

EDUCATION AND TRAINING EMPLOYEES AND LOCAL RESIDENTS AS PRESUMPTION TO DEVELOP RURAL TOURISM¹

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Abstract

There are two directions for the development staff needed for the rural tourism, formal and informal. In Serbia, the dominant type has been formal, so far. However, certain programmes which gave appropriate results on the field, belonging to the informal type have recently started. The thing which encourages the most is the positive attitude of the local residents towards the knowledge in the field of tourism which they should acquire and which could improve not only their incomes, but also the conditions they work and live in (rural infrastructure, superstructure, environment, etc.). Official bodies take place in this process and it is important to build adequate system of teaching people how to achieve better results and develop their local communities through rural tourism. The aim of the paper is to point out theoretical basis of formal and informal type of the development staff for the needs to develop rural tourism, with the stress on the programmes proposed for the education and training local residents.

Key words: *education, training, development, programmes, rural areas, tourism*

Introduction

Accelerated and exaggerated concentration of inhabitants in town centers and problems made by industrial production, have given assumptions for the appearance and growth of the need for the vacation in nature.

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World Tourist Organization (WTO)³, suggests that more than 75% of total tourist demand is, today, directed towards the natural areas, but, it is impossible to determine precisely the percentage directed towards the rural areas, since official statistics of the great number of countries (including ours) do not follow these indicators.

Urry (1991)⁴ points out the changes happened in the taste of consumers in the last decade of the twentieth century. He notices the appearance of the so-called “new service class“, which puts an accent on the need for consumption in the rural areas.

One of the critical factors in the evolution and development of rural tourist destination is identification of potential consumers, appropriate aimed market segment and the way in which to offer rural tourist products.

The right approach makes possible the making of assumptions for the existence of the so-called “loyal consumers” which is of crucial importance in gaining competitive advantages, which is insisted upon (*Porter E.M*, 2008, *Jobber*, *Fahay*, 2006, *Woodruff B. R.*,1997, *Piercy F. N.*,1998)⁵.

Today, in the state of growing competition and increasing demand for tourism, quality has become a condition for surviving on the market and gaining profit. Having in mind that rural tourism in Serbia is still in the initial phases of development, it is necessary to take into consideration all of the aspects for the improvement of quality (half-board and off-board supply).

Special attention should be given to the development of staff which should be enabled to provide an appropriate quality of services. Without the existence of well-trained staff, none of the constitutive elements of tourist destination practically have a large use value.

³<http://www2.unwto.org/> (25.10.2013.)

⁴Urry J., (1991): “*Cultural change and contemporary holiday making*”, journal *Theory, Culture and Society*, No.5, p.35-55.

⁵ Porter E.M, (2008): „*On Competition*“, published by Harvard Business School Press; *Jobber & Fahay*, (2006): „*Foundations of Marketing*“, McGraw-Hill Education International UK Limited, p.148; затим *Woodruff B. R.*,(1997): „*Customer Value: the Next Source for Competitive Advantage*“, *Journal of Academy of Marketing Science*, No. 2, p.148; као и *Piercy F. N.*,(1998) : „*Marketing Implementation: The Implication of Marketing Paradigm Weakness for Strategy Execution Process*, *Journal of Academy of Marketing Science*, No. 3. p.228.“

Receptive capacities of rural tourism as a starting point in the development of rural tourism

The ways of equipping receptive capacities and the types of services which will be provided in the above mentioned represent the basis for the development of rural tourism. Hence, the education of the local population is very important so that the capacity will be equipped in an adequate way, and the owners educated for providing services of a corresponding type and quality.

The characteristics of the development of the receptive capacities so far are:

- official record of their number and types does not exist at the moment (neither relevant ministry, nor Chamber of Commerce and Industry, nor National Tourism Organization of Serbia „TOS“ have records of this);
- the existing lists which can be found at various sources are incomplete and are not updated regularly.
- the list which shows in a most comprehensive way the accommodation supply of rural tourism is the one presented on the Internet site” *Rural tourism of Serbia* “ (table 2.).

Table 1. *Types and number of accommodation facilities in the rural tourism in Serbia*

FACILITY TYPE	TOTAL NUMBER
Apartments	40
Log cabins and „vajats“	25
Vajats	3
Cottages	23
Villas	33
Exclusive objects	3
Ethno villages	16
„Konaks“	11
Village houses	319
Farms	10
Village hotels	16

Source: <http://www.selo.co.rs> (25.09.2013.)

