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**Functioning of rural tourism in the context of sustainable development of the  
region: the entrepreneurial aspect of partnership interaction**

**Natalia Trusova,**

Doctor of Economic Sciences, Professor, Professor of the Department of Finance,  
Accounting and Taxation, Dmytro Motornyi Tavria State Agrotechnological  
University, 66 Universytetska St, Zaporizhzhia, 69011, Ukraine  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9773-4534>

**Anastasiia Trusova,**

Assistant of the Department of Economics and Business,  
Dmytro Motornyi Tavria State Agrotechnological  
University, 66 Universytetska St, Zaporizhzhia, 69011, Ukraine  
<https://orcid.org/0009-0008-8154-2456>

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**Abstract.** The article reveals the scientific, theoretical and applied aspects of the functioning of rural tourism in the context of ensuring sustainable development of the region. The current trends in the development of rural tourism are studied in the context of the transformation of the regional economy, the activation of domestic tourism, the greening of economic activity and the increase in the role of territorial communities in ensuring the economic self-sufficiency of rural areas. It is established that the development of rural tourism in modern conditions is accompanied by an increase in the need for diversification of sources of income of the population,



the formation of a competitive tourist environment, modernization of infrastructure and rational use of the natural resource potential of the regions. The need for the formation of an effective organizational and economic mechanism for the development of rural tourism on the principles of sustainability, innovation and regional balance is substantiated. **The purpose** of the article is to study the economic principles of rural tourism in the context of sustainable development of the region and to identify strategic directions for increasing the efficiency of using the tourism potential of rural areas in the context of modern socio-economic transformations. Particular attention is paid to the role of rural tourism in ensuring the economic development of regions, creating new jobs, stimulating entrepreneurial activity of the population, developing local markets for products and services, and increasing the investment attractiveness of territories. **The research methods** are based on the use of a systematic approach to assessing the security of the banking system, methods of comparative analysis, statistical generalization, economic modeling and graphic visualization of research results. To assess the trends in the development of digital banking and the level of cyber threats, methods of dynamic analysis of statistical indicators were used. **The results** of the study showed that in recent years there has been a gradual increase in demand for rural tourism services, the intensification of the development of local tourist clusters and the expansion of the range of tourist services in rural regions. It was established that the development of rural tourism contributes to the growth of incomes of the local population, an increase in the level of employment, the development of small and medium-sized businesses, as well as the preservation of the historical and cultural heritage and natural environment of the territories. It was proven that the effective functioning of rural tourism requires the improvement of transport, information and digital infrastructure, the development of marketing mechanisms for the promotion of tourist products, the attraction of investment resources and the formation of a modern system of state support for tourism activities. At the same time, it was determined that in the conditions of sustainable development of regions, the integration of environmental, economic and



social components of the functioning of rural tourism, the implementation of the principles of the circular economy, support for local producers and the development of environmentally friendly forms of management are of great importance. Strategic directions for the development of rural tourism are proposed, which include the formation of a multi-level system of support for tourism activities, the development of tourism infrastructure, the digitalization of tourism services, the improvement of regional tourism policy, and the intensification of cooperation between local governments, business, and territorial communities. **The conclusions** show that the development of rural tourism on the basis of sustainable development contributes to increasing the competitiveness of the regional economy, ensures the economic stability of rural areas, stimulates innovative activity and creates the prerequisites for the effective use of the tourism potential of regions. The implementation of the proposed development directions will allow to increase the level of economic activity of rural areas, strengthen the financial capacity of territorial communities and ensure long-term socio-economic stability of regions. Further research should be directed at the development of adaptive models of management of rural tourism development, improving mechanisms for investment support of tourism activities and forming innovative instruments for stimulating the sustainable development of rural areas.

**Keywords:** rural tourism, sustainable development, regional economy, tourism potential, rural areas, investments, tourism infrastructure, competitiveness, regional development, greening.

