

Study on the Concept of Rural Tourism and Leverage of Some Specific Activities from Rural Areas through Rural Tourism

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Abstract

The popularity of the forms of rural tourism has grown in recent years. From the individual initiatives it become a real alternative for leisure. In the majority of rural settlements, defining emblematic is multiple: landscape quality and warmth of the people, works of art and folk technique, traditional occupations, costumes, customs, traditions, cuisine, local resources, etc. To these are added awareness, by farmers, of the need to diversify the activities by engaging in forestry, tourism or calling certain activities on specific period, within the local economy.

Keywords: rural tourism, activities, development, crafts

1. Introduction

Rural tourism in the ample sense can be translated by residential vacations in rural areas. The term rural tourism occurs in advanced industrial societies, this term has been born of the mid-1950s, when European economic reconstruction process is finished after the Second World War. Rural tourism means tourism recovery across the rural world, which has as recipient of its profit rural society. So for rural areas, rural tourism is both an economic and social development factor, and an alternative for relaxation and conservation of the traditions and customs.

2. Materials and methods

The authors of the paper were used as methods of work: data collection, processing, analysis, observation and their interpretation.

3. Results and discussion

At European Community level there is no clear definition of rural tourism concept, perhaps due to the fact that rural area is defined in different ways by different EU countries. Rural tourism concept must be understood beyond the accommodation offer, of being required offer of other benefits such social, cultural or sport and its development should be done respecting the natural environment.

The rural tourism term has different meanings in different countries.

-Finland - rental of cottages or providing services in rural areas and transport food type;

-Hungary - "tourism at village" implies activity and services in villages, low-priced accommodation and involvement in agricultural activities.

-Slovenia - "farm tourism", the guests lives with farmers families;

-The Netherlands - camping at the farm where most services are related to activities such as cycling, horse rides, etc.

-In Greece - accommodation in rooms furnished in traditional style with traditional

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breakfast often prepared from products made in house.

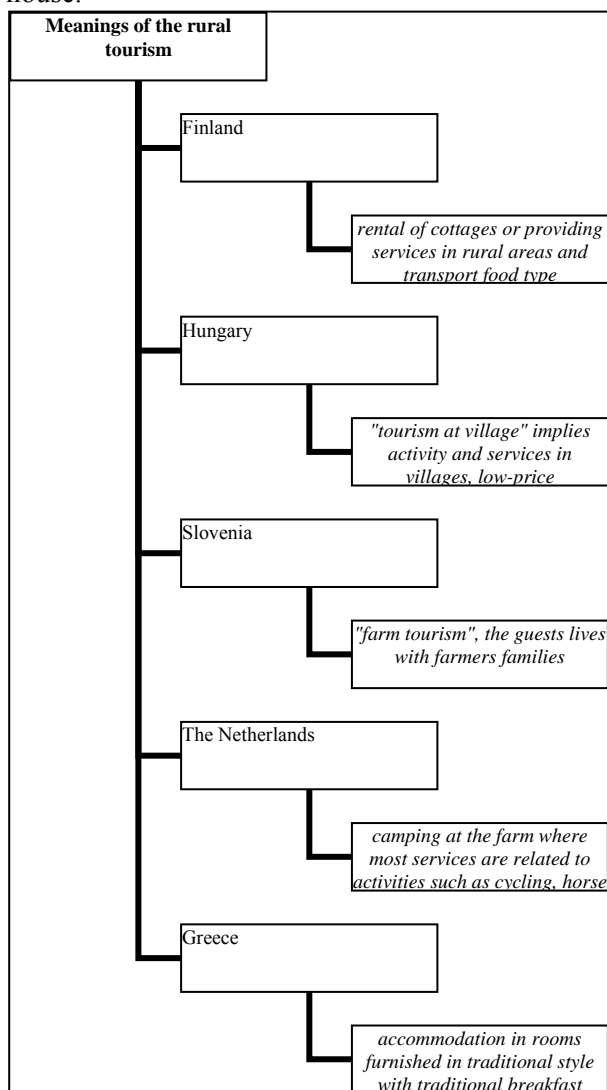


Figure 1. Meanings of the rural tourism term

Overall the local economy, rural tourism is defined as being a form of tourist exploitation of rural areas by exploiting natural resources, cultural and historical values and traditions, agricultural products, the brand products with regional identity, and specifically ethnographic and cultural, designed to meet the needs of consumers in respect of accommodation, food, recreation, entertainment and various services.

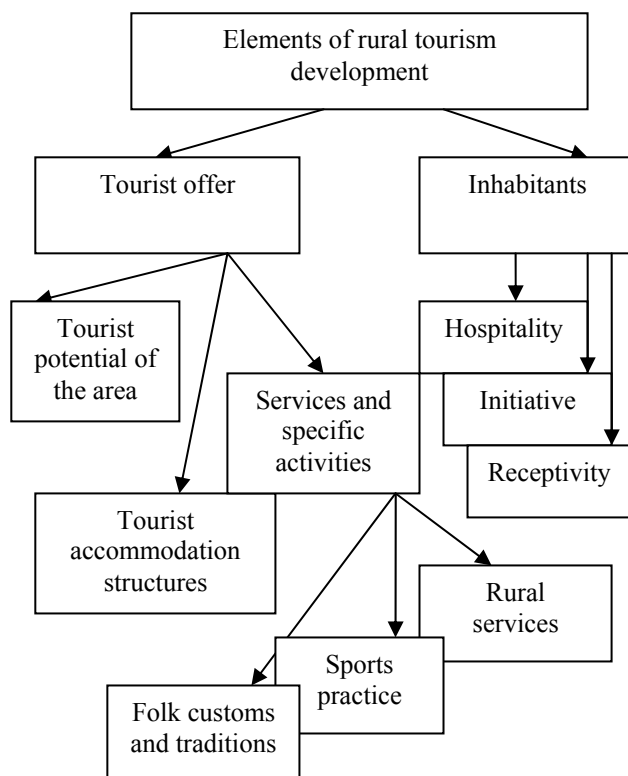


Figure 2. Elements of rural tourism development

Rural tourism represents an alternative to the traditional classic tourism, developed in tourist stations and centers and also to the industrial standard offer. The necessity of extending of rural tourism affairs is the result of creation favorable conditions to bound elements which contain:

