

## THE PROJECT OF LEISURE AREA PRUNDU BÂRGĂULUI - SECU VALLEY - HENIU MARE (BISTRIȚA-NĂSĂUD COUNTY). PRELIMINARY STUDY

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**ABSTRACT.** The Heniu Mare massif is part of the Bargau Mountains and is located in the eastern part of Bistrița-Năsăud County, on the territory of the municipalities of Prundu Bârgăului, Tiha Bârgăului, Ilva Mică and Leșu. The southern flank of the massif, facing the Bistrița Ardeleană valley, distinguishes itself through a high attractive potential, marked by the presence of spectacular landforms and TV Relay, insufficiently exploited by tourism activities. For this reason, the present work proposes a project for upgrading the Secului Valley-Heniu Mare sector relying on some items of favorability, such as: the proximity of Prundu Bârgăului village and geographical axis Bistrița-Prundu Bârgăului-Vatra Dornei, road access to the Secu Valley, lift line and tourist path from Fundu Secului to TV Relay on Heniu Mare Peak and the electric network from Prundu Bârgăului to Heniu Mare. Therefore, the proposed project involves the use of these elements in order to achieve a tourist complex in the Fundu Secului-Heniu Mare sector: structures for visitors, parking, location of a cable car line, identification and marking of tourist routes for hiking and cycling, location of a platform for the launch of paragliding on the Heniu Mic Peak, establishment of stopover places and scenic points, etc. Stakeholders involved in the realization of this project could be: Bistrița-Năsăud County Council, Mayor of Commons Prundu Bârgăului, Josenii Bârgăului and Tiha Bârgăului, Radiotelevision Direction of Cluj, Fold Forest Service Broadcaster Prundu Bârgăului, Rescue Public Service Bistrița-Năsăud, Water Management Company Bistrița-Năsăud, LAG Bârgău-Călimani, NGOs, private investors, the high school Prundu Bârgăului, the Faculty of Tourism Geography and the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport from Bistrița, the local community.

**Key words:** Heniu Massif, tourism planning, sport tourism, active leisure, tourist cluster

**REZUMAT. Proiectul zonei agrementale Prundu Bârgăului - Valea Secului - Heniu Mare (Județul Bistrița-Năsăud). Studiu preliminar.** Masivul Heniu Mare aparține Munților Bârgău și este situat în partea de est a județului Bistrița-Năsăud, pe teritoriul comunelor Prundu Bârgăului, Tiha Bârgăului, Ilva Mică și Leșu. Flancul sudic al masivului, orientat spre culoarul Bistriței Ardelene se distinge

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printr-un potențial atractiv ridicat, marcat de prezența unui relief spectaculos și a releului de televiziune, insuficient exploatat prin activități turistice. Din această cauză, studiul de față propune un proiect de relansare a sectorului Valea Secului-Heniu Mare, bazându-se pe câteva elemente de favorabilitate, cum ar fi: proximitatea localității Prundu Bârgăului și a axei geografice Bistrița-Prundu Bârgăului-Vatra Dornei, drumul de acces de pe valea Secului, linia de telecabină și traseele turistice dinspre Fundu Secului spre releul de televiziune și vârful Heniu Mare, precum și rețeaua electrică de la Prundu Bârgăului spre Heniu Mare. Prin urmare, propunerea de proiect implică folosirea acestor elemente pentru realizarea unui complex turistic în sectorul Fundu Secului-Heniu Mare, reprezentat prin: structuri de primire a turiștilor, parcare, stație de telecabină, identificarea și marcarea traseelor turistice pentru drumeție și cicloturism, amplasarea unei platforme de lansare a parapantelor pe vârful Heniu Mic, stabilirea unor locuri de popas și platforme de observare a peisajului, etc. Actorii implicați în implementarea acestui proiect ar putea fi: Consiliul Județean Bistrița-Năsăud, Primăriile comunelor Prundu Bârgăului, Josenii Bârgăului și Tiha Bârgăului, Direcția de Televiziune Cluj, Ocolul Silvic Prundu Bârgăului, Serviciul Public Salvamont Bistrița-Năsăud, Societatea de Gospodărire a Apelor Bistrița-Năsăud, GAL Bârgău-Călimani, organizații nonguvernamentale, investitori privați, Liceul Prundu Bârgăului, Facultatea de Geografia Turismului și Facultatea de Educție Fizică și Sport din Bistrița, comunitățile locale.