**Функціонування сільського туризму в умовах сталого розвитку регіону:  
підприємницький аспект партнерської взаємодії**

**Трусова Наталя Вікторівна,**

доктор економічних наук, професор, професор кафедри фінансів, обліку та оподаткування, Таврійський державний агротехнологічний університет імені Дмитра Моторного, вул. Університетська, 66, Запоріжжя, 69011, Україна

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9773-4534>



**Трусова Анастасія Олександрівна,**

асистент кафедри економіки і бізнесу, Таврійський державний  
агротехнологічний університет імені Дмитра Моторного,  
вул. Університетська, 66, Запоріжжя, 69011, Україна

<https://orcid.org/0009-0008-8154-2456>

**Анотація.** У статті розкрито науково-теоретичні та прикладні аспекти функціонування сільського туризму в умовах забезпечення сталого розвитку регіону. Досліджено сучасні тенденції розвитку сільського туризму в контексті трансформації регіональної економіки, активізації внутрішнього туризму, екологізації господарської діяльності та підвищення ролі територіальних громад у забезпеченні економічної самодостатності сільських територій. Встановлено, що розвиток сільського туризму в сучасних умовах супроводжується зростанням потреби у диверсифікації джерел доходів населення, формуванні конкурентоспроможного туристичного середовища, модернізації інфраструктури та раціональному використанні природно-ресурсного потенціалу регіонів. Обґрунтовано необхідність формування ефективного організаційно-економічного механізму розвитку сільського туризму на засадах сталості, інноваційності та регіональної збалансованості. **Метою статті** є дослідження економічних засад функціонування сільського туризму в умовах сталого розвитку регіону та визначення стратегічних напрямів підвищення ефективності використання туристичного потенціалу сільських територій в умовах сучасних соціально-економічних трансформацій. Особливу увагу приділено ролі сільського туризму у забезпеченні економічного розвитку регіонів, формуванні нових робочих місць, стимулюванні підприємницької активності населення, розвитку локальних ринків продукції та послуг, а також підвищенні інвестиційної привабливості територій. **Методи дослідження** базуються на використанні



системного підходу до оцінювання економічних засад функціонування сільського туризму, методів порівняльного аналізу, статистичного узагальнення, економічного моделювання та графічної візуалізації результатів дослідження. Для оцінки тенденцій розвитку сільського туризму та визначення рівня туристичної активності регіонів використано методи динамічного аналізу статистичних показників. **Результати дослідження** засвідчили, що протягом останніх років спостерігається поступове зростання попиту на послуги сільського туризму, активізація розвитку локальних туристичних кластерів та розширення спектра туристичних послуг у сільських регіонах. Встановлено, що розвиток сільського туризму сприяє зростанню доходів місцевого населення, підвищенню рівня зайнятості, розвитку малого та середнього підприємництва, а також збереженню історико-культурної спадщини та природного середовища територій. Доведено, що ефективне функціонування сільського туризму потребує удосконалення транспортної, інформаційної та цифрової інфраструктури, розвитку маркетингових механізмів просування туристичних продуктів, залучення інвестиційних ресурсів та формування сучасної системи державної підтримки туристичної діяльності. Водночас визначено, що в умовах сталого розвитку регіонів важливого значення набуває інтеграція екологічних, економічних та соціальних компонентів функціонування сільського туризму, впровадження принципів циркулярної економіки, підтримка локальних виробників та розвиток екологічно орієнтованих форм господарювання. Запропоновано стратегічні напрями розвитку сільського туризму, які передбачають формування багаторівневої системи підтримки туристичної діяльності, розвиток туристичної інфраструктури, цифровізацію туристичних послуг, удосконалення регіональної туристичної політики та активізацію співпраці між органами місцевого самоврядування, бізнесом і територіальними громадами. **Висновки** свідчать, що розвиток сільського туризму на засадах сталого розвитку сприяє підвищенню конкурентоспроможності регіональної



економіки, забезпечує економічну стабільність сільських територій, стимулює інноваційну активність та формує передумови для ефективного використання туристичного потенціалу регіонів. Реалізація запропонованих напрямів розвитку дозволить підвищити рівень економічної активності сільських територій, зміцнити фінансову спроможність територіальних громад та забезпечити довгострокову соціально-економічну стабільність регіонів. Подальші дослідження доцільно спрямувати на розробку адаптивних моделей управління розвитком сільського туризму, удосконалення механізмів інвестиційного забезпечення туристичної діяльності та формування інноваційних інструментів стимулювання сталого розвитку сільських територій.

