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The Features of the Development of Rural Tourism in Russia

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A falusi turizmus alakulásának jellemzői Oroszországban

Summary

Rural tourism in Russia is determined by established traditions, the peculiarities of the agricultural sector and share of rural population in total population.

The National Association of rural tourism organizations has been created in Russia. Rural tourism clusters have also been created as a basis for developing infrastructure. The government supports the projects of small and medium-sized businesses with subsidies and preferential loans with the creation of a tourism cluster.

However, the problem of information security, the standardization of the service and the evaluation of service quality in rural tourism, transport accessibility, training of qualified personnel have not been solved yet.

Key words: rural tourism, clusters, infrastructure, government support.

Összefoglaló

A falusi turizmust Oroszországban a régi hagyományok, a mezőgazdasági szektor sajátosságai és a vidéki lakosságnak a teljes lakossághoz viszonyított aránya határozzák meg.

Megalakult Oroszországban a falusi turizmussal foglalkozó szervezetek Nemzeti Szövetsége. Létrejötték a falusi turizmus klaszterek is, amelyek elősegítik az infrastruktúra fejlesztését. A kormány anyagi támogatással és kedvezményes hitelekkel támogatja a kis és középméretű vállalkozásokat a turizmus klaszter kialakításában.

Azonban az információs biztonság problémája, a falusi turizmus szolgáltatásainak standardizálása és a falusi turizmus minőségének értékelése, a közlekedési eszközökkel történő elérhetőség és a személyzet képzése még nincs megoldva.

Kulcsszavak: falusi turizmus, klaszterek, infrastruktúra, állami támogatás

Rural (agrarian) tourism is a priority direction of the development of tourism in Russia [1]. This is due to a number of factors. First, traditionally, citizens, especially families with children prefer to spend their summer vacation in the nearby countryside renting a house.

Secondly, in Russia the share of rural population is 26% of the total population. 67% of rural dwellers live in small settlements (the population of which does not exceed 100 people) with limited employment opportunities. The service of tourists is

motivated by revenues from them. Thirdly, Russia has a very rich variety of natural resources that creates a potential tourists attraction of visiting national parks, historical and religious landmarks, collecting wild berries, mushrooms and nuts in the forests, hunting, fishing, exploring local traditions and customs, etc.

Also rural tourism contributes to the revival of traditional crafts as an element of leisure tourism such as, pottery and creating ceramics, embroidery, lace weaving, woodcarving, bone carving, the production of souvenirs, basketry, rope-making, wickerwork, etc. In some cases, educational-production complexes are created, allowing to preserve and promote craft; people organize workshops, exhibitions and sales, the implementation of orders for interior decoration of guest houses, rural estates with unique household items.

The national Association of agricultural tourism organizations has been created to support and coordinate the development [8]. The Association carries out the creation of new tourist products and their promotion, attracting investments, information support and etc. The members of the Association use its brand to market their tourism products and services. They also enjoy support in the development and implementation of innovative projects, including the cluster model of rural tourism. There is already some experience in Russia in the organization of rural tourism in the Altay and Krasnodar edges, the Republics of Buryatia, Yakutia, Karelia, Volgograd, Kaliningrad, Samara and Moscow regions and other regions.

One of the interesting examples of rural tourism is "Russian house", in Yazovo village of Talmensky district of the Altai region, offering an active family holiday all year round [9]. In summer they offer jet boating, water skiing, the beach and swimming in the river, fishing,

equestrian program (horseback riding and riding carts), Russian baths, sports games, hiking, discos. In winter – snowmobiling, skiing, sleigh rides, ice skating, equestrian program, bathhouses, discos, etc. The room consisting of different categories can accommodate up to 175 people, including comfortable wooden houses, the "Russian village" offers vehicle cabins, cottages, guest house, the Terem, Indian tepees, etc. Families receive discounts for children, for whom there is a special program of entertainment.

The combination of agricultural production and the organization of tourist services requires the cooperation of actors. For the formation, promotion and realization of tourist services in the conditions of growing market competition the pooling of efforts and coordination of actions is required of the owners of rural manors, guest houses. The cooperation in tourism demands new approaches in coordination with local and regional authorities, tourism intermediaries.

Three main approaches to tourism development are being implemented in Russia: cluster, target-oriented and special economic zones. Each of these approaches and their combination are applicable to rural tourism.

