

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL AND ECOTOURISM IN BELARUS.

О.Н.Воронец, студент, О.Н.Полозок, студент,

Л.И.Колесникович, старший преподаватель,

Полесский государственный университет, polozoshka@mail.ru

Several years ago nobody could imagine, that foreigners would rest in the countryside of Belarus. Magnificent nature the unique originality of national traditions and crafts, kindness of citizens make our country an excellent tourist destination. Not only Englishmen, Germans and Russians have highly appreciated the holidays on the banks of blue lakes. It is also popular with Belorussians who more often prefer the rest in Belarus to overseas resorts.

The basic directions of the development of rural and ecotourism are:

Creation of touristy villages on the basis of existing rural settlements with the traditional national wooden architecture, located in picturesque districts;

The arrangement of trips in the countryside, providing tourists with food and accommodation, giving them an opportunity to get acquainted with the traditional everyday country life and crafts;

Rent houses and rooms to tourists in the countryside in ecological regions.

The basic positive economic and social effects of development of rural and ecotourism are:

Creation of new workplaces for local population;

Inpayments of foreign currency to the country;

Increase in investments both into an infrastructure and service, and in the protection of wildlife;

Growth of well-being of local population;

Training specialists to be employed in tourism and ecology;

Development of local self-management and crafts.

The republic possesses the resources necessary for the development of rural and ecotourism. For example, in the XIX century landowner Narkevich-Iodko treated the visitors by fresh air and koumiss in Belarus. At the beginning of the XX century doctor Zdanovich invited city dwellers to mineral waters. Rural tourism began to develop during the

pre-war period in Western Belarus which was a part of Poland. The estates of the gentry were rented by tourists. One of such manors is "Святак". Thanks to rural tourism a lot of people were employed and farmers got profits.

Rural and ecotourism is a fine opportunity to have a rest in ecological areas of Belarus, take pleasure in its picturesque landscapes and touch unique national traditions and crafts.

There appeared three «L» (landscape, lore, leisure) to replace three «S» (sun, sea, sand).

The growth of rural tourism accounts for 30 % the growth of tourism as a whole - 4 - 5 %.

Interestingly, 82 % of Minsk inhabitants wish to have a rest at home - in the open air, in rural ecological districts.

It is common practically for all the countries in the world: the number of tourists is 80 - 90 %.

The national program of development of rural and ecotourism in Belorussia in 2006-2010 can solve not only technical and economic, but also socially-psychological problems:

Firstly, common farmers, manufactures of agricultural produce turn into caterers which dramatically change people's psychology.

Secondly, the development of rural ecology changes traditional structure of agricultural production.

Thirdly, rural ecology is not a profitable business, but the way to reduce social intensity, lower a level of poverty.

And now let me continue: 76 rural manors are registered by the Republican association of rural and ecotourism, more than 500 citizens of Belarus are engaged in the sphere of rural and ecotourism. During one year one rural manor on average accepts up to 300 tourists from different countries of the world. Today there is a great deficiency of rural manors for tourism. Only two firms offered rest on Нарочн and Braslavskih lakes with accommodation in a private sector in summer. Not manors, but just rooms or apartments were rented. The demand for them is very big, because of the low prices.

In total in 2007 the activity in the sphere of rural and ecotourism in Belarus was carried out by 175 individuals and 13 farms. In the last year rural manors accepted 18 thousand tourists. In the last two years the amount of Belarussian citizens traveling about the country has increased by 2.4 times, they spent thrice as much on the rest. In 2007 the amount of foreign citizens coming to Belarus increased by 37 %, and spent by 65 % more than in 2006.

The first step of the state to support rural tourism was the Decree of the President about the development of rural ecology tourism from 2.06.2006 № 372. It made rural tourism the only kind of business in Belarus in which people can be engaged by applying for it. They have to pay 1 living wage a year.

The only stipulation to applicants is a rural registration and no more than 5 rooms in the house. Rural and ecology tourism are not taxed. A loan of 2 - 4 thousand dollars under 3 - 5 % for 3 years is lent without a mortgage which will allow people to start their own business more quickly.

Rural and ecotourism has not only positive, but also negative sides. There are:

Instability of getting incomes;

Seasonal work;

Poor opportunities to use highly skilled work force;

Probable destruction of the local culture.

And in end it would be desirable to tell that rural and ecotourism should not only increase well-being of the country side, but also to revive old Belarussian technologies of cultivation of traditional crops, getting ecological products using old traditional recipes. At the same time the reconstruction of a country house and outhouses in accordance with the national architectural style, revival and development of crafts, folklore are planned.