

THE ROLE OF RURAL TOURISM IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RURAL ECONOMY

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ABSTRACT:

Purpose: The scientific justification of ways to eliminate high unemployment in rural areas, which is an important reason for the development of the regional economy. **Design/methodology/approach:** The research work is based on the methods of quantitative and comparative analysis and the method of economic-statistical analysis is used in the calculations. **Findings:** It is one of the main conditions for granting the small loans to the rural population along with the involvement of individual investors for the purpose of developing rural tourism in Azerbaijan. It is important to work out various methods in the direction of solution of social infrastructure elements, the social problems of the village including shortcomings in roads. The regular arrangement of city residents' rest in villages will give a serious impetus to the development domestic and foreign tourism and as a result the economic situation of the village improves, rural area with threat of disintegration are being renovated. Based on the study, we can say that, compared with 2012, the cost of tickets sold to foreigners in 2018 increased by 3,2 times, the total income of travel agencies and tour operators-1,7 times, and total expenses-1,88 times. The development of rural tourism results with the revenue of regions citizens, with the unemployment cancellation and with the opening new jobs. At that time there is a need for cadres with the provision of special trained specialists. So, by providing highly skilled staff in the rural tourism not only the development of rural economy but also the whole state economy is growing. **Research limitations/ implications:** The study showed that the expansion of rural tourism in Azerbaijan, which is one of the types of tourism, will give an impetus to the economic development of the state and will allow it to be included in the list of profitable destinations. **Practical implications:** A balanced approach to expanding rural tourism weakens the urban burden in the tourism sector and increases the purchasing power of tourists for tourism products. **Originality/value:** Achieving an increase in the share of rural tourism in tourism revenues and the development of special tourism products in accordance with the hospitality, customs and traditions of the countryside.

Keywords: rural tourism, rural economy, agro tourism, infrastructure, the economic development of rural areas

JEL classification: L83

1. INTRODUCTION

The economic downturn, terrorism, conflicts, epidemics, etc. did not go without problems and tourism, which is still considered one of the most prosperous sectors of the world economy. Many who expected a crash in tourism related to these factors did not take place. Travelers continued to travel and rest; individuals, enterprises, and governments have adapted to the situation. A major turning point was reached, part of which was recognition of the sector, the importance of which was often underestimated. Despite this process, tourism demand made people travel to countries of the world where they liked to relax. Yu. V. Aleskerov's research has shown that the main problem that exists in the agricultural economy is the support of agriculture at the state level and under natural, climatic and political conditions (Aleskerova, 2015: 24-31). A tourism product is a product in the form of a predefined set of tourism services that are useful and usually includes the following components: basic services, additional services and related services. The tourism product is sold to the client in the form of a tour, and the tour is offered to the client as a whole, as a product of the tour operator's activity, focused on a specific route and for specific dates.

The article addresses the issue associated with the underdevelopment of various types of tourism in Azerbaijan, and based on the practice of world countries in this industry, the economy. One of the main indicators for the development of tourism is the increase in the quantity and quality of local jobs in villages created to support tourism, which contributes to the improvement of economic indicators for the development of the region and supports the increase in wages, and the standard of living of the population.

Tourism development calls almost every region of the country its priority, but few can boast of real successes in this matter. Meanwhile, specialists in the field of territorial development believe that the regions need to learn how to invest and earn money on tourism using modern business tools, including attractiveness of tourists to the regions.

Rural tourism the kind of domestic and foreign tourism is one of the main directions of the development of agrarian economy in Azerbaijan. Rural tourism, in generally, reflects the rest of the citizens in the rural areas and for this purpose the guest houses equipped with the special equipment are established in their own areas of the villagers. In this case the villagers do not achieve the goal of earning income from the guest houses in rural areas where the tourists are temporarily located.

The farmers' activity on the organization of tourists residences in their own residential areas is to provide the guest houses with the special equipment. This kind of activity, i.e. the organization of the rests of tourists in the rural populations' own areas, is one of the entrepreneurial activities is used in different variants and this also allows to increase revenue of this kind of activity. For this purpose the farmers who plan to get income from the entrepreneurial activities in the rural areas and those who want to organize this kind of activity they must absolutely go through state registration.

2. REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

The research shows that in order to develop a professional tourist specialist in the future, it is necessary to focus on the content of the educational process, to focus it on the development of professional competence, the development of values and attitudes to people (Natalya, 2020: p.40-52).

Many tourism industry companies periodically experience difficulties and are uncertain about the future. In an ever-changing competitive business environment, the need for forecasting demand is growing, which is the basis for effective planning. Tourism demand is expressed in terms of the number of tourists arriving from the country of origin in the country of destination or expenses incurred in the host country. Archer B. notes that forecasting the demand for tourism is just as important as its outcome and explains the difficulties in forecasting the demand for tourism and the consequences of poor forecasting; it suggests different levels of demand (Archer, 1984: 517-518).

Professionals involved in the hospitality industry need to know the national characteristics of tourists, their habits, tastes, the most acceptable forms of leisure. The three most basic distinctions are domestic (within country of resident), outbound, and inbound tourism. But this is rather trivial given that tourists can much more valuably be classified by their budgets as well as by their purposes for travel and by their psychological propensities (Bull, 1995:295-236).

The result of the production of a tourism company is a tourism product, which is an abstract consumer product consisting of goods that have both tangible (tourist goods, facilities, infrastructure) and intangible (services, social environment, climatic conditions) forms. The combination of all these benefits into one concept of "tourist product" is due to the fact that the consumer cannot satisfy a variety of recreational needs only due to one type of tourist goods or services. This is possible only in a complex and in a specific environment. Therefore, a tourist product should be considered as a complex of goods, as a single and indivisible whole. If any benefits are absent in this complex, then the usefulness of the tour product may significantly decrease (Crooch, 1992:165).

In his research, Ante S.A. wrote that to attract tourists from other countries of the world we have to act like American gambling companies, which have achieved great success in Macau in recent years, face growing competition from casinos appearing in Asia in order to attract Chinese high rollers and tourists (Ante, 2012:52-65).

Weak development of rural tourism in Azerbaijan is due to some shortcomings in the state of economy (İsmayilov, 2018: 2-6). The rural tourism can be formed in the shape of agrarian and farmer types. The agrarian rural tourism is intended with the intense relations activity with agriculture as a tourist. It is necessary to take part in some holidays which is typical for those areas, to visit the historical places of the village, to go to the museums and other special places of the village. These are directly related with the local traditions and with the production of agricultural products.

The farmer tourism implies the various actions related with the activity of certain farms which organized in the rural areas. The high unemployment in rural areas can be attributed to the basic reasons of development of the farmer tourism and it leads to the development of labor productivity. As a result of the increase in agricultural capital the labor productivity develops (Desyatova, 2017: 78-96). Thus agrarian and farmer tourism are the similar models in their formation and development. It can be used as a synonym if needed.

In some countries in order to attract tourists to the historical places, to the historical monuments etc. located in the rural areas and to arrange tourist travelling to picnic, to those historical places is popular and it is considered one of the kinds of tourism.

Currently, the boundaries of the concept of “tourist infrastructure” are vague, because formulated an integral set of essential features that distinguish this object or a class of objects (phenomena) from all similar to them. Often, tourism infrastructure is considered as a synonym for the tourism industry, recreational infrastructure, and the material and technical base of tourism. His uncertainty complicates the understanding of the essence of the most important resource factor in the organization and development of tourism and recreation activities - tourism infrastructure. It is impossible to correctly organize its statistics. We made an attempt to summarize the methodological studies of the tourist infrastructure and formulate its concept, having previously established the functional features, properties and composition. This uncertainty complicates the understanding of the essence of the most important resource factor in the organization and development of tourism and recreation activities - tourism infrastructure.

