

RURAL AGRITOURISM IN THE SYSTEM OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF UKRAINE

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Abstract

In the article we proved that the development of rural areas lies in the plane of non-agricultural areas of entrepreneurial activity, among which agritourism plays an important role. In the manuscript we identify and highlight the main role and place in the economic system of the tourism industry in the direction of the social and economic situation in rural areas of Ukraine, as well as to study the development of agritourism in Ukraine. According to the results of the work, it was established that conducting agritourism activities in the studied regions of Ukraine allowed the rural population to receive new and additional types of income, which in turn contributed to improving their living standards and development of rural areas in general.

Key words: rural agritourism, rural development, agritourism farms, green tourism

INTRODUCTION

In the conditions of urbanization and the intense rhythm of city life, rural green tourism is becoming more and more popular, the urgent element of the union of man with nature. According to European statistics, 35% of urban dwellers in the European Union choose to spend their holidays in rural areas [33].

The development of rural areas lies in the plane of non-agricultural areas of entrepreneurial activity, among which agritourism plays an important role. A significant share of agritourism farms and estates in Ukraine is concentrated in the Western region, in particular in its two regions – Lviv and Ivano-Frankivsk [14].

The low level of agricultural efficiency does not make it possible to offer enough jobs for the rural population, which has found itself in difficult socio-economic realities. The question arose of finding additional and stable types of income [12]. Under such conditions, using all their potential, the peasants quickly reoriented to a new type of entrepreneurship, namely agritourism, which helped ensure a certain village's certain economic stability.

Rural green tourism is necessary both for vacationers and for the owners of their estates, peasants, village councils, the whole region, and the state as a whole. We believe that the development of agritourism will contribute to the development of all sectors of the economy.

Important prerequisites for agritourism

activities were available labour and land resources, free rural housing, clean rural environment, natural resources, rich historical and cultural heritage [15]. Agritourism is associated with an increase in the number of agro-villages and farmsteads, which receive a larger flow of tourists who invest in rural infrastructure, improving the welfare of farmers, and thus contribute to the development of the village, which is the cradle and treasure of Ukrainian traditions. As Viacheslav Lypynskyi once said: «Without tradition, there is no culture, without culture there is no nation» [46]. The development of agritourism and green tourism in rural areas was studied in their works O. Agres [1], O. Apostolyuk [2], O. Binert [3], V. Chegley [5], M. Dziamulych [7-10; 34-36], S. Hutkevych [12], V. Lypchuk [14, 15], I. Lytvyn [16], L. Marcuta [19], L. Marmul [20], A. Popescu [21, 22; 23; 24; 25; 26; 27; 28; 29; 30; 31; 32], O. Serdiukova [33], R. Sodoma [37, 38], O. Stashchuk [39, 40; 41], I. Tsymbaliuk [42], I. Yakoviyk [44], Ya. Yanyshyn [45], L. Zaboranna [46], I. Zhurakovska [47].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The purpose of our article is to identify and highlight the main role and place in the economic system of the tourism industry in the direction of the social and economic situation in rural areas of Ukraine, as well as to study the development of agritourism in Ukraine.

The research is characterized by a comprehensive and systematic approach to solving current problems and solving problems of formation of rural agritourism in the system of rural development, in the process of which a system of modern methods, techniques, and tools of research was used.

The study used a set of modern methods, including methods: theoretical generalization, systems analysis (to systematization of theoretical foundations and foreign experience in the development of agritourism in rural areas of Ukraine);

- method of analysis and synthesis, methods of abstraction (to scientific substantiation and generalization of proposals for solving the problems of agritourism in rural areas and development of recommendations for further development of rural green tourism and agritourism in Ukraine);

- methods of comparative, structural, functional analysis (to provide substantiation of conclusions and recommendations obtained from the results of the study), etc.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Ukraine, which is rich in natural and recreational resources, has all the prerequisites for the successful development of rural green tourism. In Ukraine, there are about 150 thousand potential participants in rural green tourism [17].

