



## Conditions for Choosing Form of Rest Agritourism from the Point of View of Respondents in Poland

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**Abstract:** The purpose of the study was to present the factors conditioning the use of agritourism services by the respondents. The study was conducted in May 2019 using a diagnostic survey using a questionnaire on a sample of 120 randomly selected residents of Warsaw in Poland. The most frequently studied people using agritourism services for several days spending their stay connected with the family. The main motive for choosing the place of rest by the respondents was peace and quiet, as well as price attractiveness. Popular surveyed people spend their free time in agritourism services on walking and hiking and exploring the nearby area.

**Key words:** Rural tourism, Agritourism, Conditions, Leisure, Rural areas.

### Introduction

Modern people live in a dynamic, ever-changing reality that generates change and stress every day (Che *et al.*, 2005). The increase in the pace of life and the intensification of the effects of stressful situations means that more and more recognition is enjoyed by rest in the countryside (Roman *et al.*, 2020). The most important trump card services are clean air, close contact with nature, high landscape values, as well as the possibility of communing with friendly people and learning about their habits (Bagi & Reeder, 2012). The advantages of relaxing away from large

online cities, that agritourism enjoys the interest of tourists (Roman & Golnik, 2019). Services that have many years of tradition both in Poland and in other international companies. In Poland, they popular after 1989, when the farming economy collapsed and many people living in the countryside had to find another source of income (Młynarczyk, 2002). Poland is a country especially predestined for the development of this type of tourism – the villages are characterized by the attractiveness of areas, traditions, folk art and interesting architectural monuments (Firlej, 2002).

### **Purpose and problem**

The purpose of the study was to present the factors conditioning the use of agritourism services by the surveyed residents of Warsaw. Many people living in the capital do not have contact with the village on a daily basis because they are in the urban area all the time. Investigating their opinions on agritourism as a form of recreation has allowed the determination of the strengths and weaknesses of agritourism. The problem of the article is to present the low level of agritourism development in many regions of Poland. The problem can be solved by making the offer of agritourism farms more attractive (e.g. introducing innovations). As a result, there will be a greater selection of agritourism farms by tourists, e.g. from Warsaw or other cities.

### **Literature review: The state of agritourism development in Poland**

The concept of agritourism appeared in Polish and foreign literature at the end of the 20th century (Roman, 2019). The term was created from the combination of the prefix 'agro-' with the word 'tourism'. "Agro" comes from the Greek term *agros*, meaning "field" and *agronomos*, referring to the management of agricultural property. Tourism is a kind of active rest outside the place of residence, inspired by, among others leisure and recreational needs, as well as cognitive, cultural, social, sports, etc., including all forms of voluntary change of residence (Sznajder & Przezbórska, 2006).

In general, and sometimes also in the literature on the subject, agritourism is often equated with rural tourism. These concepts have a lot in common, but they are not synonymous (Wojcieszak & Sadowski, 2019). In scientific studies, a lot of space is devoted to distinguishing between these two forms of

tourism, and the authors of studies mostly point out that they cannot be treated interchangeably (Roman & Niedziółka, 2017). The term 'rural tourism' includes 'all tourism economy taking place in rural areas' (Wiatrak, 1996). In this definition, the emphasis is on the economic dimension of this form of recreation and its supply side. As a supplement, one can also refer to the explanation of the concept of "rural tourism" proposed by Sikora (1999), according to which "tourism in rural areas includes all tourism organized in the countryside", and its main purpose is "to contrast the activities and tourist conditions of the rural environment with the urban". Agritourism is a more specific subset of rural tourism (Wojcieszak, 2017). The biggest difference are the place where tourism takes place and available attractions. Any practice developed on a working farm with the purpose of attracting visitors can be named agritourism (Barbieri & Mshenga, 2008). Also, it is believed that the hosting house should be integrated into an agricultural estate, inhabited by the proprietor and visitors should have access to take part in agricultural or complementary activities on the property (Marques, 2006).

Agritourism farms operate throughout almost all of Poland because as Drzewiecki (2009) reports- "agritourism can develop anywhere where there are no natural and anthropogenic exclusion or limiting factors". Not everywhere, however, optimal conditions for its development can be noted.

Based on the research carried out by Drzewiecki (2005), seven regions of agritourism development were distinguished: West Pomerania and Gdańsk along with the coast, Warmia and Masuria, Greater Poland, Sudetes, the Carpathians, Lublin Upland and Podlaskie. In turn, Wojciechowska (2009)

proposed the division of the country into 12 regions distinguished by agritourism, including: the coastal region, Pomeranian region, Kashubian-Masurian-Suwałki region, Masovian region, Greater Poland region, Łódź region, West, Świętokrzyskie region, Lesser Poland region, East, Sudetes region and Podkarpackie region.