It is impossible to correctly organize its statistics. In his research, Kosmanev made an attempt to generalize methodological studies of tourist infrastructure and formulate its concept, having previously established functional features, properties and composition. The idea of the composition of the tourist infrastructure is different, while there are complex and fragmentary options. An example of the complex composition of tourist infrastructure: includes hotel services (the totality of all accommodation facilities for the temporary stay of tourists), transport services (mobile transport means, stationary devices of all kinds transport, legal conditions for passenger transportation), catering, entertainment and entertainment and sports and fitness services, excursion services, financial services, communication facilities and systems, production of souvenirs and handicrafts, tourism and sports products, retail, consumer services (Kosmanev, 2012: 5-12).

Although the transport industry provides the link between tourism generating and destination regions the industry's role as an agent in destination development has been largely overlooked. If the ability of tourists to travel to preferred destinations is inhibited by inefficiencies in the transport system there is some likelihood that they will seek alternative destinations. This paper outlines a transport cost model that identifies the significance of transport as a factor in destination development as well as in the selection of destinations by intending tourists (Prideaux, 2000: 53-63).

Seetaram studied the possible impact of the passenger tax, a tax on air travel, on the demand for outbound tourism from the UK. Typically, the transportation aspect of research in tourism economics is dealt with in tourism demand literature. Authors treat transportation as a cost which hinders demand. It is accounted for by the inclusion of proxies for transport in standard tourism demand models with the aim to compute transport elasticities, which measure the responsiveness of demand to changes in cost of travel (Seetaram, 2016: 203-206).

The problem of service quality in tourism is one of the most urgent in the development of this sector of the national economy. In the market of tourist services, quality of service is the most powerful weapon in the competition. Tourists, satisfied with the service in hotels, restaurants, service bureaus, sanatoriums, tourist complexes of various regions, become their active propagandists. They visit these places many times, contributing to an increase in flows and creating a high reputation for the areas they like. The quality of service significantly contributes to the economic efficiency of tourism enterprises (Fernandez, 1985).

For example in Ireland (in Irish), the tourists' most travelling areas are considered the region that there are ancient times monument- dolmens (stone graves) ancient

graveyards—cemetaries there (Electronic resource: <https://www.google.com/search?rlz>). In Norway in the coastal area the founds-the natural tourism objects, acting the most catalyst role in the development of rural tourism have been the most travelling area of tourists (Electronic resource: <https://www.google.com/search?rlz>). In Germany in the coastal area the founds marketing forces are more interested in reifying in the rural-scape what tourists originating from the urban areas want to see (Balabanova, 2011: 57-59). Canada can be called a country with amazing nature and large modern cities. The neighborhood of huge megacities and wildlife annually attracts a huge number of tourists to Canada. Be sure to visit this unique country that is simply breathtaking (Electronic resource: https://studbooks.net/660890/turizm/razvitie_turizma_kanade).

Tourist infrastructure in the territory of the Czech Republic is located in one of the oldest resorts in Europe-Karlovy Vary (formerly Karlsbad). This fact testifies not only to the intrinsic value of spa treatment in the Czech Republic, but also to the fact that this country has many years of experience serving tourists, that along with the state tourism development program is the most important prerequisite for creating a modern tourist infrastructure (Electronic resource: <https://studbooks.Net/752244/turizm/>). Istanbul is one of the most important tourist centers in Turkey. In Istanbul, there are hundreds of hotels and a huge variety of attractions. Istanbul- the former capital of Byzantium will find something to boast in front of tourists. Istanbul is the home to the Hagia Sophia Museum, Topkapi Palace, the Istanbul Museum. Sofia Cathedral attracts many tourists to Istanbul. This monument is located in the heart of the old city. The building has gone through a lot of events. Nearby is the Topkapi Palace, which means "Palace of the Cannon Gates" (Electronic resource: <http://worldluxrealty.com/turizm-v-turcii>). The income sector of the Italian economy, based on the use of recreational resources. Italy is the fifth country in the world in attendance and the fourth in profit from tourism. The estimated annual income from tourism is \$ 10 million. The share in GDP is 12%. According to statistics from the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) on international tourist traffic in 2017, Italy, with 58,3 million visitors, ranked fifth after China, the United States, Spain and France (Electronic resource: <https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/>).