**Cuvinte cheie:** Masivul Heniu, amenajare turistică, turism sportiv, agrement activ, cluster turistic

## Introduction

Bistrița-Năsăud County benefits from important tourism resources, natural and anthropogenic, that are insufficiently used through profile activities. One of these resources is Heniu Massif from Bârgăului Mountains, which by its genetic and structural features can be distinguished by several attractive elements such as: insularity and dominance from the lane adjacent regions represented by Bistrița Ardeleană Valley, and Bistrița Hills, and large difference of level (1100-1200 m from Bistrița Valley and Leșu Valley), the presence of television relay of top Heniu Mare (1611 m), 360° panorama of the surrounding landscape (Bârgău, Călimani, Rodna Mountains, Bistrița Hills). When they add on it southern flank: the proximity of DN 17-E 58 (Dej-Bistrita-Vatra Dornei), the city of Bistrița (24 km) and the communities of Bistrița Valley and Bârgău Valley, easy access to it base to Secu and Tureac valleys.

Given these considerations, this paper aims to outline a possible model for the development and tourist exploitation of the massif on the southern flank, with the reference to Prundu Bârgăului-Secu Valley-Heniu Mare peak axis, because the sector has already some infrastructure elements, namely: acces road to Secu valley, lift line from Fundu Secului to television relay, electricity network and tourist path to the peak Heniu Mare.

The most representative forms of tourism and recreation in the Bărgăului Mountains and within the Heniu massif are mountain biking and hiking. They involve the most significant tourist flows, cycling due to the attractive potential of the area and hiking because of its popularity as a generally recreational form, having the widest target audience of the present in the region. Also included some forms that address a small number of practitioners, such as: ecotourism, rafting, paragliding and fishing.

Mountain hiking is one of the most "free" forms of tourism who can be practiced throughout the entire massif on short or longer distances more difficult, along marked trails. This diversity of lengths and difficulty degrees of trails, makes by hiking the form of travel with the widest target audience.

Tourists of all ages, with any degree of training and fitness, will be able to identify the right way to practice this form of tourism, from short walks, along trails or side roads, no steep slopes or difficult obstacles to overcome, thus having a relatively low degree of difficulty. Cycling routes not served the purpose, calling on existing communication infrastructure, county roads or forest roads, and specific sectors of hiking trails. Paragliding is a recreational form of tourism which finds favorable conditions in the region studied, due to major differences in level, but there is no feature to launch.

## **Metodology**

The arsenal methodology used in the study design meets, what is natural, the logistic elements of two sciences: geography and sports science, interfaced to the topic addressed. To achieve this study were the following stages:

- consultation of papers in tourism planning (Cocean, P., Dezsi, Șt., 2010) and mountain tourism (Stanescu, I., 2002; Tigu, Gabriela, 2002);
- consultation of documents of county and municipal landscaping planning (PATJ, PATZ, PUG) and the sustainable development strategy of the village Prundu Bărgăului;
- crossing the literature for Heniu massif (Athanasiu, I., 1956; Sârcu, I., 1957; Bleahu, M., et al., 1968; Naum, T., Moldovan, Gr., 1984; Rusu, E., 1999, Ureche, I., 2000);
- analysis of geological and topographic maps, scale 1:25 000, for Heniu massif;
- conducting field research for mapping certain geographical aspects and tourist inventory of Heniu massif;
- designation of trails for active leisure practice, but also in the idea of carrying out of competitions, mountain sporting and outdoor events (tourist-orientation, mountain biking);