From ancient times to the present day it is known that the main value of Ukraine is its rich lands, in its beautiful nature, which has always been the main treasure for its conquerors. Over the past 5 years, the number of tourists has tripled.

The potential demand for agritourism services in Ukraine is quite high. This opinion is justified by the significant activity of the Ukrainian population in terms of tourism outside Ukraine (Fig. 1). Therefore, high-quality agritourism services can be both a good alternative to foreign recreation and its interesting addition and expansion because the consumption of healthy products (fresh vegetables and fruits) grown by villagers and consumed directly from the field and stay in natural scenic climates conditions of Ukraine can create preconditions for interesting and full rest in the countryside and rapid development of agritourism.

Rural green tourism plays an important role in the organization of leisure and recreation and accounts for a significant share in the tourism industry, thereby expanding the boundaries of the national economy. It is worth noting that the positive socio-economic impact of rural green tourism is hampered by the difficult life of the rural population and urbanization. Thus, according to the State Statistics Service of Ukraine, there is an annual population decline

of 9% in rural areas. Addressing these issues requires support from the government and the public [43].

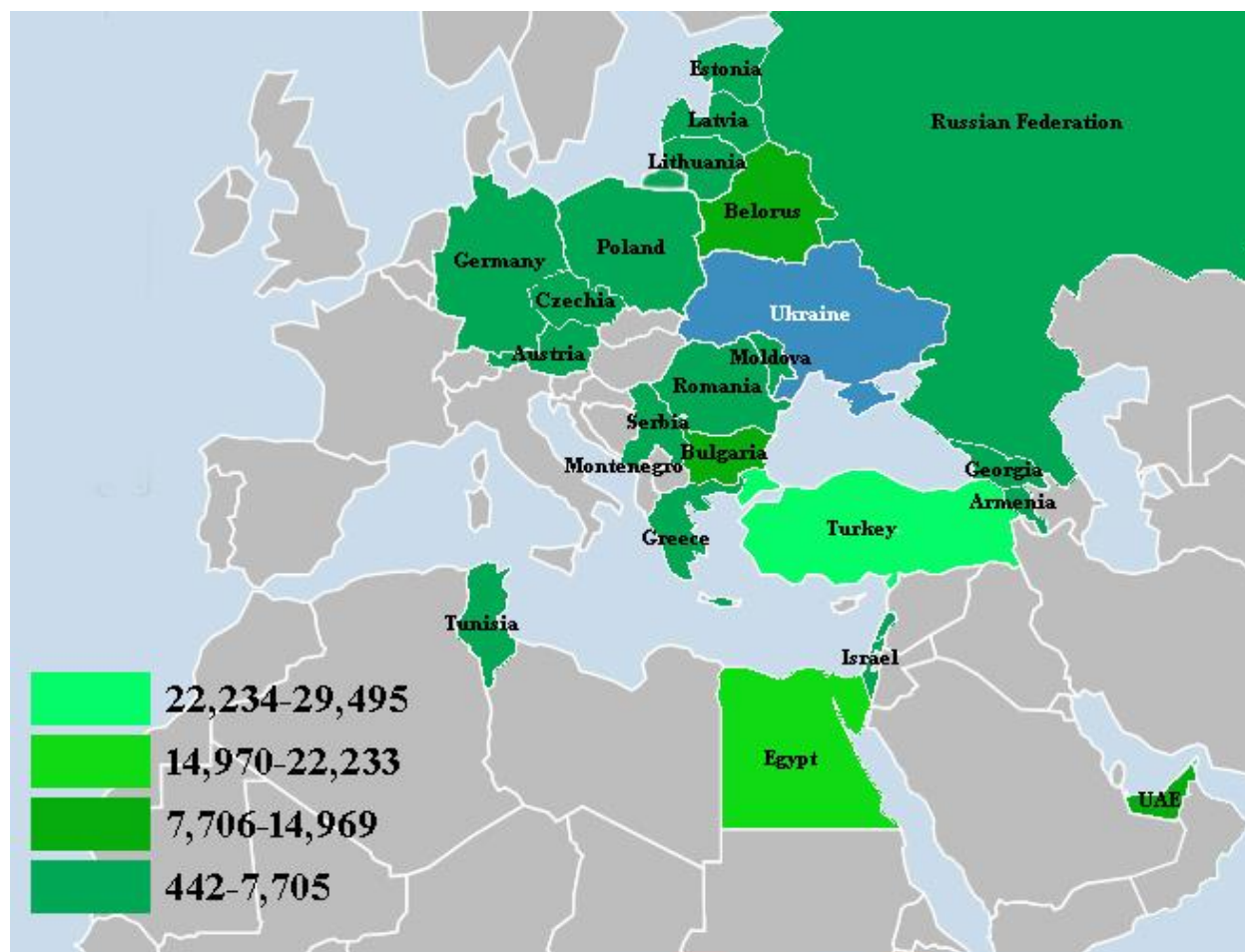


Fig. 1. The cartogram of the grouping of visits of other countries by Ukrainians for the purposes of tourism in 2019, persons

Source: own development, built according to the Administration of the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine (information submitted without taking into account the service personnel of vehicles and servicemen).

Rural green tourism contributes to the economic development and prosperity of the country, addressing several issues related to:

- increase in jobs in the village;
- creation of improvement of estates and villages as a whole, development of infrastructure;
- increase in income and average living standards at low cost;
- the opportunity to sell local products to tourists, receiving income from it;
- organization and increase of protection of local historical monuments, preservation of local customs and traditions, folklore, folk crafts;
- raising the cultural and educational level of the rural population, etc.

In the world, rural green tourism is seen as an