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Travel spending information is extremely stingy. But it is known that in the UK they make up 19% of the average annual family budget of the British, at the same time on the second line the cost of food and housing. In Germany, a similar indicator is 16%, in France and the United States - 12%. The average American family spends about \$ 4,000 a year on travel, as much as she spends on medicine or on food, drinks and tobacco combined and twice as much as the purchase of clothing.

Established at one level, the total amount of income from international tourism does not mean its stability in a number of regions of the world. Thus, in the last three years (2014 - 2016), there has been a significant decline in revenues from international tourism in France (by 27.3%, minus \$ 15.866 billion), Italy (by 11.5%, minus \$ 5.242 billion, United Kingdom (by 14.9%, minus \$ 6.924 billion), Turkey (by 36.6%, minus \$ 10.809 billion) and a number of other countries in the European continent and North Africa (in Egypt, the drop in revenues from international tourism is 2.6 times) (Alexandrova, 2002: 7-8).

Ferrer-Rosell, Coenders, Mateu-Figueras and Pawlowsky-Glahn study demand in a different context. Here, in the first instant the authors analyse micro level data of tourism expenditure using a novel approach to determine the factors influencing absolute expenditure on transportation. In the second step, they analyse the relative importance of this expenditure compared to the budget share of other items constituting the tourism spending. They find that characteristics such as travel group size, age, income and professional status is important in determining the absolute expenditure on transport. However, the characteristics which influence the budget share of transportation are education, income, country of residence, travel group and professional status. The authors include passengers of low cost airlines only (Seetaram, 2016: 205-206). Pricing and competition is central in the paper by Abrate, Viglia, García and Forgas-Coll, who study the competitive behavior of high-speed trains and airlines in a dynamic context. They provide an explanation of simultaneous price adjustments by firms in the short run taking into account intermodal and intermodal price competition on the Rome-Milan route. The data reveal asymmetric responses between the two modes of transport. Airline companies are found to display higher reactions to changes in the price of the competitors than the high-speed trains. Furthermore, it is observed that traditional carriers have independent pricing strategies while low cost airlines, consider the tactics of full service airlines when taking decisions regarding airfares (Seetaram, 2016: 205-206). Studies show that, in general, the development of the tourism sector, including rural tourism, is considered one of the significant and profitable areas for the state. In this direction, Azerbaijan has adopted a state program for the development of tourism, which directly affects the development of the country's economy. In state program it is intended the raising of socio-economic states of the regions and it is also intended the new directions of rural tourism and the expansion of its scale all over the republic. Therefore the state should establish its policy on the sphere of developing the rural tourism according to the traditions of the village. It is also reasonable to organize the tourism enterprises in the rural areas using marketing strategy and to apply medium and high income tourism sector segments as well.

4. DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

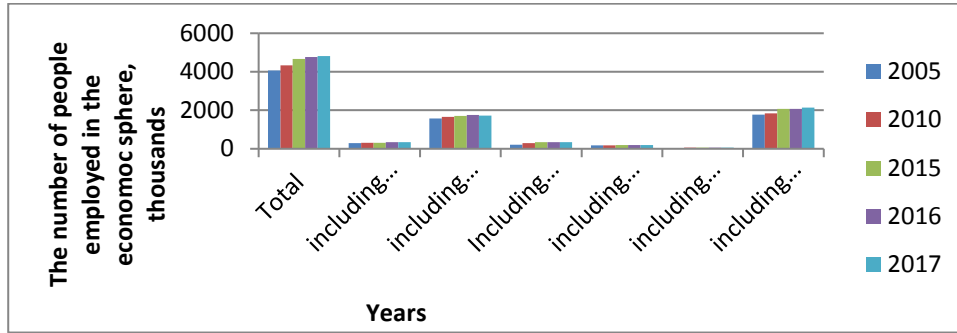
So, looking at the number of travel agencies and the number of tour operators' ownership type it seems that the numbers compared to 2011 in 2017 have been increase 98 units and this increase was 2,4 times. Countrywide Gross Domestic Product (GDP) the accommodation of tourists and the special weight of public catering facilities have been 2,3% and it says that it is 5,3% increase compared to 2016 year.

