

Prospects for international cooperation in the field of rural tourism (based on the example of Russia and Serbia)

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the issues of priorities of cooperation between Russia and Serbia in the field of tourism. The theoretical and methodological basis of research in the field of tourism, including in relation to the objects of research, is analyzed. Basic works on the problems of rural tourism and its territorial differentiation have been studied. The experience of Serbia in the development of rural tourism and the possibility of transferring it to the territory of the Rostov region have been studied. The key objects for the development of rural tourism in Serbia are characterized and their specificity is determined. The tourist resources of the Rostov region for the development of rural tourism have been studied. Using the comparative analysis methodology, a comparison of the resources and tourism development of the two territories was carried out. Promising event activities on the territory of the Rostov region have been identified, on the basis of which it is possible to create basic areas for the development of rural tourism. The typification of these activities and their spatial localization were carried out. The areas of cooperation between states in the area under study have been identified. The long-term program of events in the scientific and educational spheres, in the cultural plane, and in the legislative field has been detailed. A system of relationships between states in the field of rural tourism is also outlined, including through the development of tourism infrastructure and the construction of ethnocultural complexes..

1 Introduction

Currently, rural tourism is one of the promising types of tourism, since it carries trends of a healthy lifestyle, environmental cleanliness and cultural and educational fragments. As a rule, routes related to rural routes pass through territories with specialization in certain types of crop and livestock farming and are of interest to the segment of tourists interested in rural life.

There are several regions in the world for the development of rural tourism. In particular, these are the Alpine and Mediterranean regions of Europe (Italy, Spain, Greece), the USA and New Zealand. Such countries include Serbia, where natural conditions and

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historical agricultural specialization of most of the territory contributed to the formation of regions for the development of rural tourism. Potentially, it is possible to develop tourist complexes in these places.

It is the cooperation between Serbia and Russia that seems to be the most optimal, taking into account the positive historical experience of the countries and the presence of interstate cultural and political ties. It should also be noted that Serbia has a natural similarity with regions of Russia that are actively developing rural tourism (primarily the south of the European part of the country).

In such a situation, it is the development of international relations that can become a “catalyst” for the development of tourism in Serbia, contribute to the popularization of local culture and traditions and, as a result, arouse interest in local attractions.

This process includes many potential activities and therefore requires a well-structured management system. Such a system should involve the governments of both countries, tourism enterprises, service providers, public organizations, and educational institutions.

The purpose of the article is to analyze opportunities for cooperation between Russia and Serbia from the perspective of rural tourism, analyze factors of interaction between states and identify directions for further relations

Main objectives of the study:

- analyze the research base for the development of rural tourism;
- consider the territory of Serbia from the standpoint of organizing rural tourism and determine priority areas of cooperation between Russia and Serbia in the area under study;
- propose standard events within the framework of cooperation between countries in the field of rural tourism.

2 Background and methods

Rural tourism is one of the promising types in those countries and regions where there are sufficient resources and there is a need for such recreation. This type of tourism fits into the concept of sustainable tourism development, which is extremely relevant at the present stage of social development, Evgrafova, 2020 [1]. Interest in rural tourism is growing all over the world, Back, 2014, Farsani, 2019 [2, 3].

In addition to the main tourist function, rural tourism plays the role of supporting farms and rural areas in general, bringing tangible economic benefits, Barbieri, 2013, Sotomayor, 2019 [4, 5]. This type of tourism needs specialized tourist accommodation facilities of rural type and farms that would perform basic functions, Sueb, 2019, Choo, 2009, Li, 2019 [6, 7, 8]. The work uses the results of research in the field of rural tourism in various countries and regions of the world, Back, 2020, Hakim, 2020, Gomez, 2019 [9, 10, 11].

In the study of rural tourism, it is important to take into account regional specifics and the need to form certain indicators of the development of this area, as well as the general research methodology as a whole. Such experience was taken into account thanks to the works of Karampela, 2019, Li, 2019, Dewanti, 2019, Teng, 2022 [12, 13, 14, 15]. The work uses the views of Lanfranchi, 2019, Sidali, 2019, regarding the analysis of factors of tourist satisfaction with agrotourism structures and identifying approaches to determining indicators of their quality [16, 17].

Like any other type of tourism, rural tourism needs promotion. Some issues related to specific promotion methods and features of the formation of rural tourism brands were analyzed in the studies of Liang, 2020, Vikhoreva, 2020 [18, 19]. In the concept of sustainable tourism development, the basic issue is the rational use of natural resources and the absence of harm from tourism activities. These postulates are reflected in the work of Ispas, 2019, Kazmina, 2023 [20, 21].

