

Let's meet our neighbours with „Welcome to the County of Călărași“



The county of Călărași, declared a territorial unit in January 1981, is situated in Southeast Romania, on the left bank of the Danube and the branch Borcea, in the plain of Baragan.

The material evidence, found as a result of both accidental and planned excavations as well as the official documents prove that Romanians have lived in the area for many years in unity with the time, space and the local residents. Out of the material findings from the Neolithic culture, of Boyan and Gumelnita and of the archeological findings dating back to Getae-Dacian times to the early Middle Ages, the experts found that strong settlements emerged in the important river valleys and around the lakes and these go on developing nowadays, in contrast to the lands between the rivers, which are populated only in modern times, particularly after the agrarian reforms of 1864 and 1921. Situated in the Southeastern part of the Romanian state (Muntenia), the territory of the county of Călărași took part in the political and the military events of the time and in the fight of the Romanian nation to protect its freedom and independence since the very beginning. It is written down in the notes of the locals during the reign of Michael the Brave that in the winter of 1594–1595 the Romanian army attacked the following Turkish towns in Dobrogea and the Balkans: the boyars Preda and Radu Buzescu attacked Hârșova, while the counselor Mihalcea attacked Silistra in January 1595, crossed Lichiresti (the old name of Călărași), attacked Turtucaia and crossed the frozen Danube next to Oltenita (a town mentioned from 1523). Later on, in the 18th century, Constantin Brancoveanu organized a cavalry detachment deployed by the gates of Silistra, near Lichiresti. The settlement that took the name of the detachment (Rosiori), turned into the administrative residence of the county of Ialomita in 1883 and gained the statute of a town. The modern history of Romania mentions significant economical, social and political events in Călărași. It might be said today that the best developed branch is agriculture, which is due to the extension of the arable land and the use of rotation of crops. This is why great quantities of grains and animal products are exported through the ports of Oltenita and Călărași. There was a development of the industry after the First World War, when the most important production units were related to the agricultural production. The most important economical places in Călărași are the Systematic Mill of Stefan Vineziu, and in Oltenita there are similar units as the Moara Dunarea with 196 workers.



Let's present ourselves to our neighbours



In 2010 the population of the county of Călărași was about **311 898** people, 61,4% of whom live in the rural areas and 38,6% in the towns. 49% of the total population are men and the women are 51%.

The figures of the National Statistics Institute show that as of July 1st 2010 the density of the population is 61,3 people/square kilometer, and the average life expectancy in Constanta for the same year is 72,48 years.

According to the 2002 census the ethnic and religious structure of the county is as follows:

Number of people	Romanians	Roma	Turkish	Hungarians	Russians-Lipoveni	Other nationalities
324 617	94,1%	5,7%	0,14%	0,03%	0,01%	0,06%
98,8% of the population are orthodox Christians						

* The values are calculated out of the total number of people, mentioned in the first column

The area Budesti is mentioned for the first time in 1526 in a ruler's decree. Later is mentioned in another document of 1543. In the years before the world wars the ruler of the area was the boyar Manu, of princely origin. He built a castle in the area. During the communist years the castle is ruined almost to the base because of the theft of the materials, out of which it was constructed. The town is surrounded by the Argeș River and its branch Dâmbovița. The recreation sites here are: the woods near the River Argeș and some fish ponds (Crivat, Aprozi, Gruiu).

In the years of both world wars the Southern part of the town was a battle field of harsh battles, witness of which is the Cemetery of the Unknown Soldier. The buildings of historical significance are: a building with a high tower, where the town's printing house is today, a building for the storage of ice, a stone gallery, an orthodox church and parts of the Argeș canal, whose construction is not finished yet.

Budesti is the only town in Romania, where the Roma population counts more than 20% of the total number of residents. This is the reason why Roma language is the second official language here. The Roma language is taught in schools, the local administration services are offered in both languages and the information signs there are also written in both languages.



Let's show neighbours our favourite sites



The **Ostrovl Ciocanesti Nature reserve** is situated by the Danube and is part of the Danube production group of the Forestry Călărași. The reserve occupies a territory of 206,7 hectares and has a length of 3000 meters. The climate in the region is continental, with cold winters and hot and dry summers. The reserve is state owned and is part of the area of the Danube riverside flood meadows. The area is characterized by plant and animal species, protected according to the agreements of Bonn and Bern and other such conventions.

This is the right place for the people interested in the research of various bird species and their behaviour in the wild. Here one can see the entire beauty of nature. Beside that, there are two smaller reserves along the Danube near the Ostrovl Ciocanesti Nature reserve.

The **village of Plataresti is a significant tourist site**. The village presents an old Romanian settlement. It was first mentioned in May 14th 1580, in the decree issued by Mihnea Turcitul in Bucharest. Plataresti is also famous for its monastery that bears the same name. Until recently the monastery sheltered nuns, but there are monks living there now. The monastery was reconstructed in 2000, and is under restoration at the moment.

The most precious in the monastery is the church "St. Mercurie" (celebrated on November 25th). The church dates back to 1646 and was been built by prince Matei Basarab and his wife Elena.

Since 2003 the Plataresti monastery church **is the only one dedicated to the holy martyr Mercury**.

The architecture of the church presents a new trend, which began with the ascension of Matei Basarab on the throne of the Romanian state. The monastery is one of the most beautiful ensembles of the Walachia art of the 17th century. The monastery comprises: church wall, cells and the King's house; the church is in the centre of the complex. The church is constructed of small bricks and is rather modest concerning its size: 1,2 meters thickness of the wall, 18 meters length and 4,5 meters height. Outside the church is covered by decorative bricks. The narthex of the church still preserves parts of the original paintings. Actually, the Plataresti church is among the few ones built by Matei Basarab that still preserves some original frescoes.