alternative to agriculture in terms of income. In addition, the development of rural tourism infrastructure does not require such significant investments as other types of tourism and can be carried out at the expense of the peasants themselves without additional investment. Reducing migration from rural to urban areas will save significant financial and material resources, because, according to experts of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, resettlement in rural areas is 20 times more expensive than creating conditions for his life and work in rural areas [11]. Thanks to the use of such a form of recreation as green tourism, many Western European countries have made a giant step in the development of the rural economy.

The development of rural green tourism in the world began in the second half of the 20th century when in England and the United

States was created the concept of “Bed & Breakfast” – living about 7 days in empty rooms, regardless of their location (Table 1).

Table 1. Classification of recreation bases belonging to the type «bed & breakfast»

Name	Characteristic	Feature
Bed & breakfast cottage	Rented cottage in a resort and recreational area, in an area that has the status of a rural area or belongs to the resort	Location by the sea, lake or in the mountains
Bed & breakfast farm vacation	Family vacation with children in picturesque countryside with valuable recreational resources	Possibility of rest in “home” atmosphere of children of different age groups separately from parents
Bed & breakfast homestay	Accommodation in the house of the owner of the farmstead together with his family in separate guest rooms	Acquaintance with traditions, culture, a life of that family with which guests live
Bed & breakfast farmstay	Accommodation in a farmer`s house or in a campsite on the farm	Eating products grown by the owner of the estate, participation in agricultural work on the farm

Source: [5].

In Ukraine, in particular, there are no systematic data on tourist activity of the population in rural areas. The only information obtained from individually targeted surveys is available. For example, according to surveys of agritourists who were on vacation in rural areas of the Vinnytsia region of Ukraine, it was found that the largest share of such agritourists came from neighbouring regions, namely – Kremenchuk and Kyiv regions of Ukraine (Fig. 2). The obtained results provide grounds to claim that Ukrainians are interested in agritourism services in rural areas with good climatic conditions and sufficient infrastructural development.

It should be noted that in Ukraine there are many interesting places located in relatively prosperous ecological regions. The most active regions that develop green tourism on their territory are Transcarpathian, Ivano-Frankivsk, Vinnytsia, Kyiv, Lviv, Poltava [15].

