

TRENDS REGARDING RURAL TOURISM

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Many governments and the European Union recognize the fact that rural tourism represents a way to save agriculture and cultural heritage, being an activity in full ascension, with a positive impact on local development. Minister of Tourism and Rural Development, from Luxembourg, said that "over the next 20 years, tourism will be a key component of the economy, and rural tourism will become tourism of the future." To support this claim, the present paper is intended to be a way of highlighting the main trends in tourism in the present, which will be amplified in the 2020 perspective and of which rural tourism must also take account.

Rural areas will have to define new functions, more ecological and recreational, increasingly important, being new developmental alternatives for those involved in agricultural field. [1] In this context a major role will be played by the development of a multitude of tourism activities in rural areas. Specifically, for European economies, rural tourism brings an essential contribution to the integration process. This explains why, starting with the second half of the last decade, tourism and, implicitly, rural tourism, has entered the European Commission's agenda in a more systematic manner, in a more institutional context created by The Treaty of Maastricht. Rural tourism, in recent times, has a strong evolution and enjoys greater attention. The reason? The authenticity of rural areas is a growing quality and more and more demanded, in the conditions of the present life. [2,4,5,6] Many governments in the European Union recognize that rural tourism is an alternative that can save agriculture and that "over the next 20 years tourism will be the core component of the rural economy, and rural tourism will become tourism of the future."