- The list is updated rather regularly, and the types of accommodation facilities are adjusted to the local types of rural architecture. However, the classification does not comply with the valid “*Rules about Terms and Conditions of Catering Services, the Manner of providing catering services, Classification of catering facilities and minimum technical requirements for planning and equipment of catering facilities*”(“*Off. Gazette of RS*”, no. 48/2012).

- Ministry of Education and Science, in collaboration with the EU, has financed the project of training rural population for providing services of appropriate quality to the tourists named "*Training for organizers of tourist accommodation in rural households*". The following classification of rural tourist households has been given, among other things, in this document: bed and breakfast households, family houses, farm households, households with the historical past, castles and country houses, „vajats“, farms, yards, taverns, huts. This represents the most comprehensive classification of rural tourist households which is in compliance with the "*Rules*".

However, none of the presented classifications haven't been officially accepted; hence, the problem of standardization of quality in providing services appears.

Due to the different interpretations and imprecision coming from the adopted *Rules*, their mutual harmonization and harmonization with the valid *Law on Tourism* is necessary (*Off. Gazette of RS*, No.36/2009, 88/2010 and 99/2011). It is also necessary for the agricultural producers to build a special relationship towards rural tourism so that they can put their resources in the function of its further development and to be trained for providing services of adequate quality. The system of education will play the "crucial role" in the making of this relationship. Just with the educated staff one can expect adequate quality in providing services and effects of its development.

Levels of management and required knowledge

There is a significant level of interaction and inter-dependence among managerial, educational, and professional and advisory elements. They represent "human capital" in the development of tourist destination.

World Tourist Organization (2007)⁶ points out that tourism is a labour intensive activity and that the interaction with the local communities is an important aspect of tourist experience. Well-trained labour force in tourism and the inhabitants ready to develop it are aware of the benefits and responsibilities that their developments carry. They represent the essential elements of this tourist destination and they should be managed in accordance with the strategy of destination development.

⁶UNWTO (2007): "*A Practical Guide to Tourism Destination Management*", Madrid 2007. p.1-2. http://pub.unwto.org/WebRoot/Store/Shops/Infoshop/4745/8BCE/AD9A/ECA8/048B/C0A8/0164/0B7A/071115_practical_guide_destination_management_excerpt.pdf (25.10.2013.)

The most important features of human resources are level of education (training) and years of working experience (Thrane, 2008)⁷. Good staff training provides quality in offering services, quality which represents one of the important factors for the repeated arrival of tourists to the destination (Seaton & Benet, 1996)⁸.

Bakic at al. (1999) point to the levels of management and the necessary skills of managers in tourism (table 1.)

Table 2. Levels of management and necessary qualifications of managers in tourism

Levels of management	Necessary skills
Operational level: -reception manager -manager of sales packages	- technical training - ability for the selection, motivation and management of employees (which are in direct contact with the tourists)
Intermediate level: - manager of products	- elementary education within the managerial domain - common knowledge about tourism
Strategic level: - manager of strategic jobs in a hotel, agency, etc.	- understanding of strategic planning within the domain of instruments of business policy. - possibility for successful communication with the other members of the staff because of the consensus of achieving aims
Leadership level: -directors of the company -leader team	- ability for vision and company management - innovation, courage, talent - stimulation of other employees for the activity

Source: Bakic O., Nikolic M., Bakic M. (1999): “Fundamentation of Tourism with the basics of hospitality”, Belgrade, Čigoja, p.123.

Doing business in tourism is, today, characterized by incessant innovations; hence, it is necessary for the management on all level to adopt formal knowledge, as well as to enable themselves to follow the innovations which appear daily in tourist management.

⁷Thrane C., (2008): “Earnings differentiation in the tourism industry : Gender, human capital and socio-demographic effects”, Tourism Management, 29 (2008), p.514-524.

⁸Seaton, A.V.& Benet, M.M., (1996): “The Analysis of Tourism Demand: Market Segmentation”, The Marketing of Tourism Product : Concept, Issues and Cases, International Thomson Business Press, London

Baum T., (1995)⁹ makes a distinction of competencies:

- for the problems of the managing of the guests (tourists) with care and sensitivity;
- for communication in written and oral form;
- for achieving positive work atmosphere in every way;
- for achieving professionalization in every way;
- for achieving positive attitude of consumers as well as a positive relation with them;
- to lead the employees to achieve the operations wanted.