According to the 2018 statistical data coming for tourism to Azerbaijan 76.619 out of 1120610 people within the framework of rural tourism organization have been located in special places organized by entrepreneurs in order to accommodate tourists in rural places. Compared with 2017 statistical data the increase in this indicator is 12% and this fact expresses the entrepreneurs show high interest in the direction of rural tourism development (The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Tourism in Azerbaijan, 2019: 98).

A strong economy stimulates tourism growth. The goals of the visit of tourists to Azerbaijan in 2018 show that the share of tourists having a rest is 31%, the share for professional business is 30%, the share of wellness, religious, and other purposes of tourists is 4%, the share of visiting relatives and friends is 24%, and the share of uncertain goals is 11%. The share of tourist trips compared to 2000 in Azerbaijan in 2018 increased by 2159,3 thousand people and amounted to 2840,9 thousand people. And the share of free time travel in the world has grown from 50% in 2000 to 56% in 2018. It can be noted that the basic reason of development of rural tourism in rural areas was the high unemployment rate and the increase of the rising structure of agricultural capital stock that leads to increase of lab our product activity entirely influents to this fact.

However, in the condition of the globalization of the market attracting tourists to the many rural areas (Khinaliq-in Guba, İlisu-in Qakh, Lahij-in İsmayılı etc.) is considered the main source of income of the rural population. Besides it, the development of rural tourism in Azerbaijan leads to the revive of various activities in the village, at the same time it leads to evolvment of the skilled cadres for the development of agriculture. According to the information available at the beginning of 2018 year the tendency of reduction is observed in the number of people engaged in agriculture. The number of employed population by the type of economic activity is given in Figure 1.

As sees from the information, there is a slight decrease in the number of people engaged in agriculture compared with 2016. Thus, the development of rural tourism forms favorable conditions for involving of skilled cadres for the development of agriculture and this ultimately allows for the improvement of socio-economic development of the village.

Figure 1: The number of employed population by the type of economic activity

Source: The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Tourism in Azerbaijan, 2019:12-20

The statistic dates show that in 2017 the participating in product development in entrepreneurial farms the number of family members was 3665, this indicator respectively decreased by 2,58 times compared to 2013, compared to 2014 decreased by 1,80 times, compared to 2015 decreased by 1,63 times, and decreased by 1,55 times compared to 2016. There has also been a decline in the number of employees involved outside to the mentioned farms. So that there was a decline in 2017 compared to 2013 40, 3%; 41,8% compared to 2014; 41,5% compared to 2015 and 28% compared to 2016. The number of individual peasant farms according to the information available at the beginning of 2018 was 955 units and there was approximately a 6 % decrease in the number of people engaged in rural tourism organization compared to 2016.

It is advisable to consider the tourism in a relatively balanced approach lately. The main purpose of this approach is that in the tourism industry urbanism loading weakens and the tourism product being diversification enhances the purchasing power of tourists regardless of the season allow the country enables expansion of tourism revenues. In order to achieve these goals setting out in the tourism industry in our country, the expansion of rural tourism is considered to be the main method. For this purpose, the state has recently been doing some purposefully work and here the main direction is considered the impact of the revival of socio-economic revival of rural areas of the country.

At present, organization of rural tourism in our country reflects low level of competitiveness because this activity area faces a number of challenges and to implement their solution is impossible without the interference of state bodies and structures. The reason is that the infrastructure in the village is not at the required level. So that, when the urban residents move to rural areas they are not ready to change their life form. The limited number of stores, kindergartens, schools and

healthcare organizations as well as their remote location sharply reduces the prospects for rapid development of rural tourism. Besides it, not developing the regulatory-legal base of the rural tourism, investing in small quantities by the state, leads to the low quality service for those who are resting here, and all these results not only with the violation of hygienic conditions but also in a breach of security rules. The condition of roads in villages is also unsatisfactory and this fact also effect to the tourist services and reduces service opportunities, at the same time, it does not allow the elimination of obstacle in rural areas in the future. One of the main factors that hinders the development of rural tourism is the low staffing level for working in the rural areas. In the solution of these problems, the state has already started implementing special programs. In some regions of our republic the surveys has been conducted individually for tourism and for the tourist attitudes. In this surveys it was clear that the rural population's attitude towards tourism is positive and the rural population have no objections to staying the tourists in the rural homes.