- engaging students from the Faculty of Geography of Tourism and Sport and Physical Education in the practical work of mapping and marking of walking trails;
- the development of educational activities in collaboration with schools units to popularize the concept of mountain leisure;
- implementation in residents consciousness the practical values and economic and financial benefits in the medium and long induced term by such activities;
- conduct environmental cleanup activities in the mentioned area;

### **Study Area**

Heniu massif is located in the eastern part of the county Bistrița-Năsăud on the west outskirts of Bârgău Mountains, on the territory of the municipalities Prundu Bârgăului, Tiha Bârgăului, Ilva and Leșu (fig. 1) and belongs to the central group of neogene eruptive chain of the Eastern Carpathians (Țibleș-Toroiața-South Rodna-Bârgău), the South Bârgău sector (fig. 2). The massif is bordered by Strâmba Valley and Mountain Valley to the west, Ilva Valley to northwest, Leșu Valley to the north, Tureac Valley to the east and Bistrița Ardeleană Valley to the south (fig. 3).

From the geological point of view, the Heniu massif is a magmatic intrusive body, lacolite shaped, composed of andesite and pyroxene diorite, intruder in the Bârgău Mountains miocene sedimentary formations (sandstones, marls, clays).

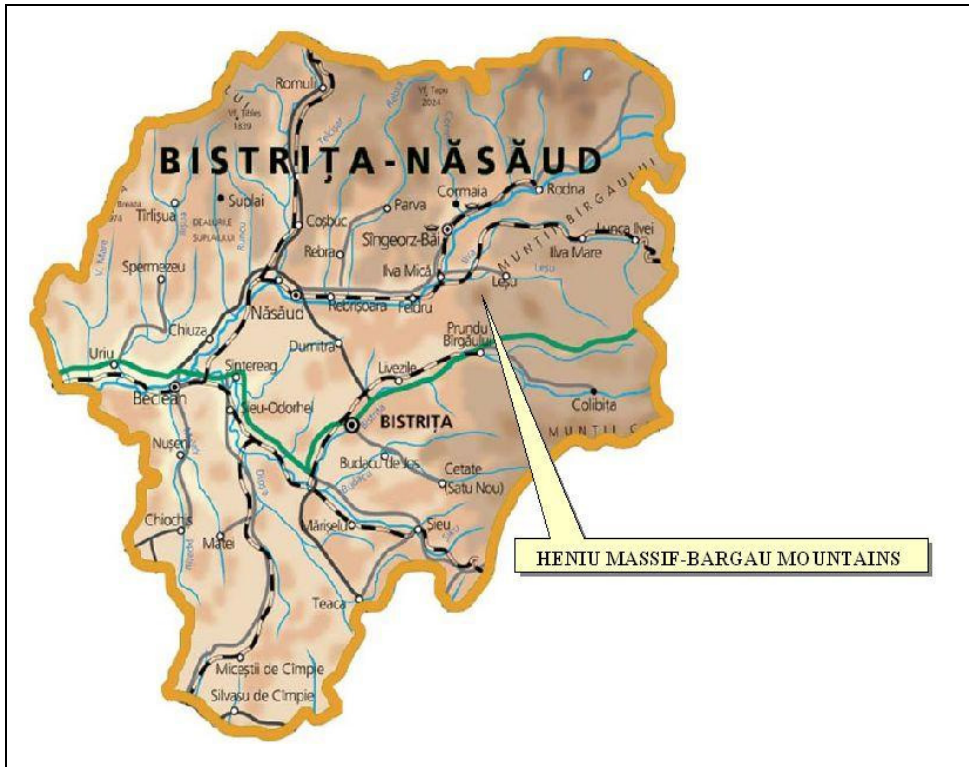
Its geomorphological pattern is specific to magmatic exhumed massif by the action of sculptural agents on sedimentary cover. Therefore, there are two morphostructural levels: the level of sedimentary cover and the level of magmatic massif, whose contact is marked by the presence of slope breaks located at 1000-1200 m.