Today, in literature, the term “*development of managerial staff*” is in wide use, and less and less one can hear terms such as training and education. This primarily comes from the reason that the former are considered to be an integral part of a process. There is in Serbia a formed system of manager education for the needs of tourism, which can be educated at faculties, high schools, secondary schools and private schools and universities, so-called “*formal educational system*”.

Special attention is given to the wide range of education (lectures, consultations, exercises, professional practice, professional school trips, company visits, visits of specialists, and so on). The model of “*complete separation*” has mostly been used in Serbia so far. Market orientation in doing business, the process of privatization, which represents long-term orientation of our economy, require inclusion and usage of other models in the educational system, where to the accent must be put on practice and training of the so-called “*informal educational system*”.

It is also of high importance for the process of management in the development of rural tourism for the staff to be educated on all levels of management, starting from the “top managers” to the “operational level”. In this sense, assumptions about how to vividly ease and speed up the process of managing the development of rural tourism can be made.

In rural tourism, a special accent should be put on the education of the so-called operational managing level. We are talking here about the local people which provide services for the tourists. It is necessary to develop the appropriate educational programmes. The aim of the programmes like these is to introduce

⁹Baum T., (1995): “ *Managing Human Resources – in European Tourism and Hospitality Industry – Strategic Approach* “, International Thompson Business Press, London, p.191.

developmentally determined households with the elemental knowledge about rural tourism, and the way of providing services. In this sense, the role of the system of informal education has become more and more powerful, as well as the influence of organizations, i.e. bodies (governmental and non-governmental) which would deal with trainings like these.

Formal system of the development of managerial staff for the need of tourism

All levels of management (top, operational and functional) should be subjected to the formal system of education. We are talking here about the staff management in private (companies, enterprises, and so on) and in public (official state institutions, ministries, agencies, tourist organizations, chamber of commerce etc.) sector.

Necessary (“*required*”) level of education depends on the needs and responsibilities. In private sector, for example, it is desirable for the owners of the appropriate hospitality facilities to have a university degree, although this is not the case in practice, in the majority of cases.

What can be said to be a critic of the formal education so far is the fact that it has been functioning to a large extent upon the model of complete separation. As an alternative, there is a model of the long-term cooperation of the educational institutions and the institutions of tourist agriculture. Also, formal system of education has been, almost completely, in the function of the development of young staff for the needs of mass tourism, while the other aspects have been marginalized.

Informal system of education

The education of the local population for the providing of the services of the appropriate quality to the tourists has been performed in a small way in Serbia. This role should be given and performed by the local tourist organization, regional chambers of commerce, units of the local government, non-governmental organizations, etc.

Insistence on the education of the agricultural producers, primarily the carriers of the developmentally oriented households, is a condition upon which the development of rural areas should be based. Programmes for the education of the local population are the basis upon which we must base the future development of tourism.

The expectations are that in this way, on the groundwork of the acquired theoretical basis and practical exercises in mastering specific knowledge in the field of tourism, agricultural producers will be enabled for planning, organizing, coordinating and managing of all the activities on the level of households, villages, that is to say, local communities as mini tourist destinations.

In the later phases of the development of rural tourism, for the further hastening of its development, it is necessary for the corresponding advisory services to perform the education and that, in the exchange of the information with the owners of the rural tourist destinations, give key contribution to the sustainable development of rural tourism in Serbia.

The proposal of the programme for the education of the local population for the needs for development of rural tourism in the Republic of Serbia

a) The way of the introduction local population with the rural tourism

The approach to the problem of education should be conducted in phases. In the first phase, it is necessary to raise the awareness of the local population about the importance of tourism for the development of local communities, with the accent on the importance of rural tourism. Programmes like these should be organized in the cooperation with the Tourist Organization of Serbia (National Tourist Organization of Serbia), local government authorities and regional chambers of commerce. It is necessary to organize courses for the carriers of the developmentally oriented households which show interest for the dealing with rural tourism. In this sense, so that the effects of the dealing with the activities like these should be visible, the priority should be given to the carriers of the *“developmentally oriented households”* which would show interest for the dealing with rural tourism.

It is necessary for the course attendants to be familiar with the chances offered by rural tourism. In this sense, one should point to:

- the role of tourism as a source of extra income for the local population,
- the strengthening of agriculture through the sale of the agricultural products to tourists,
- the possibility for the revitalization and construction of complete infrastructure in the rural areas,
- the impact the tourism has on the process of the prevention of depopulation,
- the impact the tourism has on the development of trade,
- the impact the tourism has on the development of traffic,

- the impact the tourism has on the development of service sector,
- the revival of cultural, manifestational and all the other ethnic features of the rural areas, etc.

