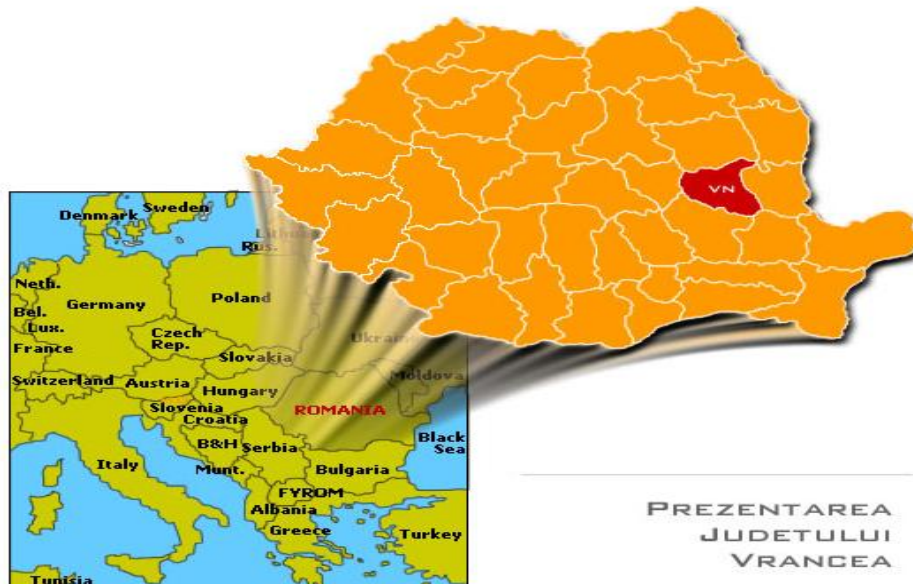


## The historical province of Vrancea



The name of “Vrancea” comes, just like the legend says, from that of “Baba Vrancioaia”, mother of seven brave and handsome men.

The legend says that Baba Vrancioaia has sent the seven sons to fight next to the Moldavian voivode Steven the Great in order to help him in one of the wars led against the Turks. As a reward for the bravery that they have shown in the battle, the voivode has offered seven mountains to reign over, with the desire of creating a county that should bear the name “Vrancea County”.

The present county of Vrancea has developed on the former administrative settlement, the County of Putna, which was situated along the valley of Putna River, officially recognized by the voivode Steven the Great, in 1482, as being the *border of Moldavia with Muntenia*.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the unionists have considered the river as a symbol of the union between Muntenia and Moldavia (eg: the poem “*Hora Unirii*” by Vasile Alecsandri). The border from Milcov has remained until 1859, when Muntenia and Moldavia were united under the voivode Alexandru Ioan Cuza, forming the Principality of Romania.

„Come to Milcov in a hurry

To dry it with one sip,

So the main road should cross  
Over our ancient borders.”

**The memorial house Ion Roata from Campuri** evokes the story of the old peasant Ion Roata, directly involved in the events that were at the basis of the union. Ion Roata has been a Romanian peasant, deputy in the Ad-Hoc Council and a great supporter of the Union of the Romanian Principalities Moldavia and Muntenia.

The Union of the Principalities from 1859 is an event of a great importance in Vrancea's history, the town of Focsani being the **symbolic capital** of the Union.

The World War I represents another important stage in the history of Vrancea, as here were led the historic battles from the summer of 1917, which culminated with the great battle and defeat of the German troops from August 6, 1917.

The citizens of Vrancea are honouring the memory of the heroes that have died during World War I, testimonies standing the 41 monuments dedicated to the ancestors, from which we recall: The Heroes Mausoleum from Focsani, the Heroes Mausoleum from Marasti, Marasesti, Soveja.

### Geographical Data



**Vrancea**, also called **the County of Wines and Vineyards**, is situated outside the Curvature Carpathians, at the crossroad of the three historical regions: Moldavia, Muntenia and Transilvania. Extraordinary connection point between the three regions, from Vrancea you can easily reach the Danube's harbors from Galati (90 km) and Braila (100 km) or to the Black Sea (Constanta – 280 km) and Danube

Delta (Tulcea – 215 km). Vrancea assures the road network, the fastest access to Transilvania (Brasov – almost 220 km) or to Moldova Republic (Chisinau – almost 280 km, through Albita-Husi) customs.

