

EVALUATION OF RURAL TOURISM IN BERETTYÓÚJFALU DISTRICT

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The promotion of tourism in rural areas can play significant roles in local economy and rural development. Strengthening the economic basis of rural areas, its diversification by developing the agriculture alone may not be sufficient, developing activities utilizing local resources may be necessary by diversification of the activity.

Creating diversification, production, processing and sale of local specialties, linking agriculture and tourism may help in increasing population retention force of the given area.

Several mayors (the mayors of Nagykörű, Cserkeszölő and Berekfürdő) found that rural tourism being an alternative income source is one of the opportunities of local economic development, which directly increases the income of rural hosts and service providers, indirectly stimulates the local market, and may realize and enhance the development sources of the village. In our study, we examined the rural tourism in Berettyóújfalu district. All in all 17 rural hosts were included in the sample, in this way 76 % of the rural hosts in the district were examined.

Living conditions in the bigger cities of the district are considerably average, but in smaller settlements the major problems include the migration, the bigger ratio of mortality and the relating high unemployment lasting for years. Therefore, the income-supplement in connection with rural tourism plays an important role in the respondents' life.

We found, that the tourism opportunities of the Berettyóújfalu district are less known, the seasonal fluctuations according to the programs may be considered as extra problems. Facilitating the flow of information, organization and promotion of traditional and regional programs, local food tasting, compiling packages can provide more balanced season and reliable source of income for the rural hosts of the district.

The research also revealed the fact that certain houses reflect only medium level of development, which may be a further problem. Expert support is required for quality improvement and the development of quality assurance

systems. The experts' system may base on both the available domestic initiatives and the Western European instances.

There are further conditions for operating successfully rural tourism which include strong market activity, marketing, the orientation of information connections and membership in social or professional associations. In order to develop the organizational level of rural hosts in the district every host should belong to at least one association dealing with rural tourism, which would contribute to the protection of interests of the hosts and gaining information regularly.