Mountain building is dissected by radial-diverging valleys, routed to local erosion bases (Bistrița Ardeleană, Ilva, Leșu, Tureac, Strâmba), separated by sharp ridges on magmatic formations and flaring ridges on sedimentary rocks, looking for spurs, cut in the end at 600-800 m. The main valleys (Secu Muncel, Lescior, Strâmba) have carved the deep pools at the origins on the magmatic formations, characterized by energy and high slopes.

By morphofunctional aspect distinguishes a main ridge, winding sinuously from west to east, between Strâmba Saddle (700 m) and Muncel Coast (1222 m), marked by Tomnatec (1203 m), Heniu Mic (1543 m), Heniu Mare (1611 m) and Muncel (1542 m) peaks, from which starts diverging secondary ridges.

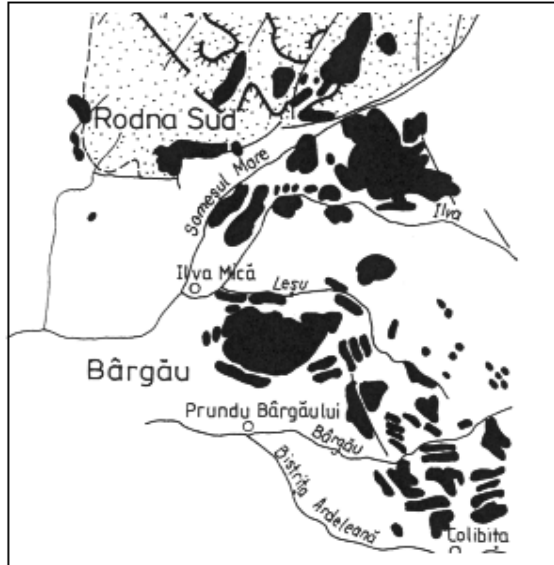
On southern flank, inside the magmatic massif was opened by upper Secu valley, which has a flared catchment, dominated by Heniu Mic, Heniu Mare and Muncel peaks, marked by numerous torrential valleys and steep slopes, and

the geomorphometric parameters in this sector have high values, which emphasize toughness and intensity of erosion of igneous rocks, outlining the massive tourist personality. Thus, the relief energy is between 300-400 m/km<sup>2</sup>, relief fragmentation is between 4,0-5,0 km/km<sup>2</sup> and the slopes often reaching 35-45° (fig. 3).

