

LEASECON 2021
Conference on Land Economy and Rural Studies Essentials**AGROTOURISM AS A PROMISING AREA OF THE TOURISM
INDUSTRY IN VOLOGDA REGION**

Irina Vladimirovna Kryukova (a), Svetlana Germanovna Golubeva (b)*,
Anna Alexeevna Lagun (c), Olga Anatolievna Roskova (d), Maria Victorovna Andreeva (e)
*Corresponding author

(a) Vologda State Dairy Production Academy, 2 Schmidt st., Molochnoe village, Vologda, Russia,
iri917717@yandex.ru

(b) Vologda State Dairy Production Academy, 2 Schmidt st., Molochnoe village, Vologda, Russia,
golubevasg@molochnoe.ru

(c) Vologda State Dairy Production Academy, 2 Schmidt st., Molochnoe village, Vologda, Russia,
econanka@yandex.ru

(d) Vologda State Dairy Production Academy, 2 Schmidt st., Molochnoe village, Vologda, Russia, ros-15@yandex.ru

(e) RANEPa under the President of the Russian Federation 71 Leningradskaya, 160017, Vologda, Russia,
andreeva.mv@yandex.ru

Abstract

Based on the Russian and foreign literature, scientific approaches to the nature of rural tourism and agritourism are analyzed. The current state and development trends in the Vologda tourism sector, including agritourism, are described. It was revealed that tourism has a high tourist potential and is a profitable sector. In 2019, the revenue from inbound tourism was 20 billion rubles (3.7% of the gross regional product). The article describes activities of the government of Vologda region aimed to create conditions for the development of the tourism industry. Much attention is paid to the development of tourism; regional programs for the development of the tourist cluster have been implemented. Prospects for the development of agritourism are analyzed, and possibilities for creating complex tourist products are described. The main problems of agritourism and their solutions are determined. The role of local self-government bodies in the development of agritourism is described. The need for more active measures aimed at implementing the project approach in the municipal management practice is substantiated. Public-private and municipal-private partnerships are one of the effective ways to attract investment in the development of tourism, since such projects can attract financial resources, innovative technologies and qualified personnel. The study is very promising for the economy of the region, since it can help to solve problems of development of rural areas.

2357-1330 © 2022 Published by European Publisher.

Keywords: Agritourism, public-private partnership, project management, rural areas, sustainable development, tourism infrastructure



This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial 4.0 Unported License, permitting all non-commercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

1. Introduction

According to Article 1 of the Constitution, the Russian Federation is a social state. This entails the priority of social tasks, which are solved through the use of a whole range of instruments of internal government policies. To ensure the sustainable development of the regions as the basis for the viability of the entire socio-economic system of the country, the priority is to diversify the economy in the sectoral and regional contexts. This problem is relevant, since the quality of state and municipal administration and the quality of life depend on the reliability of effectiveness diagnostics. The regional components are of particular importance in view of the significant territorial socio-economic differentiation.

Agritourism can become the most effective tool for diversifying the rural economy (Order of the Government of the Russian Federation No. 151-r, 2015 of 02.02.2015).

2. Problem Statement

The concept of agritourism is still not legitimate in Russia. An attempt to legalize it was made in 2019, but the bill has not been adopted yet. In the bill, rural tourism is defined as a type of tourism that involves temporary visits of citizens to a domestic agricultural producer (Draft Federal Law No. 690944-7, 2019), while the purpose of visits is not specified. In the Concept for the development of rural tourism in Russia for 2016-2030, rural tourism is defined as activities of agricultural producers and other entrepreneurs in recreating rural areas or towns, focused on the use of natural, cultural, historical and other traditional resources (Concept for the development of rural tourism in Russia for 2016- 2030).

Both in the draft law and in the Concept, rural tourism and agritourism are considered synonymous. At the same time, a number of representatives of Russian economic science define the concepts of rural tourism and agritourism in a different way. Some scholars identify these concepts, while others consider agritourism as a kind of rural tourism.