In Russia, as in Serbia, the problem of increasing the competitiveness of the international tourism product, as well as supporting rural areas through the development of rural tourism in them, is relevant. The article is based on the views on rural tourism in Russia at Kazmina, 2020, Dudkina, 2023 [22, 23, 24]. Basic issues regarding the development of tourism in Serbia are analyzed in the works of Petrović-Randelović, Vukolić, 2023, 2012, Ristić, 2019, Dimitrovski, 2012, Sekulovic, 2015 [25, 26, 27, 28, 29]. All this allows us to conclude that it is necessary to study rural tourism in Russia and Serbia, and its development on a scientific basis.

The research methodology is determined by its main objective and is based on the conclusions and provisions of the designated publications. The economic aspect implies an approach to studying the problem from the perspective of the potential benefits of solving it for the positive dynamics of the regional economic indicators.

The sociological aspect allows us to assess the socio-economic situation of the local population, assess the level of satisfaction of rural residents with ecotourism products and conduct social advertising.

Rural tourism can become a source of income for rural residents with the possibility of creating new jobs. Using statistical observation methods, marketing research and sociological aspects, it is possible to determine the prospects for the development of this area and draw correct conclusions about its effectiveness.

3 Results

Rural tourism is widespread in Serbia and is one of the most popular tourism activities in the country. Rural tourism is also often called ethnic tourism, due to the fact that such tours often take place in ethno-villages, introducing guests to folk customs and folklore.

Today, about 600 farms in almost 30 villages are organized in the country in rural tourism. In total, there are about 6,000 seats at guests' disposal.

On the territory of Serbia, rural tourism is actively developing in ethnoparks or ethnovillages. These are entire complexes with objects representing monuments of Serbian folk architecture, preserved due to conservation, or newly built in a style characteristic of a particular region. Unlike authentic Serbian villages, these objects are intended exclusively for tourist or cultural and historical purposes. Ethnoparks are a detailed reconstruction of a Serbian village that existed one hundred to two hundred years ago.

In 2022, 96.8 thousand Russian tourists visited Serbia. Serbia is located in relative proximity to Russia, which makes traveling here accessible and inexpensive. In the future, it is possible to create a specific tourism product specifically for Russian tourists.

International relations in the field of tourism pose the task, first of all, of building connections between actors that contribute to the development of the tourism sector as a profitable sector of the economy. Tourism in its development can be a catalyst for improving the investment climate, a means of replenishing the state budget, and creating new jobs.

The development of tourism in the regions undoubtedly requires financial and organizational support. At the same time, the vector of such support should be directed in accordance with the existing development strategy of the region and its tourism resources. The strategies themselves are aimed at ensuring the maximum possible effective creation and implementation of a regional tourism product.

Here it is important to note the role of the regional tourism economy, including its scientific component, which provides a theoretical basis for transformations, the creation of economic integrations, and the formation of a tourism product market.

Rural tourism plays an important role in Serbia's tourism potential and has been developing for a long time, especially in Western Serbia, Vojvodina and Central Serbia.

Rural areas constitute a significant part of the national territory and their development is of great importance. These aspects highlight the importance of developing rural tourism, which can contribute to economic development, job creation and rural preservation.

Therefore, in addition to the development of tourist flows to Serbia, it is also possible to intensify tourist flows in the opposite direction. A factor in the development of rural tourism from Serbia to Russia may be the provision of appropriate resources.

It should be noted that at present, the Rostov region has accumulated some experience in the development of rural tourism. In particular, since 2001, the socio-ethnic center “Iгореvo Pole” project has been implemented in the Pogorelov village. In the Pukhlyakovskiy village of the Ust-Donetsk region there is an ethno-archaeological complex “The Lost World”.

However, in general, it should be noted that the infrastructure for the development of rural tourism is insufficient. As a result, the existing resource potential of individual territories remains largely unclaimed.

In the future, this type of tourism can become the basis for the development of not only group tours, traditional for the industry, but also individual ones, which is especially justified for tourists from other countries. Forming a product for a specific request and creating appropriate conditions to diversify the potential of such requests can increase the attractiveness of the region as an object of rural inbound tourism and lead to the sale of a product of a higher quality level.

With this approach, it is rational to develop rural tourism through the creation of specialized tourist complexes with an agricultural and ethnic component.

Based on a study of tourism resources in the regions of the region, a typification of promising agro-ethnocomplexes was carried out (Table 1). Activities were also highlighted to increase the influx of tourists to the designated areas, both local and residents of other districts and cities of the region.