The classic definition of a cluster brings together geographically interconnected specialized companies, the providers of goods, services and thus reinforcing competitive advantages to achieve a certain economic effect. In the field of tourism cluster the socio-economic activities of rural communities have been involved with the active participation of the members which forms the basis of the tourist complex. The interaction of members of rural communities, the division of labour and functions in the formation of production and sales of a tourist product which is capable of increasing growth impulses.

Another important condition for cluster formation is the support of state and municipal authorities.

If the North American approach is characterized by the policy of "small intervention" in the development of clusters, the Western European approaches are characterized by the active role of state intervention, in the Asian region a public-private partnership is preferable. For Russia, the latter of the two options is more acceptable: the development of a cluster strategy within the Federal state and regional programs of tourism development or the implementation of Autonomous projects of tourist clusters on the basis of state-private partnership.

In Russian regions the Centre for cluster development has been created, the functions of which focus on the development and implementation of investment programs, projects of the creation of clusters, the cooperation of stakeholders, their information and consulting support, the assistance in obtaining state support, help with the development and marketing of new tourist products and services, etc.

The expediency of using the cluster approach for the development of rural tourism shows that it is necessary not only to use natural resources, but also to give new impulses in the formation of agro-industrial complexes, the creation and the preservation of jobs, the easing of the seasonality of agricultural activities, reducing youth outflow from rural settlements.

For the formation of clusters of rural tourism, it is necessary to address some of the problems. Since the development of tourism is impossible without the organization of the accommodation of travellers, in the projects of the creation of the cluster funds should be allocated not only for the renovation and

modernisation of guest houses, but also for building new ones. It is important to take into account the priority of rural tourism development for the region (active recreation for the young, families with children, the recreation of the "silver" age, people with disabilities, etc.), since the requirements of comfort of residential premises can vary considerably.

In rural tourism the implementation of environmental management should be focused not only on the creation of environmentally friendly tourism product, but also on the implementation of environmentally oriented programs and strategies to minimize the use water in household, electricity, other resources, waste disposal [4]. The task of monitoring compliance with the carrying capacity of tourist and recreational, the compliance with social norms of communication between the tourists and the local population resources remains very important, not exceeding the level of attendance of tourist facilities.

It is necessary to create conditions for inclusive tourism in the preparation of accommodation, transport and other infrastructure, the wider inclusion of people with disabilities in the sphere of tourism.

Special attention is required for the creation of an accessible information system of rural tourism, which provides a wide consumer choice of regions, routes, tourism, accommodation, leisure activities, etc. It would be appropriate to do this on the website of the National Association of agricultural tourism organizations to make a Russian information site, giving an idea of rural tourism development in Russia as a whole.

The problem of standardization of services has not been fully resolved yet, the rural tourism product has not been created nationwide; the adequate world, criteria and approaches to the

assessment of service quality have not been created in rural tourism yet. This largely depends on the skill level of the personnel employed in rural tourism, their training and retraining.

The development of rural tourism, including the basis of clusters, is impossible without state support, especially at the initial stage of formation. In the Russian regions various forms of state support of rural tourism have been developed and the experience should be learned and generalized.

For example, in the Tomsk region, the cluster of renewable natural resources has been formed as a variation of the agro-industrial cluster. It implements four areas: fish industry, wild berries, mushrooms, nuts, hunting and forestry [6]. This cluster receives regional support in the form of compensation of expenses on certification and branding of products and services, the purchase of equipment, conducting research. Through direct budget subsidies 50-80% of the investment costs have been reimbursed. In addition, it attracts private

capital, which amounts to 15 RUB per 1 RUB of state support.

The tourist cluster in Buryat Republic is financed 70% through non-budgetary sources, the rest – from the Federal and regional budget [7]. In addition, when obtaining the loans granted, the state of the Republic of Buryatia guarantees a tax exemption (reduced corporate profit tax, exemption from land tax, property tax), it sets low rents for the land, subsidizes interest rates on the loan, provides investment sites with a modern infrastructure.

A separate pilot project on a competitive basis receives state support in the form of subsidies in the framework of the Federal target program "The development of domestic and inbound tourism in the Russian Federation (2011-2018)".

Thus, the development of rural tourism in Russia is based on international and domestic experience, using innovative approaches in organization, management, using various forms and means of state support.

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