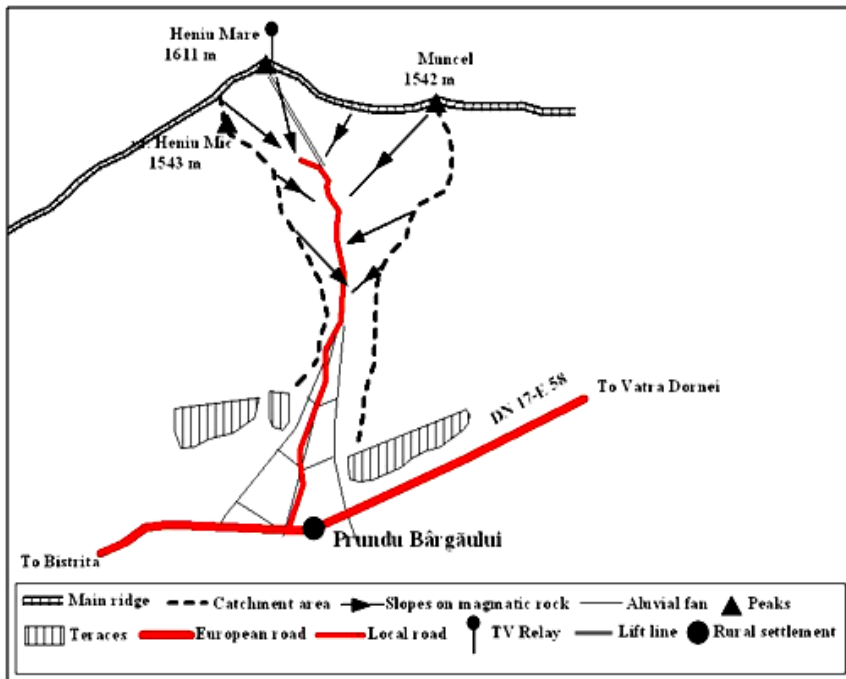


**Fig. 1.** The geographic localization of Heniu massif within Bistrița-Năsăud County

Given the opening of the valley to the Prundu Bârgăului village, the presence of Heniu Mare peak, as a major attractive target, the existing road access and the lift line to TV relay on Heniu Mare peak, this sector is characterized by a high degree of attractiveness and may be subject to a recovery project planning and to local and regional tourism valorization.



**Fig. 2.** The intrusive magmatic sector South Rodna-Bârgău from intrusive magmatic area of Eastern Carpathians (after Ureche, 2000, with modifications)



**Fig. 3.** Geomorphologic sketch of Secu catchment area

## Results and Discussion

In preparing the proposal for the planning and tourist exploitation of the southern flank of the Heniu massif have considered the following elements:

- attractive potential of the landscape in this area;
- existence of the access road to Secu Valley, lift line serving TV relay and electricity distribution infrastructure;
- mountain location near the geographical axis Bistrița-Prundu Bârgăului-Vatra Dornei;
- presence of Prundu Bârgăului village (5 km) at the foot of the massif as a receipt and redistribution center for tourists;
- -proximity to tourist-emitting centers, respectively Bistrița town (23 km) and the localities of Bistrița Valley and Bârgău Valley (Livezile, Rusu Bârgăului, Josenii Bârgăului, Prundu Bârgăului, Bistrița Bârgăului, Tiha Bârgăului, Tureac, Mureșenii Bârgăului);
- -easy access on DN 17-E 58 (Bistrița-Vatra Dornei) and on the railway Bistrița-Bistrița Bârgăului.

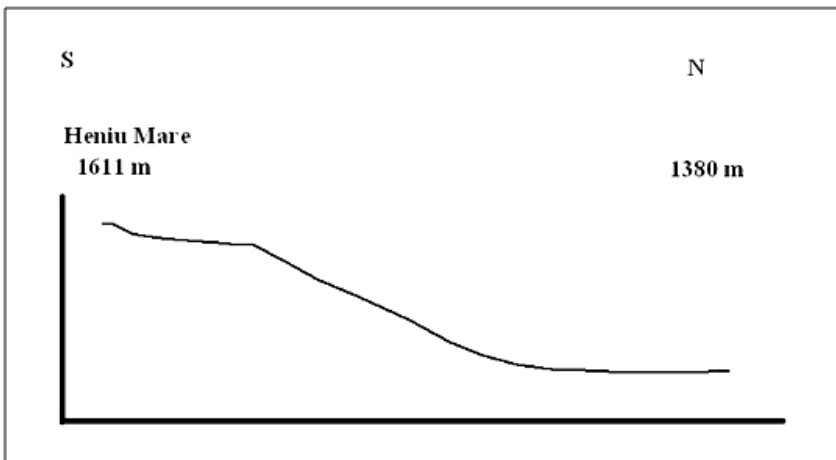
The main activities of the project could be:

- 1) Upgrading of access road to Secu Valley from Prundu Bârgăului to Fundu Secului. This road has a length of 5 km and currently only 3 km are paved;
- 2) The works to regulate minor riverbed of Secu;
- 3) Installation of a gondola on the current lift line route between Fundu Secului and Heniu Mare peak. The current line has a length of 2.5 km, the station of departure (Fundu Secului) is located at 730 m and arrival station (Heniu Mare) is located at 1611 m, resulting in a difference of 881 m;
- 4) The building of tourist structures in the Fundu Secului and Heniu Mare peak (tourist lodges, guesthouses, tourist information centre, etc.);
- 5) Establish a parking space in the Fundu Secului;
- 6) Identify, layout and marking of tourist trails for hiking and cycling.