Vrancea County is placed at almost 200 km from the International Airport “Henri Coanda”, the biggest airport from Romania, 220 km from the International Airport Iasi (to the North), the most important airport from Moldova region, at 120 km from the International Airport Bacau (to the North).

Vrancea is neighbouring at North – East with Vaslui County, at the East with Galati County, at southeast with Braila, at the West with Covasna and at the North with Bacau County.

### **The Agriculture**



The agricultural area of the county is of 255 626 ha. Vrancea County is the greatest agricultural basin of Romania, with 27 235 ha of vineyards. The agricultural area of the county is the following:

- 148 112 ha arable land
- 27 235 ha vineyards
- 3 782 ha orchards
- 43 720 ha pastures
- 32 777 ha hay fields
- In Vrancea, the viticulture represents a traditional activity, of a great importance for the economy, profiting by favourable natural conditions.
- The viticulture area of Vrancea County includes 3 vineyards, with 11 viticulture centres. The vineyards correspond to the European viticulture classification – C1a.
- The 27 235 ha of vineyards from Vrancea represent 11% from the viticulture area of Romania, and the types of noble grapes represent 23% from the total of the area at the national level.
- Vrancea's viticulture area is divided in three representative vineyards: Panciu, Odobesti and Cotesti. Panciu vineyard, with an area of over 8 100 ha has been and remains a permanent attraction for the ones that want to know the richness, beauties and vestiges of these places.
- In the past the fame of this vineyard was made by the wines obtained from traditional types like Plavaie, Galbena, Babeasca neagra, Feteasca alba and Feteasca neagra. Further on some other types have conquered the market, like: Feteasca regala (Royal Feteasca), Italian Reisiling, Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, Cabernet Sauvignon that have allowed the obtaining some wines with denominations of origin and the appearance of frothy wines that have elevated the fame of the vineyard.
- Odobesti Vineyard, with a surface of almost 7 000 ha is the oldest vineyard from our country, being considered a vineyard from the times of Dacia. Profiled on producing wines and especially the white ones, in Odobesti vineyard is cultivated a great variety of grapes. From those of

local origin that still exist in the culture, we must mention Galbena de Odobesti, and on more restricted areas the types Plavaie and Mustoasa. From the Romanian types we can find also Feteasca alba, Feteasca regala and Sarba, and from the foreign ones are cultivated on pretty big areas Aligote, Italian reisling and Muscat Ottonel. The group of black grapes is represented by Babeasca neagra and Pinot noir.

- The vineyard presents favourable conditions also for producing the mass grapes, with types like Chasselas and Coarna accompanied by Muscat Hamburg and Cinsaut.
- Cotesti vineyard represents a continuation of the viticulture plantations from Odobesti vineyard, profiting by bigger hellion thermal resources and includes the viticulture centres Tamboiesti, Cotesti, Cirligele and Vartescoiu.
- In all these viticulture centres there are areas for producing the white and red wines for current consumption are the types Feteasca regala, Aligote, Babeasca neagra. The wines of a superior quality are obtained from the types: Feteasca Alba, Italian Reisling, Muscat Ottonel, Cabernet Sauvignon, Feteasca neagra and Merlot. The reconversion and modernization of the viticulture plantations, financed with European funds starting with 2008, includes 606 ha, the sum stipulated to be used being of 7.5 millions €

The area arranged for irrigation is of 31 580 ha, and functional by the end of 2008 being 15 248 ha.

The animals number at the date of 01.01.2009:

- Horned cattle – 57 150
- Porcinis – 78 999
- Sheep – 184 132
- Poultry – 1 504 056
- Bees – 13 868

### *Traditions and agro tourism*



The county of Vrancea, an ancient hearth of Romanian ethnography and folklore and of some remarkable cultural values, is completed by a natural landscape of a special picturesque, in which are protected monuments of nature of a wonderful beauty: Putna Waterfall, Tisita Gauges Reservation, Lepsa Trout Farm, Lepsa Hermitage, Soveja Mausoleum, the Alive Fire from Andreiasu, unique in the country – former volcano of Vrancea that is one of the most attractive tourist's point.

