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## **DEVELOPMENT OF GREEN AND AGRITOURISM IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WITH USE OF INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES**

At the beginning of the 21st century, rural tourism is developing dynamically in the world. It represents a significant share of world tourist activity. In European countries, there is significant state support for programs involving rural communities in green and agritourism. In the European Union, rural tourism is an essential tool for the economic development of rural areas. And in order for them to develop rapidly and generate income, it is necessary to use innovative approaches and technologies in this field.

Agritourism is a type of activity on the territory of the countryside, the community, which includes the provision of comprehensive services to those who have arrived, in terms of accommodation, recreation, excursion services, organization of leisure time, sports activities, active tourism activities, organization of fishing, acquisition of new knowledge. It focuses on the use of natural, historical, cultural and agricultural resources of the rural community to create a tourist product.

At the end of the 1990s, all the national organizations of rural tourism and agritourism united in the European Federation for Farm and Village Tourism. The short name of this organization is EuroGites.

Its main tasks are:

- Comprehensive popularization of recreational values in rural areas;
- To study and preserve the potential of rural tourism in European countries;
- To promote the development of rural and agrotourism in all agricultural regions of European countries;
- To introduce the principles of sustainable tourism for various forms of recreation in rural areas;
- To invest in projects aimed at developing agritourism that contribute to preserving Europe's biotic, scenic and ethno-cultural diversity and to increasing employment in rural areas;
- Providing various forms of support to the organizers of green, rural and agritourism tourism, in particular consultancy, marketing support, education and training support [1].

The European Federation of Rural Tourism is composed of 30 national rural tourism organizations.

According to studies of literary sources, innovative activity in the field of tourism develops in the following directions:

- virtual tourism;
- introduction of the newest technologies and equipment;
- introduction of new resources and marketing activities;
- introduction of new tourist routes, hotel products, transport services;
- the use of new technologies for carrying out tourist activities and business processes [2; 3; 4; 5; 7].

One of the interesting innovations in the field of tourism is virtual tourism. It includes virtual excursions, virtual tours, virtual acquaintances, where the usual reality is replaced by a virtual one [6]. The main purpose of creating such tours is to provide everyone, without exception, with an opportunity to “travel” to interesting regions and objects.

Innovative technologies in the field of green and agritourism consist of the following innovations: marketing innovations, innovations in the tourism process (regarding the forms of sale of the tourism product, distribution, etc.), innovations in the tourism product, innovations in the management of tourism activities. The innovation potential of rural and agrotourism organizations is closely related to their involvement in cooperation, use of marketing information systems for market research and effective promotion of the tourism product. Actions aimed at improving the skills of employees in the field of green, rural and agritourism are also important [6]. Cooperation in the innovation process means the formation of clusters of tourist enterprises in the field of rural and agrotourism in relation to thematic settlements, cultural animation sales centers, as well as social tourism and in the field of health improvement (therapy on agrarian farms).

The global trend in agritourism is organic tourism, which is related to organic farming. It combines travel with the opportunity to live a healthy lifestyle. This type of interaction between farmers and tourists operates in more than 50 countries of the world through the program WWOOF (World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms) [8]. This organization runs international programs of agritourism that allow you to combine tourism with work on organic farms and in ecological settlements. Those who join WWOOF provide food, accommodation and the opportunity to learn about organic production. In Europe the following countries have joined this program: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom [8]. WWOOF provides volunteers with free accommodation and organic food. In order to participate in the program, a farmer must contact the WWOOF representative in their country and provide information that their farm meets the standards of organic agricultural production. Program participants pay annual fees ranging from \$20–60.

It should be noted that the tourism industry is strongly developing with the use of IT technologies and the global Internet network. European countries have official websites for the development of agritourism, especially where it has gained the most widespread development and

popularity: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, United Kingdom, Greece, Denmark, Ireland, Iceland, Spain, Italy, Cyprus, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Finland, France, Czech Republic, Croatia, Switzerland, Sweden [2]. The sites are used to promote tourism products, especially with the use of social networks.

Therefore, rural and agritourism needs innovative approaches for its dynamic development in the countries of the European Union. The tourism activities of European countries are influenced by global factors. And this, in turn, contributes to the development of innovation in rural tourism.

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