It is necessary to make use of each opportunity which stresses the importance of tourism in the insurance of the economic growth, financial and social security of the local population, etc.

b) Topics which could occupy the attention of the inhabitants of rural areas

Having in mind the fact about a relatively low level of education of the local population, it is necessary to make a programme which would have to, as the first step, animate the local population and make the local population familiar with what the rural tourism actually is. Only in the later phases the local population should be informed about the standards necessary for the providing of the services of adequate quality.

Some of the themes which would occupy the attention are, for example:

- the term of tourism;
- pointing out to the social, economic importance of the development of tourism in the rural areas;
- illustration of complementarity in the development of tourism and agriculture;
- understanding the conditions for creating and showing the way for the organization of tourism in rural areas;
- the conception of marketing and its usage in tourism;
- the importance of the sustainable tourist development;
- the presentation of all of the aspects of tourism which can be implemented in a certain rural area etc.

After one cycle of theoretical lectures like these, one should pass to the education through the practical examples. Namely, it is necessary for the attendants to be familiar with the appropriate standards which the rural households must meet in order to be able to deal with rural tourism.

In this sense, the basis would lie in the valid “*Rules*“ (prescribed by the legislature of the state) as well as in the introduction of the local population with the standards prescribed by some important international organizations (such as, for example: *EUROGITES*¹⁰ standards and so on), then their comparison etc.

¹⁰ <http://www.eurogites.org/documents/> (25.10.2013.)

It is important to point out that the consensus about all of the issues in connection with the education and the ways in which the required standards should be presented to the local population must exist on all of the levels of management in the development of tourism, local, regional and national.

c) The ways to implement education in rural areas

Starting from the objectives mentioned, it is necessary to determine the phases upon which a cycle like this can be organized. Anyway, it could be organized in three phases:

- 1) Preparatory phase,
- 2) Implementation phase, and
- 3) Phase of measuring the achieved results.

Preparatory activities imply field work. It is necessary to finish:

- field visits,
- talking with the agricultural producers,
- forming work groups,
- location of space necessary for the realization of educational programme (local communities, houses of culture, schools and similar facilities),
- making, printing brochures and working material, both in written and in electronic form, etc.

In the second phase transition is made towards the process of direct education. Education could also, depending on the interests of the population, be conducted in phases. In the first phase of education, all of the attendants must be informed about a detailed programme of lectures.

Having in mind the complexity and demands for the conductioning of the programme, it is necessary for the education to be directed only to a certain number of rural households. We are dealing here with the competent carriers or the members of the registered developmentally oriented rural households.

Depending on the size of a populated place, educational programme should include no more than the twenty attendants. The attitude like this comes primarily from the reasons of efficiency that a course like this must have. Some of the activities that will be undertaken in the first two phases (preparatory phase and the realization phase) are:

- meeting and talking with a large number of farmers;
- formation of small work groups of selected composition on the basis of gathered information;

- making and printing of the working material, in written and electronic form;
- organization and implementation of a range of theoretical lectures with an active participation of all of the attendants in the discussions after the end of the lectures;
- illustrations with the practical examples;
- during the course, it is necessary for some means of testing to be done as a way of revision, and so on;
- in the end, it is necessary to summarize the results of the joined work, and remove all of the possible ambiguities;
- It is necessary to insist on the future collaboration of all of the attendants.

The assumption is that the farmers, on the basis of the educational programme like this, would have an opportunity to:

- understand the role and place of the existing natural and social (anthropogenic) resources in a potential development of tourism;
- see the influence of tourism and its use in the social and economic development of village;
- estimate the effectiveness and efficiency of tourism in achieving its goals and interests;
- receive all necessary information about the experiences of other communities opted for this kind of rural development;
- on the basis of existing resources, see clearly their opportunities for development and start their own entrepreneurial spirit;
- understand the importance and role of sustainable development for the preservation of the environment;
- avoid the consequences of neglecting natural and social potentials of their own development;
- realize the importance of tourism for general social development;
- understand the risks in making their own incomes.

If one whole some system of “*development managerial staff*” would be formed on all levels, through the systems of education (formal and informal) it would be justifiably to expect that the quality of the services would raise to a higher level. With the raise of the level of knowledge of all interest groups (stakeholders) in the later phases of development of rural tourism, one could insist on a concept of the use of total quality management (TQM). We are talking here about the endeavors of all of the factors of the tourist chain of value (tourist cluster) to make an effort so that the tourists as the final consumers of services would be pleased.