In the “County of Vrancea” is still preserved even nowadays the traditional craftsmanship such as:

- The artistic wood manufacture, occupation met especially in the mountain area, is remarked by the famous “smoked cheese patterns”, used by the

natives for producing the green ewe cheese and the pressed cheese, but also some decoration objects. These patterns can be also found even nowadays in the mountain area in Negrilesti and Nereju communes;

- The weaving of the objects for adorning the houses;
- The pottery, represented very well in Iresti locality;
- The confectioning of the traditional outfits and especially the unique traditional masks. The traditional outfit illustrates the continuity and ethnographic unity of the Romanians and the “masks parade” are enjoying of a great interest even nowadays, preserving the old traditions, unaltered by the passing of time.

Vrancea County has a varied and attractive tourist-spa potential. The geographical position, as well as the natural and cultural landscape favors the different forms of tourism: of circulation, for weekends, cultural, rural, for hunting and fishing, at the mountain, etc.

The tourism for weekend is favoured by the picturesque landscapes, unpolluted and by the special clima (Soveja – one of the places with the most ozonated air from the country or Vizantea, with its mineral waters). The wine tourism is practiced during the fall when harvesting and permanently, per wine tasting (Panciu, Odobesti, Cotesti and its surroundings). The rural, the ecologic and cultural tourism, in a continuous development is carried on in homologated village pensions, included in the ANTREC circuit, as well as in the 900 holiday houses.





Every year, in the last decade of October, the citizens from Vrancea are celebrating **The International Festival of Wine and Vineyards**, manifestation where is celebrated the wine, the outfits, the tradition and the crafts from Vrancea.



In Vrancea exists a “Wine Route” and crosses the vineyards from Cotesti, Vartescioiu, Odobesti and Panciu. A special attraction place is “Steven the Great Cellar” from Panciu. These cellars can be visited, the tourists having the opportunity to see how the frothy wine is produced.



## **Personalities from Vrancea County**

In Vrancea County were born personalities of which we are proud: **Virgil Căndea** – one of the most important Romanian historians, **Constantin C. Giurescu** – historian and politician, **Gh. C. Longinescu** - chemist, **Ion Nestor** – historian and archaeologist, **Anghel Saligny** – former president of the Romania Academy (remarkable constructor of bridges and pioneer in introducing the prefabs of reinforced concrete), **Duiliu Zamfirescu** – writer and diplomat, **Simion Mehedinți** – the creator of the Romanian geographic learning.

Some of the artists that have origins in Vrancea and which we are proud of we can recall **Leopoldina Bălănuță**, **Ion Dichiseanu**, **Emil Botta** – great Romanian actors, the directors **Alecu G. Croitoru** and **Gh. Naghi**, the soprano **Angela Gheorghiu**. In the field of sport a great representative of Vrancea is the multiple champion in gymnastics, **Gina Gogean**.

### **The capital city of Vrancea region –Focsani municipality**

The municipality is for the first time attested in documents from the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Being known in the history as the “town down Milcov river”, river that represented the border between Moldavia and Tara Romaneasca, the locality that remained in the memory of the Romanians as “the Union City”. On the former riverbed of Milcov has been erected in the centre of Focsani Municipality the **Union Obelisk**, a work of the Romanian sculptor **Ion Jalea**.



**The Municipal Theatre „Major Gheorghe Pastia”**, erected in 1913 and finalized 6 years later, due to the good will of the Major Gheorghe Pastia, is a real jewel of architecture, having a rich adorning in Baroque and Renaissance elements (in the decorations), being covered with gold sheets. The theatre’s building, affected during the years by repeated earthquakes, has been consolidated and restored entirely, being inaugurated again in 2004.

### ***Social indicators***

As surface and population, Vrancea County is the fourth at the level of Region 2 South East. So, the county's area is of 4 857 sqkm and the population of 392 679 inhabitants (on 01.07.2007), 38% of them living in the urban area, and 62% in the rural area. The structure on gender is rather balanced on the entire county, the female population representing 50.9% from the total of inhabitants.

Vrancea County, from an administrative and territorial point of view, has in its constitution two municipalities – Focsani – the county residence municipality and Adjud, three towns – Panciu, Marasesti and Odobesti and 68 communes.