Let's present the neighbours our leading organizations



Industry

The industry in the county is concentrated mainly around the processing and manufacturing industry. The major industrial branches of the county are the following: food processing and gastronomy, metallurgy, apparel manufacturing, production of other non-metal mineral products, production of paper and paper products. Recently, a trend for the increase of the industrial production is registered.

The investment of Saint-Gobain Glass Romania in Călărași is one of the biggest green field investments in Romania, amounting to 170 million euro. Here glass is manufactured and exported to Hungary, Bulgaria, Turkey, and Moldova. Through the development strategy of the French investor, the factory will become a world production centre, supplying glass facades for buildings all over the world (in 2010 the turn-over of the factory was 63,6 million euro).

Agriculture

The base of the agriculture in the region is the agricultural land, with a total area of 426,6 thousand hectares (2,9% of the total agricultural land in the country) and has the following structure: 97,5% arable land, 1,3% pastures and meadows and 1,2% vineyards and orchards. Plant-growing is oriented predominantly towards grains, oil-bearing and forage plants. The crop of wheat, barley, corn, sunflower and soy places the county of Călărași in the category of the big producers in the country.

Trade, utility services and tourism

After the trade and social services, agriculture ranks second concerning its contribution to the Gross national product of the county. The location of the county of Călărași at the bank of the Danube River is of crucial significance for the tourism. The River Danube with its wild isles and unique flora and fauna, the lakes and the water basins, stocked with fish, as well as the hunting grounds in the deciduous woods – all this contributes to the development of sport tourism in a natural, ecologic and unique environment. The county of Călărași has utilities for tourist accommodation – hotels, motels and boarding houses, with a total capacity of over 500 places.

The main companies in the county are: Aldis and Avicola Călărași – part of Nutricom – food industry, Catex – textile industry, Comceh – cellulose-paper industry, Repsid, ZAFSA – steelwork industry, Sidertrans – transport, Navol, Stentor – shipbuilding industry, Saint-Gobain Glass Romania – production of float glass.



Let's tell the neighbours why Maria Cutarida-Cratunescu means a lot for us



We can list here personalities famous for their creative work in such fields as follows: **literature, music, science, arts, theatre, etc.:**

Nicolae Banescu, a writer, teacher; **Dan Mateescu** – a scientist, **Stefan Banica** – an actor.

Army: Constantin Pantazi – a Minister of the army.

Politics: Ion Iliescu – a President of Romania.

Known personalities in the field of medicine:

Pompei Samarian, a doctor in medicine and surgery in 1905, **Maria Cutarida-Cratunescu** – the first woman doctor.

Maria Cutarida-Cratunescu (February 10th 1857, Călărași – November 16th 1919, Bucharest)

She is the first woman doctor in medicine in Romania, also internationally known. She studied in the high school of Zurich in 1877 and in the University of Medicine. Because of the difficulties of the language and the advantages the graduate students get in France, she switched to the University of Montpellier – Faculty of Medicine. She completed her practice and preparation for the doctor's degree she completed at the Paris University of Medicine. In 1884 she defended her doctor's dissertation and became doctor in Medicine (specialization "women's and children's cases"). To be able to practice in Romania she equalizes her diploma, taking the exam with the mark Magna cum Laude.

After her initiative in 1897 the associations "Leaganul" and "Societatea Materna" were established and she dedicated herself to the latter to such an extent that in 1904 she gave up her private practice. In 1898 she became vice president of the association "Culture and Aid for the Woman". In 1899 she opened the first Romanian nursery in a tobacco factory, offering care for the children of the working women.

Maria Cutarida-Cratunescu attended medicine and feminist congresses (1900 – Paris, 1907 – Brussels, 1910 – Copenhagen). In the times of the Second World War she was head physician of the Evangelist institute (Temporary military hospital № 134). After the war, because of health problems, she retired from the medicine and social activities.



Let's tell the neighbours one of our stories



The name of Călărași.

The name Călărași is not accidental; it is derived from the name for a definite group of people – horse-rider heralds (călărași), who were engaged in the transport of the ruler's correspondence on the Bucharest-Constantinople route, during the reign of the ruler Constantin Brancoveanu. The first document, which mentions them, dates back to May 25th 1722. They settled down in an area initially called Lichiresti, but in the course of years the village became popular as "the village of the heralds" or Călărași.

The legend of the Crucifix.

The healing crucifix of Dichiseni is an old stone crucifix, which is credited with special curative and healing features. It dates back to 1620. Legend has it that it cannot be moved. This legend could be connected to an extent with the myth that "the one who drinks water from the Danube, will never leave". In other words, the people living on this land are firmly settled.

The curse of the Baragan treasures

For most of the Romanians Baragan is nothing but an endless plain, where snowstorms wail in winter and in the summer the sun burns mercilessly. And there are just a few people acquainted to the mysteries that veil these lands, situated between the Black Sea, the Carpathians and the Danube, lands that were often mentioned in the writings of Panait Istrati and Fanus Neagu.

According to a local legend, there are numerous treasures buried in the plain, guarded by a heavy curse. Somewhere between Călărași and Lehliu the village of Dor Marunt is situated, until recently famous for the beautiful stallions and for the largest flock of horses in Baragan. But here also lay the ancient treasures, guarded by **mythical creatures and wood-nymphs that dance in the nights in the endless fields.** Also famous is the area called La Movila, where before the Revolution of 1989 a peasant found a clay pot full of gold coins, while ploughing. He shared the coins with the other peasants. Not long after that the militia learned about that and confiscated all the gold coins from the peasants.