Badalyants (2017) and foreign authors define rural tourism (agritourism) as a special type of organized and unorganized tourist recreation in the countryside intended to familiarize people with nature, rural lifestyle, and agricultural traditions (Roman et al., 2020; Van Winkle & Bueddefeld, 2020). Gareev and Romanyuk (2019) and Korobova (2019) emphasize that rural tourism (agritourism) is the accommodation of townspeople in rural guest houses, rural estates and farms for tourism purposes, i.e. without engaging in income-generating activities. According to Voskolovich and Zhiltsova (2017), rural tourism (agritourism) is activities, programs, products and services for organizing recreation aimed at implementing ecological forms of interaction with nature, promoting the development of agriculture and rural areas, preserving cultural and historical heritage, establishing positive contacts of tourists with local residents (Fedorchenko et al., 2020).

Most of the scholars define agritourism as a special type of rural tourism. Gruzdeva (2019) argues that agritourism is one of the types of rural tourism along with ecological, pilgrimage, event and other types. At the same time, rural tourism means recreation in rural areas in order to get acquainted with the local nature, the way of life of the rural population and local cultural values (Malede & Girma, 2015). Ivanova (2018) considers agritourism to be the main form of rural tourism, which includes visiting a farm, agricultural, horticultural or agro-industrial enterprise for the purpose of entertainment, education or

active participation in rural activities. According to Motorina and Mityakova (2019), agritourism is the most promising type of rural tourism.

Other scientists consider rural tourism as a type of agritourism; the main characteristics of agritourism is the possibility to participate in the life of a rural family and in the production of agricultural products (Kaznacheeva et al., 2017). Korobova (2019) and Rawlins et al. (2020) consider agritourism to be one of the types of ecotourism. They emphasize that this type of tourism has specific forms of leisure (feeding pets, walks and picnics in the countryside).

Rural (agritourism) is understood as a special type of tourism, which involves

- participation in farm activities;
- hunting, fishing, berry and mushroom picking;
- hiking, horseback riding, boat trips, participation in sports events;
- excursions, master classes.

Tourists can relax in the fresh air and get acquainted with rural labor, local culture, crafts, folk crafts, traditions and customs, thereby satisfying their needs for acquiring new knowledge, skills and abilities.

There is no doubt that rural tourism is one of the most important factors in the development of rural areas, since it

- creates new jobs, increases the income of the rural population;
- reduces the migration of the rural population to cities, attracts citizens to rural areas;
- preserves folk crafts and handicrafts, cultural traditions;
- develops transport, engineering and social infrastructures of rural areas.

In Vologda, tourism is one of the promising sectors of the economy, since the region has a high tourist potential.

3. Research Questions

The subject of this study is agritourism as one of the most effective tools for diversifying the rural economy and developing rural areas.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to identify problems in the development of agritourism in Vologda and to determine ways of solving these problems. The objectives are to analyze the concept of agritourism, the current state and development trends in Vologda agritourism to assess activities of Vologda government aimed to create conditions for the development of the tourism industry; to identify the main problems of development of agritourism in the region and find solutions to these problems.

5. Research Methods

The methods of scientific cognition were used (analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction, abstraction, etc.).

6. Findings

In the region, 128 companies perform tour operator and / or travel agency activities. Almost all of them (98%) are small businesses. There are 333 collective accommodation facilities with a total number of 7,726 rooms (annual growth is about 4%).

In 2019, the tourist flow amounted to 3150 thousand people, including 739 visitors and 2411 sightseers. Over the past 5 years, an increase in the tourist flow was 17%.

The total aggregate income from inbound tourism was 20 billion rubles (3.7% of the gross regional product). The region ranks 9th in terms of the share of tourism revenues in the gross regional product. In 2019, the tourism sector and related industries paid about 450 million rubles to the regional budget (10% more than in 2018).

The Vologda Region has repeatedly participated in the annual National Geographic Traveler Awards. In 2016 and 2019 she received an award for victory in the nomination "Russian ecological recreation" (20% and 37% of the votes, respectively), in 2018 she took second place in the nomination "Excursion vacation".

In the municipalities of the region in 2019, 20 additional tourist routes were developed, incl. 12 tourist routes with active forms of movement within the framework of children and youth tourism. The total number of routes was 312, incl. 49 environmental. More than 30 new objects of the tourism industry and tourist display have been opened. The total number of attractions is 337, incl. 41 - active recreation, 6 - gastronomic tourism, 61 - culture, 94 - museums, 67 - shrines and temples (Kaznacheeva et al., 2017).

Vologda Region is a member of the Silver Necklace of Russia Interregional Historical, Cultural and Tourist Project. 22 tour operators participate in the project, 113 regional and interregional routes have been created.