Focsani Municipality belongs to the range of big cities, with complex economic and social functions and role of coordination and damping of the development in the territory, the other urban localities being included in the category of small cities. The rural settlements have generally a role for industry and agriculture, for silviculture, tourism, or mostly agriculture (viticulture, vegetables, animal husbandry). They are also the ones that preserve the thesaurus of ethnography and folklore (the areas Putna Valley, Zabala Valley, the superior basin of Ramnic River, the localities Campuri and Soveja, Siret Valley).

### ***The relief***

Disposed just like a giant ladder from west to east, the relief includes Vrancea Mountains (with the intermountain depressions Gresu and Lepsa ), the Sub Carpathian Hills and the Inferior Plain of Siret, bordered by Moldova plateau (Tutova Collins) to North-East and Raminc Plain to South East.

The Sub Carpathian Hills, the collinear depressions and the plateau hills include the western high hills, the eastern high hills, the sub Carpathian glacier, which makes the connection between the Sub Carpathian Hills.

The Plain of the Inferior Siret and Ramnic Plain are inclined to the east up to the altitude of 20 m, at the confluence of Ramnicu Sarat with Siret.

Siret Plain represents the lowest tread from the county's territory and is disposed between the sub Carpathian glacier and Siret River, with an area inclined from west to east and altitude included between 20m and 125 m.

On the north from Susita Valley, the plain's aspect represents the form of a prism descending to Siret Meadow, and close to Adjud, at the terraces of Siret are connected those of Trotus.

### ***Hydrographical Network***

The hydrographical network of Vrancea County measures 1 756 km of watercourses, belonging entirely to Siret River.

Siret River crosses the county's territory on a length of almost 110 km, and some of its affluent being Trotus, Susita, Putna, Ramnicu Sarat.

From the county's waters, the most important is Putna, which springs from the central area of Vrancea Mountains, crossing all the forms of relief.

The hydrological data from the territory are being transmitted through a network that comprises a hydrological plant in Focsani and 16 hydrometrical plants allotted on the water streams from inside Vrancea County.

### ***The soil resources***

Vrancea County is predominantly placed in the central area of the Curvature Carpathians, characterized by a big variety of relief forms (6% plain, 54% hills and 40% mountain).

The altitude varies from 50m from Siret Meadow to 1785 m in Goru Peak.

The structure on species is presented as it follows:

- Ø Resinous 34% (spruce fir 18%, fir tree 12%, pine 4%)
- Ø Deciduous 66% (beech 37%, various 29%)

The land fund is made of the following types of soil:

- Ø In Siret Plain prevails the chernozem and the alluvial soils that have a high fertility;

- Ø In the area of the high hills are present the “pedzolic” soils, with a big process of erosion;
- Ø In the sub mountainous depressions there are typical brown soils;
- Ø On the higher mountain peaks can be found acid “pdzolic” brown soils or raw humus.

In Vrancea exist 18 natural geological, landscape, zoological, floristic and forestry reservations, the most famous ones being: Tisita Gauges, Putna Waterfalls, Rapa Rosie, Lacul Negru, Naruja Gauges, Caldarele Zabalei, the Alive Fire from andreiasu, Dalhauti, Lunca Siretului.

### ***Flora and fauna***

**The flora** comprises 1.500 species of plants. For their rarity and beauty some plants are declared nature monuments and are protected by law. Among these we mention: Edelweiss, butcher’s broom, lady’s shoe. . The juniper tree can be found in Vrancea only on the mountain peak Goru (1.785 m), which reminds of the Austrian Alpine pastures.

An immense resource of our county is represented by the forest, which occupies almost 40% from the county’s area.

Vrancea has an important hunting fund famous not only in our country but even abroad. In the mountain area can be found the stag, which sometimes descend to the depression, and the bear, which appears almost in the same mountain area, but mostly in Zboina Neagra. Its spreading area is up to Odobesti Hill. The deer and the wild cat live on a very spread area in the mountains and up to the forestry steppe. Among the mammals we must mention the following: the wild boar, the marten, the squirrel, the weasel, the rabbit, the hedgehog a.s.o.

In Vrancea’s waters we can find the trout, the sturgeon in the Mountain Rivers and the crap, the crucial, the sheat fish all along the hydrographical basin.