We studied the peculiarities of conducting and developing agritourism activities in the Lviv and Ivano-Frankivsk regions of Ukraine, as they are characterized by high favourable for the development of agritourism, the availability of sufficient climate and

recreational resources. In particular, the largest share of rural farmsteads and agritourism farms is concentrated in the Carpathian recreational region, due to favourable climatic conditions, specific terrain, picturesque landscapes, ecologically clean areas, the availability of sufficient rural historical resources in Ukraine, and the number of facilities, the preservation of national authentic traditions and skills, high culture of management and the mentality of the indigenous population.

The resource potential of agritourism is formed by: natural, recreational, industrial, demographic, logistical, socio-economic, informational, political and legal, historical, and ethnocultural resources [12; 14]. The treasury of the nature reserve fund of the Lviv region of Ukraine consists of 350 objects with a total area of 175 thousand hectares, which is 7% of the region, while the nature reserve fund of the Ivano-Frankivsk region of Ukraine includes 474 objects with a total area of 218.8 thousand ha, which is 15.7% of the total area of the Ivano-Frankivsk region. The recreational potential of the region is 30% of the national with a large share of forested areas [17; 18].

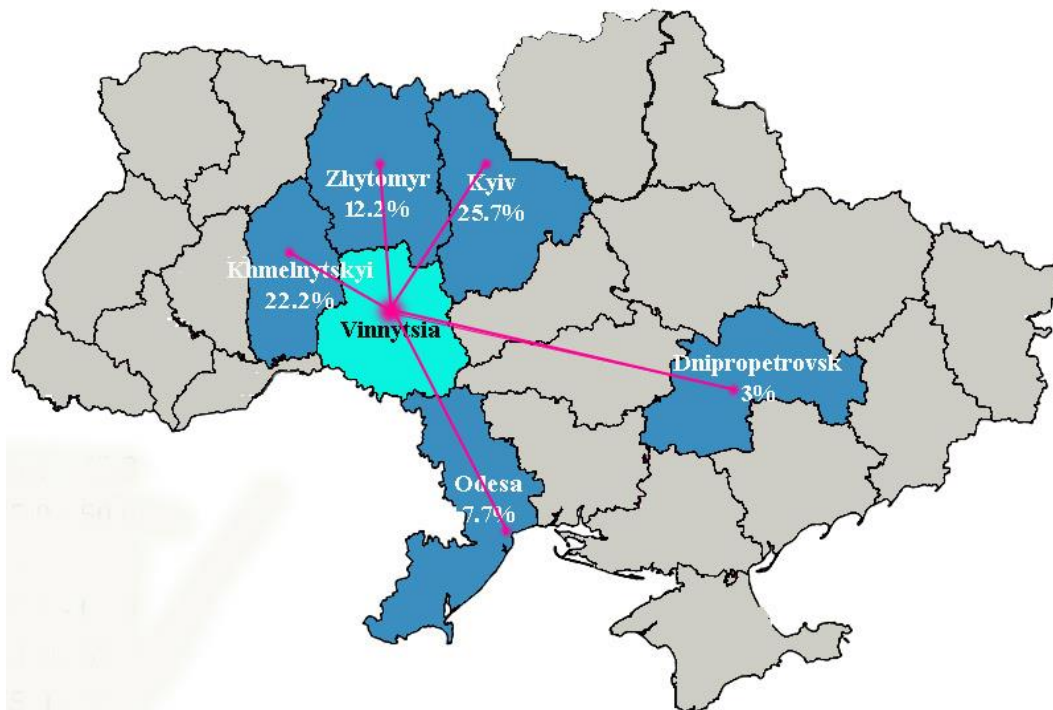


Fig. 2. Map of visualization of tourist attractiveness of Vinnytsia region of Ukraine in 2019 (according to the results of a survey of vacationers in rural areas of the region from other regions of Ukraine)
 Source: own development based on the results of the survey.

