanciu, 2025).

The project integrates cultural, natural, gastronomic, and recreational attractions from Galați County, Cahul, Gagauzia, and Taraclia, facilitating access to geospatial information and thematic tourism experiences through the CROSS2MAP mobile application (CROSS2MAP App, 2025) (Figure no. 1).

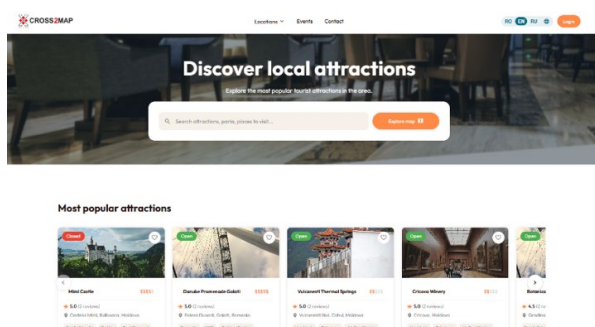


Figure no. 1. CROSS2MAP mobile application interface

Source: CROSS2MAP App (2025)

Digital tourism tools such as CROSS2MAP contribute to destination visibility, tourist engagement, and stakeholder cooperation, supporting the development of smart tourism initiatives in the cross-border region (Buhalis & Law, 2008; Gretzel et al., 2015).

4. Discussion

The results indicate that the Galați – Southern Republic of Moldova region possesses the characteristics of an emerging cross-border tourism system based on resource complementarity, institutional cooperation, and integrated tourism potential.

Similar to findings identified in other European cross-border tourism regions, tourism competitiveness depends not only on the existence of tourism resources, but also on the capacity for coordinated governance, integrated promotion, and institutional collaboration (Pardo et al., 2024; Timothy et al., 2026).

The PESTEL and SWOT analyses highlight that sustainability, digitalization, and cross-border cooperation represent essential factors for regional tourism development. At the same time, the results confirm the importance of tourism clusters, integrated tourism products, and digital tools in increasing destination visibility and territorial cohesion, supporting conclusions from previous studies on regional tourism systems and tourism integration processes (Parfinenko et al., 2022; Alonso-Muñoz et al., 2022).

Conclusions

The Galați – Southern Republic of Moldova cross-border region exhibits significant tourism potential based on the complementarity of natural, cultural, and institutional resources. Galați County contributes through its infrastructure, cultural heritage, and Danube accessibility, while Cahul, UTA Gagauzia, and Taraclia provide valuable balneal, rural, ethnocultural, and natural tourism resources. However, the effective valorisation of this potential remains constrained by infrastructural limitations, fragmented tourism promotion, and uneven institutional capacity.

The results indicate that the development of an integrated cross-border tourism destination requires coordinated governance, joint tourism products, infrastructure investments, and stronger institutional cooperation. Resource complementarity represents the region's main competitive advantage, while institutional fragmentation remains the principal development barrier.

The findings confirm previous studies emphasizing that tourism competitiveness in border regions depends on cooperation mechanisms, integrated promotion, and sustainable territorial governance (European Commission, 2021; UNWTO, 2022).

From a theoretical perspective, the study contributes to the literature on cross-border tourism systems by highlighting the role of territorial complementarities, institutional coordination, and digital support tools in emerging tourism destinations. At the same time, the practical analysis demonstrates the importance of projects such as CROSS2MAP in supporting destination visibility and regional tourism integration.

Acknowledgement: The research is based on the results obtained within the project “Interactive Online Map for Promoting Sustainable Tourism in Galați County and the Southern Development Region of the Republic of Moldova” (CROSS2MAP, Code ROMD 00389), funded by the European Union through the Interreg VI-A NEXT Romania–Republic of Moldova Programme. The project is implemented by “Dunărea de Jos” University of Galați, in partnership with “Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu” State University of Cahul.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) usage statement

ChatGPT and Gemini were responsibly used for language improvement and structural refinement of the manuscript. These tools were not used for data analysis, interpretation of results, or generation of scientific conclusions. The authors reviewed and edited the content and assume full responsibility for the final version of the paper.