If the tourists decide on a certain rural tourist destination, they would know in advance what level of service quality to expect. The application of the TQM concept would bring strategic and operational benefits in doing business, and would help in positioning tourists destination on the tourist market.

European experiences in the education and training local residents for the needs to develop rural tourism

Organization “*Rural Tourism International – Training Network*”¹¹ was founded in 2005. And it represents an association of organizations and educators of rural tourism. The goal of the organization is to provide quality training in rural tourism through the network connectivity and appropriate programmes and services of satisfactory quality. The organization was formed as a logical sequence of the programme “*Leonardo da Vinci*” financed by the *European Commission*, and lasted from 2001-2004. During the programme, the standards of quality in rural tourism, the so – called “*EU standards 2* “ were formed. These standards are binding for all of the member countries and are equal for the whole countries in Europe. The links of all the leading national organizations which follow the development of rural tourism in the parent state can be found on the official website of this organization. In this way, thanks to the Internet, an insight can be made into the dimensions of the development in Europe, that is to say, for each country separately, and in the ways of education of the local population.

a) The experiences of Ireland

“LEADER “programmes have given a strong impetus to the development of rural tourism of Ireland through the subsidized scheme of development of rural tourism. It was also planned to provide similar effects for the period 2007 – 2013. through the “*National plan and programme for the development of rural tourism* “ and “*National programme of rural development*”.

“LEADER“ groups from all of the corners of Ireland cover different issues in relation with the projects of rural development, such as, for example, organization of study trips abroad in order to gain necessary knowledge about models of organizing tourist activities in rural households (farms), than development and training of the farmers for providing services in tourism, writing and printing of different brochures and materials for training of farmers etc.

¹¹ <http://ruraltourisminternational.wordpress.com/about/> (25.10.2013)

The networking of farmers and different companies is conducted in an intensive way in order to strengthen the sector of tourism, and the information is exchanged through the Internet. The first website of this kind is, in fact, made in Ireland¹².

b) The experiences of Great Britain

The Government of Britain considers farm tourism to be a strategic force of rural economy, and in this sense, it gives a full support for its affirmation and invests in its development. The EU through the so- called “5b) developmental programme” has given a considerable contribution to the development of rural tourism in Britain. This programme has been operational for a period of 1994-1999. The programme covered 6 rural areas, thanks to which economic revival of these areas was made possible, and the rural households could receive capital investments for new projects in the field of development of rural tourism (“ farm tourism projects”), as well as all the help for the training in the field of marketing.¹³

The largest network of farm accommodation and major promotional organization of rural tourism of Great Britain has been operational since 1983. We are talking here about a network known as “Farm Stay” Ltd., the name of which was at the beginning “The Farm Holiday Bureau”. This network was formed by the *Ministry of Agriculture* and “English Tourist Board”.

Fifteen different regional tourist boards which are networked and work with the representatives of local communities can be differed on the field, the aim of which is to educate local population so that they would be able to provide services of satisfactory quality to the tourists. Local colleges are very often included and they also perform some sort of education of the local population. The attention is given to all of the elements relevant for the development of farm tourism and local communities. The lecturing cycle is conducted in phases and in cycles.

The experiences of Spain

At the national level, ASETUR (*Asociación Española de Turismo Rural*)¹⁴ appears as a major tourist marketing organization based in

¹² www.talktourism.ie (25.10.2013)

¹³ www.sfc.ucdavis.edu/agritourism (25.10.2013.)

¹⁴ <http://www.raar.es> (25.10.2013.)

“*Cantavieja*”. It is a member of the “*Eurogites*” organization. It was formed in 1994, in the process of regrouping 20 associations of the owners of rural households which offered accommodation services to tourists. In that way, it grew firstly into a regional, and then into a carrier of the organization of rural tourist activity for the whole territory of Spain.

Besides the national, there is a wide range of other small associations working on the regional level. Some of them are RAAR (*Red Andaluza de Alojamientos Rurales*), „*Unió de Pagesos de Catalunya*” (Catalonian Farmer Union)¹⁵ based in Barcelona etc.

Farmers’ unions dealing with rural tourism are present even on Spanish islands, and definitely, rural tourism is the most developed on the Balearic Islands.

The training of the farmers for providing services in rural tourism is conducted in courses, by the local unions, certain private companies, as well as the universities.

