

РАЗДЕЛ 2. МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ ТУРИЗМ И ТАМОЖЕННОЕ ДЕЛО

Belarusian agrotowns

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Agrotown is a relatively new type of rural settlements and their economic and social organization in Belarus. They first came about back in 2005 in compliance with the State Program on Regeneration and Development of Rural Areas. The program itself was endorsed and launched in 2005 by the decree of the President of The Republic of Belarus, though actual discussion of launching of some kind of a program on support of rural areas started in 2003. Rural areas occupy about 90 % of the country, with 30% of population residing in the rural settlements [2]. Furthermore, small villages and towns concentrate rich Belarusians traditions, authentic ways of living, etc. So it is vitally important for the health of Belarusian economy to keep its rural areas thriving and flushing.

The program consisted of 2 parts — social and economic; they are designed to improve standards of living in Belarusian countryside and boost economic growth in the agricultural sphere. The agrotown is the very component with the help of which the social aspect is executed. The program finished in 2010. As of May 25th, 2011, the number of agrotowns in Belarus comprised 1481, they are more or less equally distributed around the country. Starting 2005, 714 500 sq meters of housing were built [2; 3].

Agrotowns are renovated villages and other types of rural settlements. Once a village gets the status of «agrotown», its inner and outer structures change. As a rule, there's a major agricultural enterprise in every agrotown, which is the main employer of local residents, the major source of income to the local budget. And every chain of renovations connected with turning a village into an agrotown is based on that fact. Collective farms, Agricultural Manufacturing Enterprises and other types of agricultural organizations hire workers. These workers receive houses for their work. This is the primal benefit for workers. However, the fact that land and a house can only be used as long as the person resides in that village and works for the local agricultural community, discourages some young individuals from moving to the country after graduation. The land can only be leased or granted on the right of long-term use — the worker has no chance whatsoever to turn a land parcel into their private property.

Along with complimentary housing, village workers receive some other benefits, including new services, which are common in cities and towns, but in their majority were unavailable to the villagers before — those include gas supply, entertainment clubs, cinemas, full list of personal services — hairdressers, laundromat, tailoring

shops, renovated schools and kindergartens provided with improved facilities — pools, computer classes, sport grounds, improved banking service — more ATM machines, bank affiliates, post offices, better transportation and better roads, more shops with an expanded range of goods.

However, there have been many complaints about the quality of houses, roads and other facilities in agrotowns. It's been reported that some houses do not have hot running water, gas supply. This fact also accounts for why some of the newly-built houses stay uninhabited [1].

Apart from the social aspect of the program, its economic part was aimed at investments into agriculture, increasing its efficiency.

The program ended in 2010. According to multiple reports, even though the condition of the agricultural branch of Belarusian economy has improved, not all of the assigned goals were achieved [4]. Whilst the social situation in the country might have somehow refined, agricultural production have yet to accomplish its main goal — organize production in such a way it pays back a greater amount of money that have been put into it.

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