References

- Alonso-Muñoz, S., Torrejón-Ramos, M., Medina-Salgado, M. S., & González-Sánchez, R. (2022). Sustainability as a building block for tourism: Future research tourism agenda 2030. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes*, 14(5), 519–527. <https://doi.org/10.1108/WHATT-06-2022-0079>
- Bacal, P., & Brega, V. (2013). Premises and difficulties of promoting routes and tourist products in rural areas of the Republic of Moldova. *Journal of Settlements and Spatial Planning*, 4, 317–321. <https://jssp.reviste.ubbcluj.ro>
- Beciu, S., & Arghiroiu, A. (2019). Will the new bridge over Danube create a tourism sustainable hub in the urban area of Brăila–Galați–Măcin? In *Proceedings of the International Conference on New Trends in Sustainable Business and Consumption* (pp. 226–234). <https://www.researchgate.net>
- Buhalis, D., & Law, R. (2008). Progress in information technology and tourism management: 20 years on and 10 years after the Internet—The state of eTourism research. *Tourism Management*, 29(4), 609–623. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2008.01.005>
- Camara, G., & Munteanu, M. V. (2016). Exploitation of hunting and fishing tourism in Galați County, Romania. *Present Environment and Sustainable Development*, 10(2), 195–206. <https://doi.org/10.1515/pesd-2016-0017>
- Cașcaval, D., Dudoglo, T., Cazmali, I., & Cebotari, I. (2019). Секторальная региональная программа по повышению туристической привлекательности региона развития АТО Гагаузия на 2019–2025 [Sectoral regional programme for increasing the tourism attractiveness of the Gagauzia development region for 2019–2025]. ResearchGate. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/378714629_Sektoralnaa_Regionalnaa_Programma_po_povyseniu_turisticskoj_privlekatelnosti_Regiona_Razvitia_ATO_Gagauzia_na_2019-2025
- Colesnicova, T., & Italsin, T. (2025). Moldovan agro-tourism: The perception of foreign tourists. *Scientific Papers Series Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development*, 25(4). <https://managementjournal.usamv.ro>
- Consiliul Județean Galați. (2021). *Strategia de dezvoltare a județului Galați 2021–2028*. <https://www.cjgalati.ro>
- Consiliul Raional Cahul. (2023). *Strategia de dezvoltare socio-economică a raionului Cahul*. <https://cahul.md>
- Costea, R., & Stanciu, S. (2022). Romanian–Moldavian tourism: Analysis and recommendations. *Scientific Papers Series Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development*, 22(2), 323–328. <https://managementjournal.usamv.ro>
- CROSS2MAP App. (2025). *Cross2Map mobile application*. <https://apps.apple.com/ro/app/cross2map/id6756295833?l=ro>