Harmonized level of training at the country level does not exist for the time being. There is a Government suggestion for the training and harmonized system of education to be conducted through the Ministry of Education, which would manage the trainings through the organization “*REDR*” („*Red Española de Desarrollo Rural*”).

The experiences of Austria

Austria is among the countries with a large experience in the development of rural tourism. The adaptation of the rural houses for the needs of providing tourist services has begun 1960.

Associations for the rural tourism are formed on the level of each province, while the biggest marketing organization working on the promotion of rural tourism in Austria is based in Salzburg („*Urlaub am Bauernhof*”)¹⁶. Eight regional associations in total are networked in the offer of the rural tourism of Austria.

„*Urlaub am Bauernhof*” promotes the concept of “*regular quality control*” and, depending on the kind of the offer, gives to the farms a corresponding “*emblem*” („*Beim Bauern zu Gast*”¹⁶), which determines the quality of the offer. It is

¹⁵ <http://www.raar.es> (25.10.2013.)

¹⁶ www.farmholidays.com (25.10.2013)

necessary for the farm to offer three domestic products, at least, grown or produced on it, so that it would be able to apply for obtaining this emblem.

The organization named "*The Association for Farm Holidays*" ("*Bundesverband Urlaub am Bauernhof*") is in charge for promotion of rural tourism and has an advisory role.

In "Burgenlandu", the project of education of the agricultural producers for the needs of developing rural tourism is carried out. The education is free in order to speed up the development. The educational programme has 120 classes in total and the accent of the lectures is on:

- general culture,
- organization and management,
- tax system,
- accounting,
- calculations and making of appropriate business plans.

These are obligatory courses, while the study of foreign languages (English) and home-made cooking, optional.

Conclusion

Accelerated development of rural tourism has started since the nineties of the twentieth century. The countries which have the most significant results so far are from the Western Europe. Realizing the importance of the rural tourism in removing numerous problems the rural Europe and North America are burdened with, then the countries of the Eastern Europe as well, people have started with its development. Shapes and forms differ from country to country, depending on the type of accommodation capacities and natural-geographic features of the rural areas.

The development of rural tourism in Serbia has been conducted spontaneously and has assumed different forms. Rural areas occupy more than 80% of the Republic and on these areas, according to the last Census, live 44% of total population. Hence, the conclusion about the importance of rural tourism for the tourist and economic development of the country in general can be made from this.

Publically proclaimed attitude about tourism as a chance for developing of rural areas, must not be just a "dead letter on the paper", it must flourish since we want to expect the benefits of its development.

Working on the formal and informal education of the staff is necessary. So far, the prevailing system for the needs of tourism has been formal. However, only with the development of informal system the process gains its full dimension. The expectation are, that in this way, on the basis of gained theoretical ground and practical exercises in mastering certain knowledge in the field of tourism, the agricultural producers will enable themselves for the management of all of the activities on the level of households, village, i.e. local communities as mini tourist destinations.

The quality of tourist products which can be found on tourist market will be improved in this way. If the process is carried out continuously, with the corresponding policy of promoting conditions for the development of rural tourism made by the Government and the units of local communities, it is justifiably to expect the long-term effects. However, it is important that other bodies include in this process (National tourist organization – TOS, Regional Chamber of Commerces, local communities, and also business entrepreneurs who have interes for developing rural tourism.).

Some of the programmes for the education have been carried out sporadically so far, which is not enough. It is necessary for all of the interest groups (stakeholders) to join the process of development of managers and to strengthen the process of their networking (both horizontally and vertically).

Through process of training local population would be enabled for providing tourist services of appropriate quality, and the effects would result in creation of the so-called “loyal consumers”. For the State it is important that paralelly build system of education (formal system) and training (informal system), of increasing knowledge peopelle about advantages that tourism could bring to rural areas. It is important for the agricultural producers to build a special relationship with the tourism, and in correspondence with the acquired knowledge, put their resources (natural and social) in the function of its development.

Management techniques can help to improve results of developing rural tourism. One of these techniques is benchmarking. It can help us through systematic and continuous process of measuring our developing process of rural tourism with results which achieve leader countries, to get information which can help us in process of organization and take action to improve our business performances and on this way to become competitive on tourism market.

It is expected that the system of staff development for rural tourism, as time goes, improve. Also, it is important that all stakeholders will involve in these processes (formal and informal). This is one of the imperatives of development rural tourism. Practice has shown that only a trained staff is capable to providing high quality services and this is presumption for developing rural tourist destination.

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