When the owners of the home and their family members accommodate tourists in their rural homes they should be ready for providing the tourists with relevant services. For this purpose, it is important to enlighten the rural residents in this sphere. The reception of tourists, accommodation of tourists, bedding sets and food supply and also providing accurate information about local traditions, provision of additional services (transportation, guide book, translating, hunting etc.) and training on other rules are also very important.

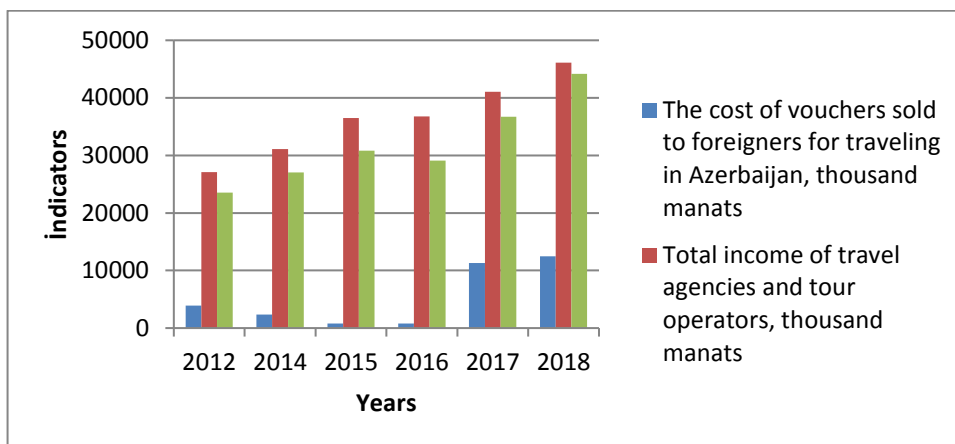
State support for the tourism industry in Azerbaijan is to stimulate the needs of the population in the services of travel agencies. As a result of the effectiveness of state tourism policy, the profitability of the tourism industry is expanding, and its share of the national economy is growing dynamically. In connection with these, the Shahdag winter-summer tourist complex was realized in Azerbaijan, which is one of the amazing corners where you can enjoy breathtaking landscapes and managed by leading world companies, offers high-quality service and is equipped with modern ski equipment.

The top 10 low-cost ski resorts in Russia and neighboring countries included 3 Russians: Belokurikha (Altai Territory), Zavyalikha (Chelyabinsk Region), Krasnaya Sopka (Kamchatka); 1 Belarusian Logoisk (Minsk); 1 Kyrgyz Karakol (Bishkek); 1 Uzbek Chimgan (Tashkent); 1 Azerbaijan Shahdag winter-summer tourist complex (Gusar); 1 Ukrainian Bukovel (Carpathians); 1 Georgian Bakuriani (Tbilisi) and 1 Kazakhstani Shymbulak (Almaty).

The growth of tourist activity, measured in the number of tourists arriving in other countries and income from their services. Since, by comparing the statistics, the

number of tourists arriving in the republic in comparison with 2005 increased 2,0 times in 2018, and the number of workers involved in tourism increased 1,82 times which is associated with the state policy to increase the level of employment (Figure 2). Such approaches are already being applied in the public administration system of Azerbaijan at the level of the Absheron, Ganja-Kazakh, Astara-Lenkoran and Sheki-Zakatalinsky economic zones and mountain regions of the republic.