- European Commission. (2021). *Rural tourism and regional development*. <https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism>
- Galați County Directorate of Statistics. (n.d.). Statistical data regarding Galați County. Retrieved March 25, 2026, <https://galati.insse.ro>
- Galați County Council. (2024a). Aria naturală protejată Pădurea Gârboavele. <https://cjgalati.ro/aria-naturala-atilte-protejataatilde-paatildedurea-garboavele/>
- Galați County Council. (2024b). Județul Galați – Ghid turistic. <https://cjgalati.ro/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/ghid-turistic-gl.pdf>
- Galați County Council. (2024c). Circuit turistic muzeal în județul Galați. <https://cjgalati.ro/circuit-turistic-muzeal-in-judetul-galati>
- Galați Directorate for Culture. (2025). Lista monumentelor istorice din județul Galați. <https://directiapentru-cultura-galati.ro>
- Ghenova, S. (2016). The components of the product policy of the winery in the context of wine tourism development in the Republic of Moldova. *Scientific Papers Series Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development*, 16(3), 133–138. https://ibn.idsi.md/vizualizare_articol/48379
- Natural Sciences Museum Complex “Râșvan Angheluță” Galați. (n.d.). Complexul Muzeal de Științele Naturii „Râșvan Angheluță” Galați. <https://cmsngl.ro/>
- Gretzel, U., Sigala, M., Xiang, Z., & Koo, C. (2015). Smart tourism: Foundations and developments. *Electronic Markets*, 25(3), 179–188. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12525-015-0196-8>
- History Museum “Paul Păltănea” Galați. (n.d.-a). Casa Cuza Vodă. <https://www.migl.ro/casa-cuza-voda>
- History Museum “Paul Păltănea” Galați. (n.d.-b). Casa memorială Costache Negri. <https://www.migl.ro/casa-memoriala-costache-negri>
- Hrechko, K., & Jacimovic, D. (2024). Dynamic interaction analyses between green territory expansion, emissions reduction, and tourism. *REICE*, 12(24), 254–296. <https://doi.org/10.5377/reice.v12i24.16745>
- Interreg NEXT România–Republica Moldova. (2024). *Programme documentation 2021–2027*. <https://jems-romd.mdlpa.ro/>
- Knezevic, M. (2010). Agrotourism as a generator of regional development. *Ekonomika Poljoprivreda*, 57(2), 293–299. <https://doaj.org/article/18eed1b29e404e49bce108f154cb6d6c>
- Light, D., & Andone, D. (1996). The changing geography of Romanian tourism. *Geography*, 81(352), 193–203. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40573196>
- Mihaila, D., Piticar, A., & Puțunica, A. (2018). Changes in bioclimatic indices in the Republic of Moldova and consequences for tourism. *Boletín de la Asociación de Geógrafos Españoles*, 77, 521–548. <https://doi.org/10.21138/bage.2529>
- Pardo, M. C., Almeida, S., & Campos, A. C. (2024). Creating new opportunities for tourism development through cross-border collaboration: Shedding light on overlooked destinations. *Tourism and Hospitality Management*, 30(3), 433–446. <https://doi.org/10.20867/thm.30.3.12>
- Parfinenko, A., Yevtushenko, O., & Onatskyi, M. (2022). International tourism as a tool of European integration within Eastern European countries. *Problemy Ekorozwoju*, 17(2), 186–196. <https://doi.org/10.35784/pe.2022.2.07>
- Safarov, B., Rakhmonov, S., Khudoykulov, K., & Abdullaev, S. (2024). Prospects of agrotourism development in the region. *Economies*, 12(12), 321. <https://doi.org/10.3390/economies12120321>
- Sorcaru, I., Căpățînă, A., Soare, I., Brătucu, G., & Bleoju, G. (2022). Residents’ perceptions towards tourism development: The case of Galați–Brăila conurbation, Romania. *Sustainability*, 14(13), 7654. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14137654>
- Stanciu, S. (2025). *CROSS2MAP – Interactive online map to promoting sustainable tourism in Galați County and Southern Development Region of Republic of Moldova (Project ROMD 00389)*. “Dunărea de Jos” University of Galați.
- Staver, I., Dodiugă, L., & Stanciu, N. (2023). Gastronomic tourism in the Republic of Moldova: Trends and opportunities. *Scientific Papers Series Management, Economic Engineering in Agriculture and Rural Development*, 23(2), 621–633. <https://managementjournal.usamv.ro>
- Stratan, A., Perciun, R., & Gribincea, C. (2015). Identifying cultural tourism potentials in the Republic of Moldova through cultural consumption among tourists. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 188, 116–121. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.03.346>

- Susanu, I. O., Cristache, N., & Stanciu, T. (2018). The city brand and the impact on tourism development. In Proceedings of the 12th International Management Conference “Management Perspectives in the Digital Era” (pp. 842–847). Bucharest University of Economic Studies. https://conference.management.ase.ro/archives/2018/pdf/5_7.pdf
- Timothy, D. J., Wieckowski, M., & Gelbman, A. (2026). New dimensions of tourism and political borders. *Journal of Borderlands Studies*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08865655.2025.2661225>
- UNWTO. (2022). *Rural tourism and sustainable development*. <https://www.unwto.org/rural-tourism>
- VIA Cahul. (2022). *Clusterul turistic VIA Cahul – prezentare și activități*. <https://www.viacahul.md>
- Wang, X. (2026). Barriers to cross-border data flows and tourism exports. *Current Issues in Tourism*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2026.2663470>
- Yasin, A. S., & Bacsi, Z. (2025). Agritourism and rural development: A global bibliometric analysis. *Agriculture*, 15(8), 866. <https://doi.org/10.3390/agriculture15080866>