Living space in rural areas of the Lviv region – 15,924 thousand m², or 28.3% of the total housing stock, it is about 205.4 thousand private rural houses, of which 37.2 thousand uninhabited, while in the Ivano-Frankivsk region living space in rural areas is 12,637 thousand m², or 36.7% of the housing stock - about 172.5 thousand private homes. It should be noted that according to the administrative division in the Lviv region there are 1,850 rural settlements (the largest number in Ukraine), and in the Ivano-Frankivsk – 765 rural settlements [17; 18].

As of January 1, 2016, the share of the rural population in the Lviv region of Ukraine was 989.3 thousand people (39.03%), while in the Ivano-Frankivsk region of Ukraine this figure was 777.8 thousand people (56.26%). Labour resources of the Lviv region of Ukraine number 592 thousand people of the rural working population with an employment rate of 52.9%, while in the Ivano-Frankivsk region of Ukraine this figure is 697 thousand people with an employment rate of 54.1% [17; 18].

According to the results of the study, it is established that the development of agritourism is characterized by high zonation. The main share of agritourism farms is located in the mountainous and foothill zone

of the Carpathians. Almost nine out of ten agritourism farms are concentrated here. Certain agro-recreational units have been formed, i.e. «a set of agro-recreational points grouped around a resort and tourist centre within a certain compact area» [14]. Such well-known agro-recreational hubs in the Carpathian region of Ukraine are Slavske in Lviv, Kosiv, and Yaremche in the Ivano-Frankivsk region. Of the total number of rural estates that provide tourist services, 67.9% are located here [12]. Agritourism farms also operate on a slightly smaller scale in other natural areas, in particular in Zhovkva, Yavoriv, Kamianka-Buzka, Busk, and Zolochiv districts of the Lviv region. Selective surveys of agritourism farms showed that in 2019 in the study region rested about 112.9 thousand people. At the same time, the stay of one tourist on the farm was 2-3 days.

Scientists and specialists in the field of agritourism have developed an integrated indicator of agritourism attractiveness of the regions of Ukraine studied by us according to the following distribution of selected attractiveness criteria:

- 1) wooded area (x_1) – 29 %;
- 2) availability of agricultural land (x_2) – 25 %;
- 3) ecological

purity (x_3) – 23 %; 4) availability of protected areas (x_4) – 17 %; 5) population density (x_5) – 6 % [14; 15].

Taking into account these criteria, the coefficient of favourability of the territory of agritourism development I_c will be equal to:

$$I_c = 0.29(X_1) + 0.25(X_2) + 0.23(X_3) + 0.17(X_4) + 0.06(X_5).$$

In each of the districts of the Lviv and Ivano-Frankivsk regions, a coefficient favourable for the development of agritourism has been determined (Fig. 3).