Among these routes one can remember the following:

- Fundu Secului-Red Ravine-Heniu Mare peak;
  - Fundu Secului-Parâng Saddle-Muncel peak;
  - Prundu Bârgăului-Secu Valley-Târnicior-Muncel peak;
  - Strâmba-Tomantec peak-Heniu Mic peak-Heniu Mare peak-Muncel peak (east-west main route);
  - Tureac Valley-Tălpaș Ridge-Muncel Meadow-Muncel peak;
- 7) The building of a paragliders launching platform to the Heniu Mic peak (1543 m);
  - 8) Establishment of resting areas, lookout points and the wildlife observation platforms on Heniu Mic, Heniu Mare, and Muncel peaks, and in Tomantec and Muncel Glades;

- 9) Location of informative panels and some trails direction indicator;
- 10) Location of waste storage containers on Secu Valley, in the Fundu Secului and on Heniu Mare peak;
- 11) Establish a tourist information center in the Prundu Bârgăului village;
- 12) Ensuring the public transport aon Prundu Bârgăului-Secu Valley-Fundu Secului route;
- 13) Planning of a ski slope and a lift on the northern slope of the Heniu massif, atop which emerges from the Heniu Mare peak to Lescior Valley (fig. 4). The ski slope would have a length of 1.3 km, a level difference of 230 m and an average slope of 5,6‰, being arranged on two levels: 1610 m-1570 m and 1570-1380 m, with an opposed slope to the finish.



**Fig. 4.** Geomorphologic section an the northern flank of Heniu massif highlighting a possible ski slope

The stakeholders involved in the implementation of such a large project could be:

- Bistrița-Năsăud County Council;
- The Mayor's offices Prundu Bârgăului, Josenii Bârgăului and Tiha Bârgăului;
- Cluj Broadcasting Division;
- Forest Office Prundu Bârgăului;
- Bistrița-Năsăud Rescue Public Service;
- Bistrița-Năsăud Water Management Society;
- Local Action Group Călimani-Bârgău;



- NGOs;
- private investors;
- Prundu Bârgăului High School;
- Faculty of Tourism and Geography and Faculty of Physical Education and Sport from Bistrița;
- local communities.

This project proposal has certain advantages for the local community, such as:

- optimal exploitation of the natural potential offered by the Heniu massif;
- the image-promoting in tourism and increasing the attractiveness for tourism investors;
- the creation of jobs;
- reviving agriculture and traditional customs;
- building of structures for tourists on Secu Valley;
- the recovery of Heniu Hotel;
- increasing local incomes;
- increasing concerns for the protection and conservation of tourism resources.

In a broader context, at regional level, the sector Prundu Bârgăului-Secu Valley-Heniu Mare can be integrated into a tourism cluster project alongside tourist areas Piatra Fântânele (leisure, winter sports tourism, monachal tourism), Colibița (leisure, water sports) and Bistrița Valley-gorge sector and rafting controlled segment.

In this case, you could shape The Bârgău Tourist Area, with a varied and complementary offer in recreational sports (hiking, clean air and sunshine, swimming and sailing, adventure), in which Prundu Bârgăului village would become a reception and redistribution center of tourists.

### **Conclusions**

The dominant position they occupy in the Bârgău Mountains and detail geomorphological elements that distinguish, the Heniu Mare massif is a major attractive target in Bistrița-Năsăud County, insufficiently exploited in tourism.

Because massif is located near the geographical axis Bistrița-Piatra Fântânele-Vatra Dornei and near Prundu Bârgăului village, its southern flank is subject to the tourist development project in the segment Prundu Bârgăului-Secu Valley-Heniu Mare peak, advocated the following elements:

- significant natural potential of Heniu Mare massif;
- proximity of Prundu Bârgăului village with relatively developed infrastructure;

- access road, largely modernized, electricity network on Secu Valley;
- lift line serving TV relay, section Fundu Secului-Heniu Mare peak;
- ample opportunities to practice active mountain leisure and organization of outdoor events and competitions;
- enlarging the horizon of local economy by developing a network of tourist services.

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