**Ключові слова:** сільський туризм, сталий розвиток, регіональна економіка, туристичний потенціал, сільські території, інвестиції, туристична інфраструктура, конкурентоспроможність, регіональний розвиток, екологізація.

**Problem statement.** The modern development of the regional economy is accompanied by the need to find new sources of economic growth, increase the level of employment of the population and form effective mechanisms for using the natural resource potential of the territories. The problem of ensuring the sustainable development of rural regions, which in conditions of economic instability, demographic crisis and increased migration processes require the implementation of new business models, is of particular relevance. One of the promising areas for activating the economic development of rural areas is rural tourism.

Rural tourism is an important tool for diversifying economic activity, ensuring the combination of economic, social and environmental interests of the development of territories. Its functioning contributes to the creation of new jobs, the development of small businesses, the preservation of cultural heritage and the increase in the investment attractiveness of regions. At the same time, the effectiveness of rural tourism



development depends on the level of infrastructure, financial support, institutional environment and state policy in the field of regional development.

In the conditions of post-war economic recovery of Ukraine, the development of rural tourism acquires strategic importance, as it allows to activate domestic tourism, ensure economic self-sufficiency of territorial communities and form new points of economic growth. That is why the study of the economic principles of the functioning of rural tourism in the conditions of sustainable development of the region is relevant and requires in-depth scientific substantiation.

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** The issue of rural tourism development and its impact on ensuring sustainable development of regions is the subject of active scientific research both in domestic and foreign economic science. In the context of transformation of the regional economy, strengthening of globalization processes, environmental challenges and development of local forms of entrepreneurship, rural tourism is considered as one of the priority instruments for diversifying the economic activity of rural areas, increasing their investment attractiveness and ensuring socio-economic stability.

Theoretical and applied aspects of the development of tourism are highlighted in the work of V. Kyfyak, who substantiates its economic essence and determines the role of tourism in ensuring regional development [3]. O. Lyubitseva considers the tourism market as a complex system of interaction of economic entities and emphasizes the need to form a competitive tourism environment [5]. M. Malska and N. Kudla focus on the features of the functioning of rural tourism, its socio-economic significance and role in the development of local entrepreneurship [4; 6].

Foreign studies by B. Bramwell and B. Lane, devoted to the formation of theoretical foundations of sustainable tourism development and determining the need to combine economic, environmental and social components in the process of developing tourism activities [9]. Further development of the concept of sustainable tourism was reflected in the works of R. Sharpley, who studied the problems of integrating the principles of sustainable development into the system of tourism policy



and regional management [12]. Modern scientists also pay considerable attention to the study of the transformation of rural tourism in the context of digitalization of the economy and the development of innovative technologies for managing tourist flows [7]. Modern studies emphasize the need to develop rural tourism on the basis of greening economic activities, supporting local communities and implementing the concept of a circular economy. In particular, the work of W. An and S. Alarcón systematizes approaches to ensuring the sustainable development of rural tourism and identifies key factors for its effective functioning [8]. The work of Z. Janjua, G. Krishnapillai and M. Rahman examines the features of the development of rural tourist estates and their impact on ensuring sustainable development of territories [10]. At the same time, J. Tirado Ballesteros and M. Hernández Hernández analyze the problems of managing the development of rural tourism and justify the need to form effective mechanisms of interaction between the state, business and territorial communities [13].

**Highlighting previously unresolved parts of the general problem.** Despite the significant number of scientific works devoted to the problems of rural tourism development, the issues of forming an effective organizational and economic mechanism for the functioning of rural tourism in the context of sustainable regional development remain insufficiently studied. The problems of integrating the ecological, economic and social components of rural development, improving state support instruments for tourism activities, developing digital tourism infrastructure and increasing the investment attractiveness of regions are becoming particularly relevant. Approaches to assessing the impact of rural tourism on the level of socio-economic development of territorial communities, forming a competitive tourist environment and ensuring the effective use of the natural resource potential of rural areas also remain insufficiently substantiated. In addition, modern transformation processes associated with the digitalization of the economy, the development of domestic tourism, the post-war reconstruction of regions and the implementation of the concept



of sustainable development require improving approaches to the functioning of rural tourism as an important factor in the economic development of regions.