Figure 2: Graph of the dynamics of the activities of travel agencies

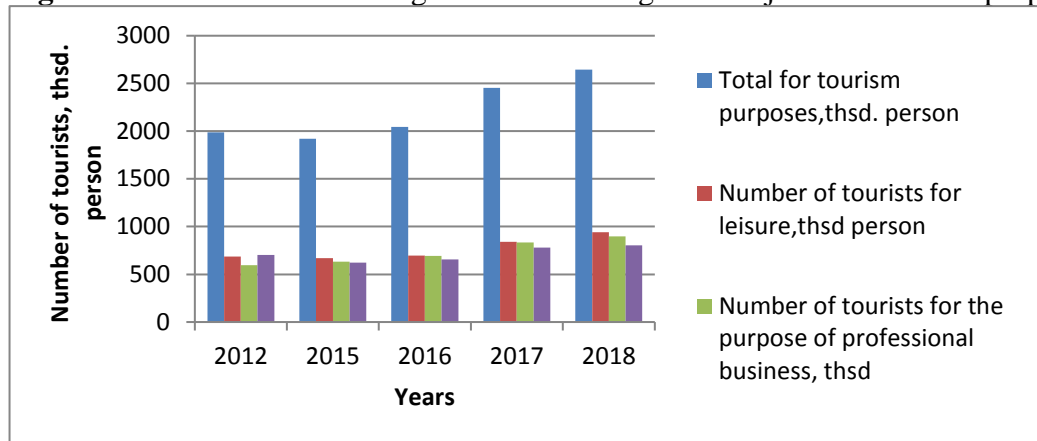


Source: The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Tourism in Azerbaijan, 2019: 36-52

It is necessary to organize a clear relationship between the tourism market participants and related industries, guided by the ideas of tourism development in the above regions of the country as one of the activities with the maximum synergistic effect. This will make it possible to work in separate departments as a whole in order to comply with the unity of technology of the process of servicing tourists. From the analysis of the purpose of the visit of tourists to Azerbaijan in 2018, it is clear that the share of vacationing tourists is 31%, the share for the purpose of professional business is 30%, the share of recreational, religious, and other purposes of tourists is 28% (Figure 3). The share of tourist trips compared to 2000 in Azerbaijan in 2018 increased by 2159,3 thousand people and amounted to 2840,9 thousand people.

In order for the rapid development of rural tourism in Azerbaijan it is considered appropriate granting small loans for the repairing the kitchens properly and for the sanitary nodes at homes. Granting the small loans to the rural homes, performing repair and restoration work in a short time in the villages, preparing tourism routes, awareness- raising activities about the rural tourism among the rural population and other such activities have a major importance for the development of rural tourism.

Figure 3: Distribution of foreign tourists visiting Azerbaijan for different purposes



Source: The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Tourism in Azerbaijan, 2019: 21-25

There are over 4253 rural residential estates in our country. The vast majority of these residential estates are located in mountainous areas. In this regard there is potential for rural tourism development in Azerbaijan (The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Statistical yearbook of Azerbaijan, 2019: 56-75).

The program directed to tourism industry, especially to rural tourism development mainly covers the following thoughts:

1. Activating the rural communities in the fight against emigration
2. To achieve an increase in the specific weight of tourism revenues, directly in the share of rural tourism.
3. Diversification of tourism products due to the introduction of new privatized tourism market segments along with other tourist sights.
4. Hospitality of rural population, use of special products which corresponds to the traditions of the village.
5. Strengthening, storage the traditional state of life and culture, at the same time protection and conservation of nature and anthropogenic environment.

CONCLUSION

Generally, the rural tourism in Azerbaijan covers “typical” socio-economic objectives in the development of agriculture. The rural tourism doesn’t serve for the alternative quality of traditional rural activity, but serves for the additional source of income directed to daily activities. The regular arrangement of city residents’ rest in villages will give a serious impetus to the development domestic and foreign tourism and as a result the economic situation of the village improves, rural area with threat of disintegration are being renovated. The development of rural tourism results with the

revenue of regions citizens, with the unemployment cancellation and with the opening new jobs. At that time there is a need for cadres with the provision of special trained specialists. So, by providing highly skilled staff in the rural tourism not only the development of rural economy but also the whole state economy is growing.

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