- many types of accommodation offer;
- supply with ago-alimentary products, traditional popular art, handicrafts and folklore is made directly by agricultural household, family and rural community;
- the offer of the natural environs and ecological demands is compatible with tourist activities;
- the offer of work paid places in rural areas;
- infrastructural equipment in public and private services.

Rural settlements that offer unique products on the market are less numerous. Keeping a brand image of tourist service requires the best possible combination of the nature of supply, service quality and perceived price. Rural areas but offers a lot of profitable tourist items: pensions, camping and accommodation in peasant households can support a wide range of activities such as walks pedestre, cultural tourism, river tourism, fishing, hunting, horsemanship, winter sports, cycling etc.[1].

What are the specific activities of rural tourism? Although often raised this question it is not easy to find an answer. Professionals prefer to classify tourist activities into three major groups of interest (rural specific, rural/urban, urban specific), but explicitly stating that this classification should be seen flexible in time, allowing passage of activity from one category to another.

Tourist activities are a first class factor in attracting tourists. Life in the country requires certain simplicity, a certain level of understanding by tourists, understanding that, paradoxically, seems to come more from Western tourists, saturated by a comfortable stereotype, many accusing alienation to a super technology society.

Among the regular events in the village may be mentioned:

- participation to the life village ritual (work in farms or agricultural works in the field);
- participation to the spiritual life of the village (religious ceremonies, performances, evenings, weddings, baptisms, etc.);
- participation to the celebrations of all kinds of rural communities.

Among special events are recorded:

- marking the birthday of the hosts, guests, those involved in tourism activity;
- fairs, festivals, religious processions;
- large secular or religious holidays;
- astronomical phenomena.

Table 1. Recreational opportunities in rural tourism [2, 3]

Sporting activities, recreational activities	Activities with socio-cultural character	Participation in specific activities of rural area	Other activities
Climbing	Crafts	Agricultural crop activities	Painting
Exploring rivers	Foreign languages	Increasing cattle	Thermal baths
Exploring trails	Study of indigenous flora	Manufacturing	Picture
Caving	Study local wildlife	Crafts workshops	Environmental activities
Riding	Environnemental study		

Some recreational opportunities in rural areas could be composed of: [1]

- *Organization of the riding excursion.* If the farm does not have its own riding stable, it can make a contract with an equine center in the area. The owner can arrange to have 3-4 people that accompany guests as guides;

- *Hiring of bicycles, canoes and boats.* It is a service that meets the needs of customers who want to have a great experience, give them an extra holiday fun, entertainment, variety and a bit of adventure. The service can be operational with a relatively low investment and without any additional obligation;

- *Organizing a sports and athletics areas.* It can be use a pasture located in the immediate vicinity of the household as a football field or volleyball.

- *Organization of ethno-gastronomic tastings.* If the area of household provides conditions, has the opportunity to taste specific wines, different

products can be sold on the spot or in specific stores.

- *Sales of products from the own household.* Customers prefer the authenticity of natural products, especially after seeing on the spot how to obtain them. Often, in the end of their vacation even expresses a desire to buy some products for the home.

- *Participate in farm life.* For most of the townspeople who come to rural households, many aspects of life are special. Participation of the guests in the life of the farm can be as spectators, workers or beneficiaries. Involvement of townspeople in specific farm activities give a special note to staying and has many advantages:

-allows a better approach and communication between host and guest;

-provides for host a helping hand (even if symbolic), which can be taken into account in evaluating payment services, either through a reduction in costs, either through an additional

supply of food/fruit given to guests leaving the hostel.

Visiting cultural and historic monuments, participation to folk performances are other recreational options. In addition to traditional songs and games can be enjoyed by participating in folk performances, it is also noted traditional port specific to the area, that enchants the eyes of tourists. The images of traditional dancers and singers dressed, gives a picturesque note and distinguish the landscape.

Other entertainment and recreational elements are represented by additional carriage rides, sleigh, accompanied fishing trips or hunting.

Very often, the animation will be reduced to cultural events, entertainment and folk, performed in a calendar whose periodicity is imposed by the rithm of economic activities or of certain traditional holidays. Of course, they are important to community life and presents compelling facets of interest, but they are not always sufficient to sustain a constant tourist attractions. Competitions of various genres, performances, demonstrations by professional artistry may have original forms and can be organized in the sense of changing tourists posture. From spectators tourists can turn into actors or competitors, actively engaged in those activities [4, 5].

4. Conclusions

Tourism development in rural areas aims to resolve, outside the essential objective oh activity - satisfying the tourist motivation - the economic problems of areas related to the depopulation caused by the migration of rural population to urban centers. By ensuring conditions to practice profitable activities into the villages it is seeking to stop the migration of rural labor and the return from urban areas of origin rural areas, increasing the stability of the active population, improving living conditions, environmental protection and conservation as recreation factor, recovery individual's creative potential, creating conditions for carrying out other economic activities, industrial, agricultural, commercial in rural areas.

If we discuss craft activities then we must put in the foreground Romanian specific crafts for rural areas. These craft activities can be charged again for tourism with the effect of these trades on and transmitting the stimulation of local handicraft industry.

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