**Formulation of the objectives of the article (task statement).** The purpose of the article is to study the economic principles of rural tourism in the context of sustainable development of the region, to substantiate strategic directions for the development of tourism activities, and to identify mechanisms for increasing the efficiency of using the tourism potential of rural areas.

To achieve the set goal, the following research tasks were defined:

- to investigate the economic essence of rural tourism and its role in ensuring sustainable development of regions;
- to systematize the main factors influencing the development of rural tourism in modern socio-economic conditions;
- to analyze the trends in the development of rural tourism and the features of the functioning of the tourist infrastructure of rural areas;
- to assess the impact of rural tourism on the level of employment of the population, the development of entrepreneurship and the economic activity of the regions;
- to determine the features of the formation of the organizational and economic mechanism for the development of rural tourism;
- to substantiate the directions of improving state support for the development of rural tourism in conditions of sustainable development.

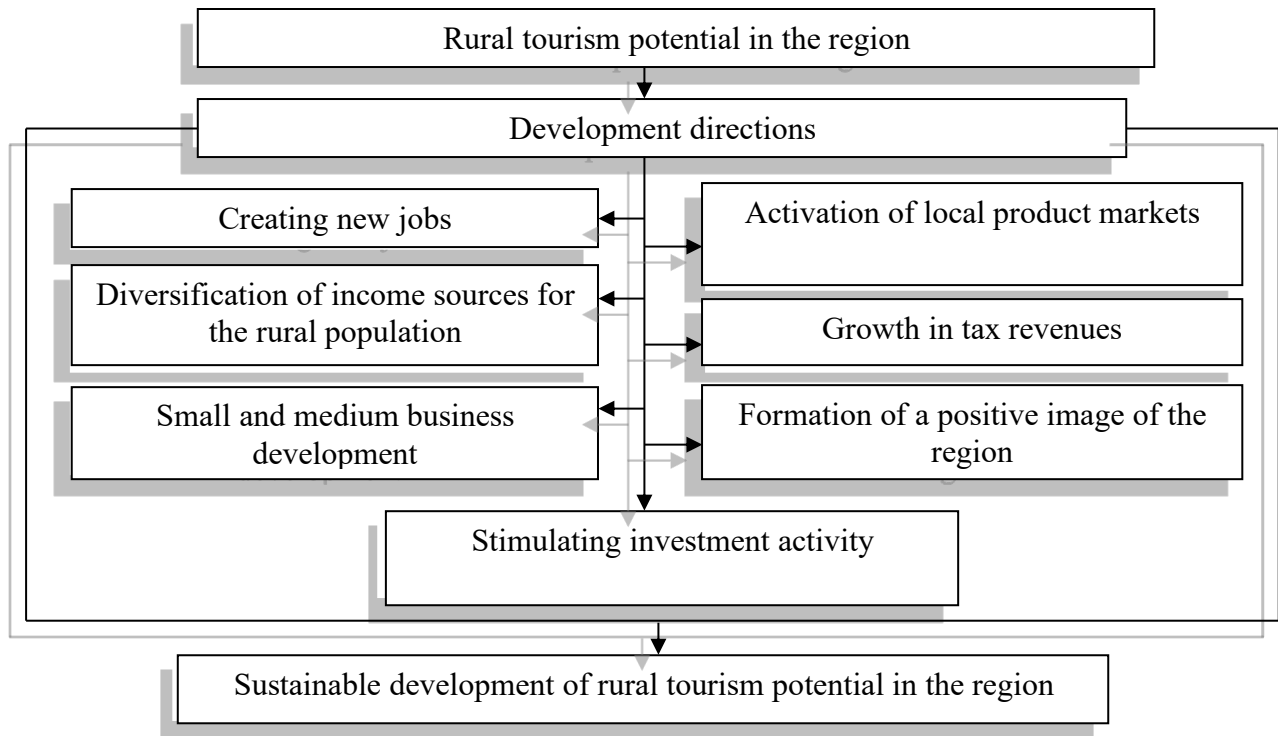
**Presentation of the main material of the study.** In the modern conditions of regional economic development, rural tourism is one of the priority areas for activating the socio-economic potential of rural areas. Its functioning ensures diversification of sources of income of the population, promotes the development of small business, stimulates employment of the population and creates prerequisites for the effective use of the natural resource potential of the regions [3; 4]. In the context of ensuring sustainable development, rural tourism is considered as an important tool for integrating economic, environmental and social interests of territorial communities, which allows ensuring balanced development of the regional environment [9].