Manor tourism has been developing in the region since 2015; the region has been participating in the implementation of the federal project "Russian estates". There are 10 manor objects, 70 excursion programs; the total number of visitors to the manors is more than 120 thousand people.

In some municipal districts, event and ethno tourism is being developed.

Various types of tourism contribute to the development of rural tourism due to the possibility of creating combined tours.

The Strategy for Socio-Economic Development of the Vologda Oblast for the period up to 2030 declared the rural tourism as one of the priority types of tourism.

The natural and climatic conditions and the favorable ecological situation make it possible to develop rural tourism in Vologda region. The region is located in the north of the European part of Russia, in a zone of the temperate continental climate. There are many rivers and lakes, natural monuments, swamps and forests rich in berries and mushrooms. The transport network makes it possible for tourists to visit the region by air, rail, roads and rivers. The share of the rural population is 27%, there are more than 8000 rural settlements on (Territorial body of the Federal State Statistics Service for Vologda Oblast, 2020).

At present, rural tourism is developing in almost all municipal districts. There are 114 property objects in the register of guest houses in 20 municipal districts. For tourists, such activities as mushroom

and berry picking, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, excursions, various interactive events (rural holidays, master classes) are held. The annual increase in the tourist flow is about 10%.

At the same time, there are a number of problems in the development of rural tourism:

- personnel for both tourism enterprises and local governments;
- lack of competencies in the creation, development and management of rural tourism, lack of experience in interacting with potential entrepreneurs;
- high cost of credit resources;
- insufficient development of the tourist infrastructure (catering facilities, roadside services);
- poor quality of the transport network, low transport accessibility;
- the underdeveloped communal infrastructure.

Russian and foreign scientists believe that the government should be more active in the development of rural tourism by improving legislation, implementing federal and regional programs and support measures, which will make it possible to use the tourist potential of rural territories of Russian regions (Afroz et al., 2017; Fedorchenko et al., 2020; Mityakova, 2019; Rawlins et al., 2020; Trukhachev, 2017).

Much attention is paid to the development of tourism in Vologda. The program "Preservation and Development of Cultural Potential, Development of the Tourist Cluster and Archival Affairs in Vologda region for 2015-2020" has been implemented. For 2021-2025, the program "Development of culture, tourism and archival affairs in Vologda region" has been adopted. It is planned to allocate 523 million rubles to finance the subprogram "Development of tourism". The program provides for activities in rural tourism.

In the region, measures aimed to create conditions for developing the hotel infrastructure, recreation, entertainment, and public catering facilities are being implemented. For 2021, 20 million rubles will be allocated to the regional budget for creating the tourist infrastructure, including museums, tourism and handicraft centers, exhibitions, holding master classes, repairing parks, and improving the public space. In order to promote the development of rural tourism, the Department of Culture and Tourism of Vologda Region aims to stimulate an increase in the number of guest houses, to improve the quality of services provided, and to promote tourism products.

The role of local self-government bodies is no less important to stimulate the investment in rural tourism.

According to Novikova (2017), local governments help to launch the mechanism for agritourism, while regional government bodies deal with the development of some territories of the region with a high level of tourism potential (Ivanova, 2018). Indeed, the regional government bodies pay attention to the most promising territories with a significant tourism potential and the most developed transport and engineering infrastructure.

However, the initiative of local self-government bodies in the following main areas is of great importance:

- creation of administrative and economic conditions for the development of priority types of tourism;

- attracting investment in the tourist infrastructure, including public-private and municipal-private partnerships;
- development and promotion of the tourist brand of the municipal district;
- preservation and development of traditional folk arts and crafts;
- tourism events and projects;
- development of competitive tourist routes;
- development of intermunicipal, interregional and international relations in tourism;
- training and advanced training of municipal employees in tourism and investment activities, attracting professional human resources.

For a more efficient and complete use of the tourist potential of rural areas, it is advisable to create complex tourist products that integrate various types of recreation (hunting, fishing, berry and mushroom picking, hiking and horseback riding), cultural and educational programs, fairs, festivals, holidays, participation in the daily farm activities. This will attract a much larger number of tourists who want to relax in the countryside and acquire new knowledge and skills. Vologda can combine rural recreation activities with visits to the Father Frost's estate in Veliky Ustyug, religious (Kirillov) and cultural-historical (Belozersk) tourism (Orlova & Leonidova, 2012), as well as ethnographic and event tourism (Babaevsky, Vologda, Kichmengsko-Gorodetsky, Nyuksensky, Tarnogsky, Sheksninsky and other municipal areas).