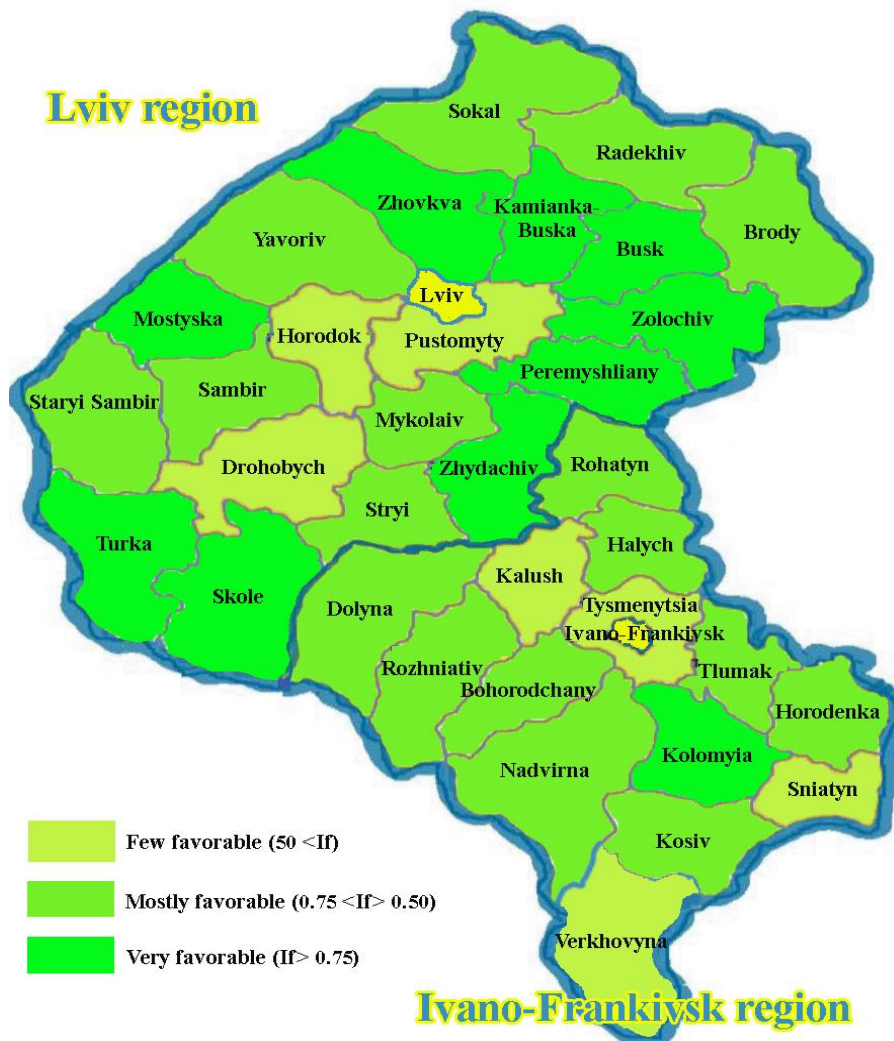


Fig. 3. The cartogram of the grouping of districts of Ivano-Frankivsk and Lviv regions of Ukraine (Carpathian region of Ukraine) by favourable development of agritourism
 Source: own development based on the results of calculation of the integrated indicator of agritourism attractiveness.

It should be noted that objective official data in Ukraine, in particular in the Western region, on the number of farms of rural green tourism and agritourism farms, which both officially and unofficially conduct their business, is not enough. Therefore, in assessing the dynamic and other trends, we used the materials of Ivano-Frankivsk and Lviv regional organizations of the Union for the Promotion of Rural Green Tourism in Ukraine, village councils, the results of questionnaires, and our own research and

observations. It should be noted that more than 92% of farms of rural green tourism and agritourism farms are not officially registered as entrepreneurs, mainly due to high taxation, and therefore they do not undergo the procedure of voluntary categorization, which actually limits their level of activity. The state of development of rural green tourism and agritourism is evidenced by data on their dynamics (Fig. 4).