The economic essence of rural tourism is to form a system of tourist services based on the use of natural, historical and cultural, ethnographic and economic resources of rural areas. Unlike traditional types of tourism, rural tourism is focused on combining recreational activities with the involvement of tourists in local cultural traditions, agricultural production and an environmentally friendly lifestyle [5]. That is why the development of rural tourism contributes not only to the economic growth of territories, but also to the preservation of cultural heritage and the natural environment [12].

Modern scientific approaches define rural tourism as an important element of the regional economic system, which forms a multiplier effect for the development of related sectors of the economy. In particular, the functioning of tourist farms stimulates the development of transport, trade, catering, folk crafts, production of ecological products and local services [6]. At the same time, the formation of a competitive tourist environment requires the development of modern infrastructure, improvement of logistics and active implementation of digital technologies in the tourism management system [11].

In our opinion, rural tourism in the region is a specific type of tourism activity carried out in rural areas and is based on the use of the natural, cultural, ethnographic and economic potential of the territory. Its economic essence lies in the formation of additional value through the provision of tourist services, the organization of recreation, the sale of local products and the development of entrepreneurial activity of the population (Fig. 1).



**Figure 1. Sustainable development of rural tourism potential  
in the region**

*Source: developed by the authors*

An important aspect of the functioning of rural tourism is its multiplier effect, which ensures the activation of related sectors of the economy (transport, trade, food industry, folk crafts and the service sector), which is based on the principles of sustainable development and involves balancing the economic, social and environmental interests of the region by determining economic efficiency and self-sufficiency, rational use of natural resources, ensuring environmental safety of territories, social development, preservation of cultural heritage, innovation and digitalization of tourist services, expanding partnerships between the state, business and community. In modern conditions, sustainable development of rural tourism involves the integration of the concept of "green economy", the use of environmentally friendly technologies and support for local production.

The effectiveness of rural tourism in the region is determined by a combination of internal and external factors (Table 1).



*Table 1*

**The main factors for the development of rural tourism in the region**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Impact characteristics</b>
Natural resource potential	Forms the tourist attractiveness of the territory
Infrastructural provision	Determines the availability of tourist services
Investment activity	Contributes to the modernization of tourist infrastructure
Government support	Provides stimulation of the development of the industry
Digitalization	Expands opportunities for the promotion of tourist products
Environmental safety	Forms conditions for sustainable use of resources
Social activity of the community	Influences the level of development of local entrepreneurship

*Source: developed by the authors based on data [8; 10; 4; 11]*

One of the key factors in the development of rural tourism in the region is infrastructure. The low level of transport accessibility, insufficient development of digital infrastructure and limited financial resources hinder the development of tourism in many regions of Ukraine. Also, research into factors affecting the effectiveness of rural tourism is of great importance. One of the factors is the natural resource potential of the region, which determines the tourist attractiveness of the territory and forms the basis for the development of recreational activities. The presence of natural landscapes, forests, reservoirs, nature reserves and historical and cultural sites is the basis for the development of tourist destinations [8]. At the same time, the low level of infrastructure, insufficient development of the transport network and limited investment resources hinder the development of tourism in many rural regions of Ukraine.