In the above-mentioned areas running agritourism farms is the most profitable. In

most cases, agritourism supplements the basic agricultural activity, however, for the owners of about every tenth resort, it is the main source of income. As reported by Matlegiewicz (2015) in 2015, for 40% of people offering agritourism services their profits make up from 30 to 80% of total income. The number of agritourism farms in the years 1996-2014 is shown in table (1).

**Table (1): Number of agritourism farms in Poland in the years 1996-2014\*.**

Year	1996	2000	2005	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Number of agritourism farms in Poland	3000	5789	6550	8790	9500	10200	7692	7852	7930	7953	8200

\* (Matlegiewicz, 2015).

Analysis of the data presented in table (1) shows that the number of agritourism farms has changed over the years. From 1996, when there were only 3,000 of them all over Poland, it increased systematically until 2009 to reach a record number of 10200 farms in the last of these years. However, this trend changed in 2010, when the number of centers from 10200 recorded in 2009 dropped to

The statistical data of the Central Statistical Office shows that the owners of agritourism farms in 2016 provided tourists with 507800 beds. However, from the data of the Central Statistical Office in April 2018, it appears that in 2017 they granted such places 537,000, i.e. 30 more (Wykorzystanie, 2017).

From the fluctuations in the number of farms and beds offered by service providers, The study was conducted in May 2019 using a diagnostic survey using a questionnaire on a sample of 154 randomly selected residents of Warsaw. Then qualified were people who at least once used this form of recreation in rural

7,692 the following year. Since then, however, the popularity of agritourism services has been increasing again, although the number of farms has been growing very slowly every year. According to data, in 2014 there were 8,200 farms providing agritourism services. In 2015, this number dropped to 7700 (Data from the Central Statistical Office, 2020).

agritourism is not an easy form of service to run. It requires time and appropriate skills, and in addition farm owners should meet the growing demands of customers, hence only farmers who can adapt to the expectations of tourists can survive in this activity. For this reason, the number of agritourism farms in Poland is constantly changing.

**Methods**

areas- a total of 120 people. The characteristics of the studied population are presented in table (2).

The majority of respondents were women. The majority of respondents were people under 34 years of age who had secondary or higher education. The following conditions have been included in the empirical studies: the frequency of using agritourism services,

length of stay and accompanying persons during rest on agritourism farms, motives for using agritourism services, forms of spending free time on agritourism farms, strengths and weaknesses of agritourism services in the respondents' opinion.

**Table (2): The characteristics of the studied population.**

	Specification	N=120	%
Gender	Woman	86	71.7
	Man	34	28.3
Age	Up to 24 years old	44	36.7
	25-34	62	51.7
	35-44	10	8.3
	Over 45 years old	4	3.3
Education	Elementary	2	1.7
	Basic vocational	12	10.0
	Secondary	56	46.7
	Higher	50	41.7

## Results

The first issue taken up in the research was the frequency of using agritourism services by respondents. Stay and rest in rural areas is a popular form of tourism. Tourists more and more often appreciate the natural and cultural values of Poland, which can guarantee a pleasant holiday. That is why more and more people choose trips to agritourism farms. table (3) presents the frequency of using agritourism services by respondents, including tourist seasons (own and other authors' research). The conducted own research shows that the majority of respondents used the services of agritourism farms 2 to 3 times. On this basis, it can be concluded that the respondents relatively often used tourist trips while choosing rural

areas. The results of studies by other authors show that respondents preferred one longer trip to agritourism farms in a given year in the summer.

An important factor in the research was the length of stay and accompanying persons during rest on agritourism farms. The respondents who preferred trips to agritourism farms had other predispositions, taking into account the place of rest, the form of accommodation, accompanying persons during the trip, as well as the length of stay. Detailed research results regarding the choice of location during agritourism trips are presented in table (4).

**Table (3): Frequency of using agritourism services within 2-3 years by respondents, including tourist seasons (%).**

Specification	2015 <sup>a</sup> N=100	2015 <sup>b</sup> N=108	2016 <sup>c</sup> N=200	2019 <sup>d</sup> N=120	Mean± SD
Rare (once every few years)	5.0	34.0	26.0	-	21.7±12.2
Once a year longer trip (in the summer season)	46.0	38.0	65.0	11.7	40.2± 19.1
2 to 3 times a year (shorter trips in the summer season)	49.0	21.0	9.0	40.0	29.8± 15.7
3 to 5 times a year (in summer and winter season)	49.0	7.0	9.0	25.8	22.7± 16.8
More than 5 times a year (in summer and winter season)	49.0	7.0	9.0	21.7	21.7± 16.7

<sup>a</sup> (Dominik, 2015), <sup>b</sup> (Hawlana, *et al.*, 2017), <sup>c</sup> (Szczepanowska & Witkowska, 2016), <sup>d</sup> Present data.