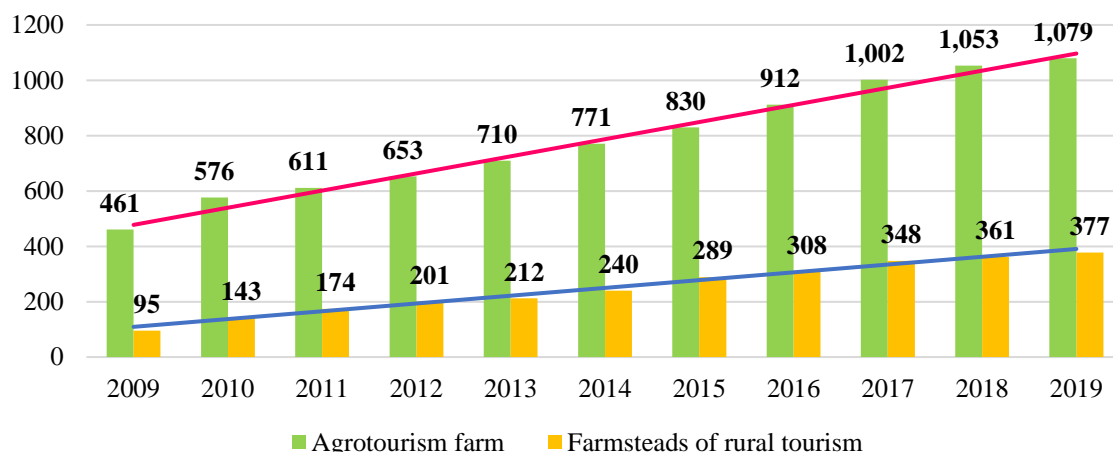


Fig. 4. Dynamics of farmsteads of rural tourism and agritourism farms in the Lviv and Ivano-Frankivsk regions of Ukraine in 2009–2019
 Source: own research.

Note that the dynamics of increasing the number of agritourism farms in the study region of Ukraine is much more active than the dynamics of the market of agritourism services in conditions of low competition. The farmsteads of rural tourism are marked by even faster dynamics (Fig. 4) [15].

The study found that the agritourism business encourages rural communities to pay more attention to rural development, reforming transport infrastructure, educational and medical facilities, restoring local cultural institutions, architectural monuments,

ensuring environmental cleanliness, cluster development, and agritourism business planning etc.

Note that at the present stage, all national organizations of rural tourism in Europe have merged into the European Federation of Farm and Rural Tourism (Eurogites). The main goals of this organization are to promote the development of rural green tourism and targeted investment in rural tourism development projects. Features of the organization of rural green tourism of different countries are given in Table 2.

Table 2. Features of organization of rural green tourism in different countries

Country	Features of the organization of rural green tourism
Italy	agritourism business is closely related to the resort, international specialization astronomical and tasting tourism
Austria	employment of guests in collecting herbs, preparing dairy products, grazing cattle, active mountain, and ecological tourism
Finland	ownerless houses located on the shores of protected lakes, and rivers
Romania	there is a National Association of Rural and Cultural Tourism, specializing in ethnographic and gastronomic tourism
Hungary	tax benefits, international specialization equestrian tourism
Poland	lack of close connection with the traditions of the country - only accommodation and meals
France	seaside farmsteads, horse farms, wine farmsteads, ski chalets, agro-cottages, castles, fishing houses
Spain	rural hotels opened in the Canary and Balearic Islands, as well as in converted monasteries and historic castles
Denmark	operates the National Association of Agritourism, specializing in cycling tourism
Iceland	categorization of rooms into three categories, categorization of guesthouses (A, B, C, D, T, F, G)
Germany	most tourists come to participate in international fairs and trade shows
Great Britain	affordable prices, special discounts for children, NZT advertising, and information catalogues are printed

Source: [5].

It is worth noting the significant state support for programs to involve rural communities in green and agritourism in European countries. The European Union sees rural tourism as the main lever for the economic recovery of its

rural areas. According to experts of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the arrangement in the city of a native of rural areas is 20 times more expensive than creating conditions for his life

and work in the countryside. It is also estimated that the income received from one bed-place is equivalent to the annual income of a farmer from one cow [46].

The classic European traditions and values of rural recreation have been professed by Great Britain for many decades. English tourism has an all-season character: it is very popular to spend not only summer vacations in this country but also to celebrate Christmas. In the UK, there is the National Organization for Rural Tourism and Agritourism, which provides accreditation for homes. The popularity of rural tourism has prompted British farmers to come together to offer a variety of services in their homes. For example, in the southwest of England, old farms are being restored, which are popular with tourists, where the increased level of comfort is combined with partially preserved old furniture [46].

In Europe, the leaders of the rural green tourism industry are Spain and France, where it has long grown into a highly profitable industry. Rural tourism in this country is represented by the National Organization of Holiday Homes and Green Tourism [13].