Analysis of the dynamics of tourism activity in rural areas of Ukraine during 2018-2024 was characterized by uneven dynamics, which was due to the impact of pandemic restrictions, military operations, transformation of the domestic tourism market and increased demand for local tourism services (Table 2). At the same time, rural tourism became one of the most adaptive segments of the tourism sector, as it was focused mainly on domestic tourism, ecological recreation and individual tourist routes.



*Table 2*

**Dynamics of development of rural tourism and tourism infrastructure  
in rural areas of Ukraine in 2018-2024**

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
Number of agro-estate farms, units	1625	1740	1580	1695	1420	1650	1835
Number of domestic tourists, thousand people	1240	1365	920	1185	760	1105	1380
Volume of income from rural tourism, million UAH	486	575	421	563	398	655	842
Number of people employed in rural tourism, thousand people	12,4	13,1	11,2	12,6	10,3	13,8	15,4
Number of tourist clusters in rural regions, units	18	22	24	28	26	31	37
Level of digitalization of tourist services, %	21	27	39	48	56	68	74

*Source: compiled by the authors based on data [1; 2; 7]*

The analysis showed that in 2018-2019 there was a steady increase in the number of agro-estate and domestic tourist flows, which was due to the increasing popularity of ecological and rural tourism among the population. At the same time, in 2020 there was a significant reduction in tourist activity due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the introduction of quarantine restrictions, which negatively affected the functioning of the tourist infrastructure of rural areas. Despite the crisis, a partial recovery of the tourism market was observed in 2021, and in 2023-2024 there was an intensification of domestic tourism and an increase in demand for rural recreation services. A particularly important trend was the increase in the level of digitalization of tourist services from 21% in 2018 to 74% in 2024, which indicates the active introduction of online booking platforms, digital marketing, information services and social networks into the system of rural tourism. The use of modern information platforms, geo-information monitoring systems, digital services for managing tourist flows and online advertising allows to increase the efficiency of the functioning of tourist facilities and provide access to international tourist markets [14; 15]. In addition, the introduction of digital technologies contributes to increasing the level of



transparency of the tourism business and the formation of a positive image of the regions.

To assess the socio-economic impact of rural tourism on the development of regions, indicators of employment of the population, entrepreneurial activity and economic efficiency of the functioning of rural areas were analyzed (Table 3).

*Table 3*

**The impact of rural tourism development on the economic activity of the regions of Ukraine in 2018-2024**

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>
Number of small businesses in the field of rural tourism, units	2150	2385	2240	2515	2180	2690	3015
Share of rural tourism in the structure of rural income, %	4,2	4,8	3,9	4,7	3,5	5,1	6,3
Tax revenues from tourism activities to local budgets, UAH million	112	126	97	121	86	144	189
Employment level of the population in the tourism sector of rural areas, %	3,1	3,4	2,9	3,2	2,7	3,8	4,4
Volume of investments in the development of tourism infrastructure, UAH million	325	418	286	395	244	537	684
Number of newly created tourist facilities, units	145	168	102	156	94	187	243

*Source: compiled by the authors based on data [1; 2; 7]*

The data of Table 3 indicate that the development of rural tourism has a significant positive impact on the economic activity of regions and the financial capacity of territorial communities. In particular, in 2024 the number of small business entities in the field of rural tourism increased by 40.2% compared to 2018, which indicates the intensification of the entrepreneurial initiative of the population and the development of local business. At the same time, there is a positive trend in tax revenues to local budgets, which in 2024 amounted to 189 million UAH compared to 112 million UAH in 2018.

An important result of the development of rural tourism is an increase in the employment rate of the population in rural areas. The analysis showed that the share



of those employed in the tourism sector increased from 3.1% in 2018 to 4.4% in 2024, which confirms the role of tourism as an important factor in reducing unemployment and curbing labor migration of the population. In addition, the increase in investment in tourism infrastructure indicates an increase in the investment attractiveness of rural areas and the formation of new points of economic growth of regions. The results of the study confirm that the development of rural tourism is an important tool for ensuring sustainable development of regions, as it contributes to the activation of entrepreneurial activity, the formation of new jobs, the growth of local budget revenues and the increase in the competitiveness of rural areas.