For this, interaction between all interested parties - regional government bodies, local governments, travel agencies, owners of guest houses, farmers, and entrepreneurs – should be established. The role of local self-government bodies is important.

In order to develop rural tourism, local governments need to implement the project approach - both in terms of developing municipal projects and attracting the population and local entrepreneurs in competitions and grants, providing consulting, information, and organizational support. It is the toolkit of the design approach that makes it possible to solve the existing problems.

In 2019, the region ranked 11th according to results of the All-Russian Tourism Award "Route of the Year"; 21 projects were announced, and four of them reached the final. In 2018, the Department of Culture and Tourism participated in the All-Russian competition "Best practices in the development of children's tourism"; five projects became winners. Since 2017, within the children's tourism development area, the project on educational tourism "Live Lessons" was implemented; 19 museums participate in the project.

Since 2002, the regional competition of culture projects "Star Lace of the North" has been held once every two years, one of the goals is to implement new methods to develop and increase the cultural and tourist potential of Vologda Region. In 2016, cultural, educational and ecological tourism projects aimed at developing the tourist potential of territories were launched. There has been a downward trend in both the total number of social projects submitted to the competition and projects in the Culture and Tourism nomination. In addition, among the projects submitted for the competition there was no project aimed at the development of rural tourism.

This is caused, among other things, by the fact that at the municipal level, there are no project activities. Meanwhile, participation in competitions can bring tangible financial results for increasing the

tourist attractiveness of the territory. In 2018 and 2020, Vytegra became one of the winners of the All-Russian competition for projects aimed to create a comfortable urban environment in towns and historical settlements (the “Small towns with a population of 10 to 20 thousand people” project). To finance the projects, 55 and 90 million rubles were allocated from the federal budget to equip the embankment of the Vytegra River and restore its historical appearance.

It is necessary to create a department in the municipal government body. In some municipal districts, project offices have been created, or their functions are performed by departments of the local bodies. In Totem municipal district, the department of tourism and public projects, created in 2016, is engaged in tourism project activities. This made it possible to intensify the work on attracting grant funds; in 2018, the Totem Museum Association received a grant in the amount of 10 million rubles intended to create a Center for Socio-Cultural Design and Development.

Project activities in the municipalities began their development. For significant shifts, personnel training is required.

Another promising area for regional and municipal authorities is public-private and municipal-private partnerships, which can attract financial resources, innovative technologies and qualified personnel. However, as Yuryeva (2020) argues, due to the seasonality of demand and complex nature of tourist flow forecasting, the investment in tourism is riskier and less profitable than in other industries. As of January 1, 2020, 97 municipal concession agreements have been implemented, of which only one is in tourism; most of the projects are related to the reconstruction of heat, gas and power supply facilities. The region has a significant potential for the development of public-private and municipal-private partnerships.

7. Conclusion

Agritourism is defined as a special type of tourism, which provides tourists with opportunities to relax in the fresh air and get acquainted with rural labor, life and traditions and customs, thereby satisfying their needs in obtaining new knowledge and skills.

Agritourism creates conditions for the development of rural areas. In Vologda, tourism has a high tourist potential. In 2019, the total aggregate revenue from inbound tourism was 20 billion rubles (3.7% of the gross regional product). The region ranks 9th by the share of tourism revenues in the gross regional product.

Much attention is paid to the development of tourism in the region. Regional programs for the development of the tourist cluster are being implemented. It is planned to allocate 523 million rubles to finance the development of tourism up to to 2025. In 2021, the regional budget will allocate 20 million rubles for developing the tourism industry.

At the same time, there are a number of problems in the development of rural tourism:

- personnel for both tourism enterprises and local governments;
- lack of competencies in the creation, development and management of rural tourism business;
- lack of experience in interacting with potential entrepreneurs;
- high cost of credit resources;
- poor development of the tourist infrastructure (catering facilities, roadside services);

- poor quality of the transport network, low transport accessibility;
- underdeveloped communal infrastructure in rural areas.