In Romania, the interests of agro-village owners are represented by the National Association of Rural, Ecological and Cultural Tourism. Rural tourism in this country is developing primarily in the Southern Carpathians and focuses on the same benefits as Ukraine, i.e. the preservation of the natural environment and ethnocultural traditions. Polish legislation clearly distinguishes the basic concepts and principles of rural green tourism from other types of tourist services provided in rural areas, but legally related to business activities. In rural tourism, the Polish government sees a source of development for regions that have natural resources to develop productive sectors of the economy [4]. Polish agritourism maintains its material base due to its connection with the countryside, agriculture, traditional architecture, and interior. The agritourism product offered by Polish farms is often reduced exclusively to accommodation and meals, but we know that the profitability of accommodation facilities

increases with the provision of, for example, other services [14].

In Ukraine, based on the Polish experience, there is also a system of environmental certification and voluntary categorization «Green Estate», which was developed by the All-Ukrainian Union for the Promotion of Rural Green Tourism. The certification scheme is based on the principles of reducing the harmful impact of agritourism facilities on the environment, support of folk traditions and crafts, support of the local economy, developing environmentally friendly types of entertainment and recreation [6]. Based on the study of the experience of different countries, it is possible to identify areas and prospects for the development of rural green tourism in Ukraine while improving the legislative regulation of rural green tourism (Table 3).

The first and so far the only special program known document on rural green tourism in Ukraine is the order of the Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food of Ukraine "On approval of the Action Plan of the Ministry of Agrarian Policy of Ukraine for rural green tourism until 2019" № 24 from 18.01.2017, which provides for the implementation of a number of measures:

- organization of the study of the tourist resource of the regions in order to develop guidelines or the development of rural green tourism;
- promotion through the media and the Internet;
- participation in the development and implementation of special regional programs to support the development of this type of tourism;
- training of specialists for work in the field of rural green tourism, participation in the presentation of the product of rural green tourism in the regions among the population in order to generate demand;
- involvement of farms and private farms in the provision of services in the field of rural green tourism;
- development of a road map for the functioning of rural green tourism in Ukraine and others [17].

Table 3. Directions and prospects of agricultural green tourism development in Ukraine on the basis of world experience

Country with similar experience	Direction of agricultural green tourism development in Ukraine
Germany, Italy, Austria, Poland, Hungary	preferential tax regime
France	joint development of rural areas and tourism with financial support from the private sector and government coordination; division of the district into recreation areas and green areas
Italy	development of agritourism business is connected with the resort, specialization on gastronomic and tasting rounds
Italy, Spain	the emergence of special hotels in the countryside near the monasteries
Austria	employment of guests in collecting herbs, cooking dairy products, grazing cattle
France	seaside farmsteads, horse farms, wine farmsteads, fishing houses
Romania	ethnographic types of rural green tourism

Source: [5].

It should be noted that significant support for rural green tourism is provided by the Union for the Promotion of Rural Green Tourism in Ukraine, the main purpose of which is to meet public economic, social, cultural, and environmental interests by promoting rural green tourism by promoting rural hospitality and related cultural heritage; assistance in increasing the employment of the rural population, providing advisory services in the field of rural green tourism.

CONCLUSIONS

According to the results of the work, it was established that conducting agritourism activities in the studied regions of Ukraine allowed the rural population to receive new and additional types of income, which in turn contributed to improving their living standards and development of rural areas in general. Unique nature, powerful recreational resources, available human resources, and rich culture make attractive rural areas of the Western region of Ukraine, which are developing dynamically with the development of agritourism services.

Thus, we believe that among the main areas of rural green tourism in Ukraine are:

- creation of favourable conditions for obtaining tax benefits and loans for owners of farmsteads;
- advertising of agricultural services, issue of various guides, distribution of various types of agritourism business, including resort

specialization of rural green tourism.

Thus, in the conditions of permanent economic crisis, rural green tourism in Ukraine is becoming a good alternative to expensive foreign resorts and advertised routes, because many citizens of Ukraine will be able to choose for active recreation rural estates of the Ukrainian Carpathians, Podillia, or Dnipro regions of Ukraine.

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