At the same time, modern conditions for the development of rural tourism require improving the organizational and economic mechanism of its functioning by expanding digital infrastructure and activating investment activities in the field of tourism services. An effective organizational and economic mechanism for the functioning of rural tourism in the region should include the following main elements: state regulation of tourism activities, financial and credit support, investment support, tax incentives, marketing promotion of tourism products, development of digital booking and advertising platforms, training of human resources, institutional support of territorial communities. The mechanism should include a system of economic, financial, institutional and managerial instruments aimed at ensuring the effective development of tourism activities and, in the context of the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine, can become an important tool for the development of rural tourism, support for local businesses and the restoration of economic activity in rural areas.

At the same time, an important role in ensuring the effective functioning of rural tourism in the region is played by state policy aimed at supporting small businesses, stimulating investment activity and developing tourism infrastructure in a cluster model of tourist destinations, which allows combining tourism enterprises, farms, local producers and local governments into a single system of economic interaction to ensure sustainable development of regions and promotes economic



growth of territories, increasing employment levels, reducing rural migration, developing local infrastructure, preserving cultural and historical heritage, greening economic activities, and strengthening the financial capacity of territorial communities [10; 14; 15]. The use of a cluster approach allows increasing the level of coordination between tourism entities, ensuring the effective use of the resource potential of territories and forming a competitive tourism product.

One of the priority areas for improving state support for the development of rural tourism is the formation of modern regulatory and legal support for tourism activities. Of great importance is the improvement of mechanisms for state regulation of the functioning of agritourism farms, simplification of procedures for registering tourism entities, harmonization of national legislation with European standards and creation of a favorable institutional environment for the development of tourism business [5]. In addition, it is necessary to form state programs to support rural tourism, which would take into account the peculiarities of socio-economic development of regions and the level of resource provision of territorial communities.

An important area of state support is the improvement of financial and investment support for the development of rural tourism. In modern conditions, a significant part of tourism entities operate in conditions of limited access to financial resources, which hinders the modernization of tourism infrastructure and the introduction of innovative technologies [6]. In this regard, it is advisable to introduce mechanisms for preferential lending to agritourism farms, compensation of interest rates on loans, provision of grant support for the development of tourism projects and stimulation of attracting private investment in the development of tourism infrastructure. State support should also be aimed at modernizing the road and transport system, developing digital platforms for booking tourist services, and ensuring access to modern information and communication technologies in the field of tourism.

In the context of ensuring sustainable development of regions, it is important to introduce environmentally oriented mechanisms for state support for rural tourism, which involves stimulating the use of environmentally safe technologies, supporting



organic production, developing ecotourism and forming a system for rational use of the natural resource potential of territories [11]. At the same time, it is necessary to strengthen control over compliance with environmental standards in the field of tourism and introduce mechanisms for environmental monitoring of tourist areas.

An important direction for improving state support is the formation of an integrated system for managing the development of rural tourism at the level of territorial communities. In modern conditions, the effectiveness of tourism development largely depends on the level of interaction between local governments, business, public organizations and the local population [10]. Improving state support for the development of rural tourism in the context of sustainable development should be based on a comprehensive combination of economic, institutional, environmental and innovative management mechanisms. The implementation of the proposed areas will contribute to increasing the competitiveness of rural areas, activating entrepreneurial activity, developing tourism infrastructure and ensuring long-term socio-economic development of regions [13].

**Conclusions.** Thus, rural tourism is an important element in ensuring sustainable development of regions and an effective tool for activating the economic potential of rural areas. Its functioning contributes to the diversification of sources of income of the population, the development of small businesses, the creation of jobs and the increase in the investment attractiveness of regions. It has been proven that the effective development of rural tourism depends on a comprehensive combination of economic, institutional, infrastructural and environmental factors. Of particular importance is the formation of a modern organizational and economic mechanism for the development of rural tourism, which should be based on the principles of sustainable development, digitalization, greening and partnership between the state, business and territorial communities. Promising areas of further research are the development of models for assessing the effectiveness of rural tourism development, the analysis of investment support for tourism activities and the formation of mechanisms for integrating rural tourism into the system of regional economic policy.



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