To solve the problems of rural tourism in the region, an integrated approach, involving the use of project management tools, is required. A prerequisite for the successful implementation of project initiatives is qualified personnel.

Many problems in rural tourism can be solved by public-private and municipal-private partnerships, since such projects can attract financial resources, innovative technologies and qualified personnel.

References

- Afroz, N. M., Mahmud, Md. Sh., & Bhashani, M. (2017). Analyzing The Problem And Prospects Of Ecotourism: A Review On Bangladesh. *IOSR Journal of Business and Management*, 59.
- Badalyants, S. V. (2017). Rural tourism as a factor in the development of rural areas in the region. *Rostov Scientific Journal*, 67.
- Concept for the development of rural tourism in Russia for 2016-2030. Retrieved from <http://xn--80aplem.xn--plai/rural-tourism/>
- Draft Federal Law No. 690944-7 "On Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation on the Development of Rural Tourism (Agritourism)". *Legislative support system*. Retrieved from <https://sozd.duma.gov.ru/bill/690944-7>
- Fedorchenko, V. K., Parubets, O. V., Krasavtceva, L. Yu., & Hrybova, L. V. (2020). Mechanisms for the integration of tourism systems: types, problems, prospects. *Geojournal of Tourism and Geosites*.
- Gareev, R. R., & Romanyuk, A. V. (2019). Features of the development of global green tourism. *Colloquium-journal*, 37.
- Gruzdeva, M. A. (2019). Development of rural tourism in Russia. *Discourse*, 97.
- Ivanova, Yu. O. (2018). Modern trends in the development of rural tourism. *Tourism industry: opportunities, priorities, problems and prospects*, 51.
- Kaznacheeva, S. N., Chelnokova, E. A., & Korovina, E. A. (2017). Agritourism as one of the promising areas of the tourism industry. *International Journal of Applied and Basic Research*, 3, 248.
- Korobova, O. P. (2019). Agritourism as a stimulus for the development of rural areas. *Academia. Architecture and Construction*, 3, 99.
- Maleda, B., & Girma, G. (2015). Review on problems, prospects and economic contribution of wildlife management and ecotourism in Ethiopia. *Journal of Veterinary Science and Technology*, 6(5).
- Mityakova, E. E. (2019). Assessment of the agritourism potential of the regions of the Russian Federation, *Risk management in the agro-industrial complex*, 2, 14.
- Motorin, O. A., & Mityakova, E. E. (2019). The state of the agritourism sector in the Russian Federation, *Risk management in the agro-industrial complex*, 25.
- Novikova, I. I. (2017). Rural tourism as a priority direction for the competitive development of rural areas. *Ostrovskie readings*, 1, 510.
- Order of the Government of the Russian Federation dated 02.02.2015 No. 151-r (as amended on 13.01.2017) "On approval of the Strategy for sustainable development of rural areas of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2030". SPS "ConsultantPlus". Retrieved from http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_174933
- Orlova, V. S., & Leonidova, E. G. (2012). Rural tourism as a factor in the socio-economic development of a provincial region (on the example of the Vologda region). *Bulletin of KrasGAU*, 9, 25.
- Rawlins, M., Kornexl, W., Baral, S., & Baromey, N. (2020). *Enabling Ecotourism Development in Cambodia*. World Bank Group. Retrieved from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/34321>
- Roman, M., Roman, M., & Prus, P. (2020). Innovations in Agritourism: Evidence from a Region in Poland. *Sustainability*, 12(12), 4858.

- Territorial body of the Federal State Statistics Service for Vologda Oblast (2020). Retrieved from <https://vologdastat.gks.ru>
- Trukhachev, A. V. (2017). Rural tourism as the main factor in the development of the regional tourism economy in the Russian Federation. *Bulletin of AIC of Stavropol*, 4(28), 154.
- Van Winkle, Ch. M., & Bueddefeld, J. (2020). Free-choice learning in agritourism. *World Leisure Journal*. Retrieved from <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/16078055.2020.1832025?journalCode=rwle20>
- Voskolovich, N. A., & Zhiltsov, E. N. (2017). Specificity of the development of rural tourism in Russia. *TSU Science Vector. Series: Economics and Management*, 14.
- Yuryeva, T. V. (2020). Projects of public-private partnership as a factor of sustainable development of the tourism industry. *Modern management technologies*, 2(92). Retrieved from <https://sovman.ru/article/9215/>