Table 1. Typical potential agroethnocomplexes in the Rostov region

Districts	Type	Events		
		thematic	eventual	master classes
Aksai	ethnographic	Cossack festivals, typical Cossack villages	reconstruction of historical events	horse riding, Cossack crafts
Azovsky	ethnographic, beach	museum complex, Cossack farmstead	Cossack folklore festival, “Chebak Day”	horse riding, Cossack crafts
Bagaevskiy	farm	themed rural villages	“Cucumber Day”	preparation of cucumber products, harvesting
Belokalitvenskiy	ethnographic	typical Cossack villages	Kayal readings	Cossack crafts
Volgodonsk	river (hunting and fishing), archaeological	fishing complexes, archaeological museums	bard song	festival fishing
Egorlykenskaya	farming	farming villages	harvest festival	agricultural work
Zernogradskiy	beekeeping	beekeeping complexes	“Day of Bees”	honey collection
Myasnikovskiy	archaeological	archaeological museums	“Day of Tanais”	pot roasting, archery
Orlovskiy	ecological	Bird watching	Festival “Sung Steppe”	herbarium collection, photo hunting

Peschanokopsky	sheep breeding	sheep breeding complexes	"Shepherd's Day"	sheep shearing
Proletarsky	equestrian	routes "Wind in the Manes"	Horse riding festival	horse riding
Salsky	fishing	fishing complexes	"Manych Day"	fishing
Semikarakorsk	ethnographic	farmer holding	a fair Festival "Zakrutinskay a Spring"	preparing dishes of Don cuisine
Ust-Donetsk	ethnographic	typical Cossack villages	"Cossack Day"	horse riding, Cossack crafts
Tsimlyansky	wine and gastronomic, fishing	gastronomic routes	Donskaya Loza Festival	wine preparation
Sholokhovsky	ethnographic	typical Cossack villages	Festival "Sholokhov Spring"	horse riding, Cossack crafts

Using the experience of developing rural tourism should be mutually beneficial. In particular, it is possible to implement standard master classes and festival events on the territory of Serbia using local specifics.

4 Discussion

Rural tourism in Serbia plays a significant role in the development of the tourism industry. The country has vast rural areas, and these regions provide unique opportunities for a variety of types of rural tourism.

Currently, rural tourism in Serbia is on the rise. This type of tourism represents an excellent opportunity for visitors to enjoy nature, local culture and gastronomy.

Prospective relations between states are supposed to be rationally implemented on an integrated basis, involving this process in the maximum possible areas of interaction.

In addition to the tourist relationship itself, which consists in the formation of new tourism products, branding the territory of states as a tourist one and relationships in general, other positions of cooperation are possible that do not exclude, but, on the contrary, complement agrotourism interaction.

Thus, it seems justified to hold thematic exhibitions and other similar events dedicated to rural traditions and culture of states, history and sights. These events will serve as an additional channel for obtaining positive information about the country and help generate additional demand for a potential tourism product.

At the same time, cooperation on research and educational lines is possible. In particular, the exchange of students will contribute not only to the development of educational tourism, but in the future also to other areas, by obtaining and disseminating information about attractions through training.

It is also possible to establish cultural and tourist ties through the institution of twinning between rural settlements of states.

To strengthen the relationship between Russia and Serbia in the field of rural tourism, it is necessary to increase tourist flows through the formation of group tours and the expansion of tourism regions. Initial interactions are expected to take place at the intergovernmental level. The result of such interactions may be the conclusion of bilateral agreements aimed at simplifying tourism formalities, supporting tourism projects and stimulating investment activity

5 Conclusions

As a result of the study, a number of conclusions can be drawn.

1. There are several centers of rural tourism in the world, the exchange of experience between which can be mutually beneficial and contribute to enhancing the development of the industry.

2. For Russia, Serbia can become a partner for international cooperation in the field of agritourism, as a state that has positive historical experience of interaction with Russia and a similar geographical location with its southern regions, the most active in terms of the development of rural tourism.

3. Currently, rural tourism is capable of putting the Rostov region as a region of tourism development on a growth trajectory by stimulating the construction of infrastructure facilities, the creation of specialized jobs, and the development of local and regional tourism development programs. In the future, with the formation of cluster areas for the concentration of rural tourist destinations, we can talk about the region entering a path of sustainable development.

4. International interaction between Russia and Serbia in the field of rural tourism is possible through scientific cooperation, the formation of common methodological approaches, participation in specialized exhibitions, as well as cooperation in the cultural and educational space.

5. The increase in tourist flow caused by cooperation between Russia and Serbia in the field of rural tourism will be able to influence the development of rural areas, will contribute to the development of the regional economy, the preservation of rural traditions as the cultural heritage of the region and thereby become one of the basic points of its further development.

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