**Table (4): Choosing a place to stay during agritourism trips (%).**

Specification	2016 <sup>a</sup> N=200	2019 <sup>b</sup> N=120	Standard deviation
I always choose the same agritourism farm	44.0	11.7	16.2
I always try to choose another object for rest	26.0	47.5	10.8
It depends on many factors; it can be different	28.0	40.0	6.0

<sup>a</sup> (Szczepanowska & Witkowska, 2016) (Values do not add up to 100%), <sup>b</sup> Present data.

**Table (5): The length of stay of respondents on agritourism farms (%).**

Specification	2012 <sup>a</sup> N=100	2015 <sup>b</sup> N=108	2016 <sup>c</sup> N=200	2017 <sup>d</sup> N=100	2019 <sup>e</sup> N=120	Standard deviation
From 1 to 3 days (e.g. weekend or holiday trip)	72.0	28.0	18.0	36.0	35.8	18.2
From 4 to 7 days	10.0	43.0	24.0	29.0	57.5	16.3
From 8 to 14 days	18.0	23.0	47.0	19.0	4.2	13.9

Over 14 days	18.0	6.0	10.0	16.0	1.7	5.3
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<sup>a</sup>(Sokół, 2012), <sup>b</sup>(Hawlena *et al.*, 2017), <sup>c</sup> (Szczepanowska & Witkowska, 2016) (Values do not add up to 100%).

<sup>d</sup>(Dąbrowski *et al.*, 2018), <sup>e</sup> Present data .

According to own research, almost 60% of respondents spent their time on agritourism farms from 4 to 7 days. The smallest number of respondents went up to two weeks or above this time. The results of studies by other authors show that the majority of respondents preferred to relax for up to 7 days on agritourism farms. Only the Szczepanowska & Witkowska (2016) studies show that the surveyed people preferred to rest in rural areas for 8 to 14 days.

Own research shows that almost half of the respondents have always chosen another agritourism farm as a place to rest. The research of Szczepanowska & Witkowska (2016) shows that almost half of the respondents preferred to choose the same object for rest all the time. Table (5) presents the length of stay of respondents on agritourism farms. Table (6) presents accompanying persons during the organization of joint trips to agritourism farms.

**Table (6): People accompanying tourists during the organization of joint trips to agritourism farms in the respondents' opinion (%).**

Specification	2010 <sup>a</sup> N=256	2013-2015 <sup>b</sup> N=221	2016 <sup>c</sup> N=342	2017 <sup>d</sup> N=100	2019 <sup>e</sup> N=120	Standard deviation
With family (families with children)	76.2	70.6	24.0	64.0	45.8	19.0
Among friends / friends (organized groups)	16.4	31.2	10.0	33.0	31.7	9.4
With a partner	37.5	39.8	44.0	-	15.8	10.9
Grandparents with grandchildren	10.9	13.1	-	-	-	1.1
Other	2.0	-	22.0	3.0	4.2	8.2

<sup>a</sup>(Roman, 2014), <sup>b</sup>(Roman, 2018), <sup>c</sup> (Kosmaczewska, 2016), <sup>d</sup>(Dąbrowski, *et al.*, 2018), <sup>e</sup> Present data.

The presented data shows that the surveyed respondents chose different forms of association during their stay on agritourism farms. These people preferred to travel mainly with family. Every third respondent went among friends. Research results of other authors show a similar sentence on a given topic. Only studies by Szczepanowska &

Witkowska (2016) show that nearly half of the respondents most often went to this type of facilities with a partner.

An important factor conditioning the stay in rural areas are the motives for using agritourism services. Increasingly, an important factor that guides a tourist when

choosing a stay is the destination of rest, where it will be possible to relax, regenerate strength in the fresh air, meet new people and their traditions and culture away from the big city in peace and quiet. Table (7) presents the motives influencing the choice of agritourism farm.

Table (7) shows, the conducted own research, as well as that of other authors, shows that the majority of respondents indicated peace and quiet as the main motive for choosing rest. Many people are tired of "big cities", which is why they are looking for

peace and quiet, taking advantage of natural and cultural values. In addition, the price attractiveness of such services was an important factor. The respondents also wanted to learn about rural life, customs and customs (monuments, folk rites, folklore), as well as make new friends. The research also shows that people were guided by the popularity of the resting place they had checked. Only research by Dąbrowski *et al.* (2018) show that the main motive was close contact with nature.

**Table (7): Motives influencing the choice of agritourism services in the opinion of the respondents (%).**

Specification	2010 <sup>a</sup> N=221	2012 <sup>b</sup> N=100	2013-2015 <sup>c</sup> N=192	2017 <sup>d</sup> N=100	2019 <sup>e</sup> N=120	Standard deviation
Peace and quiet	78.8	-	81.3	7.0	85.0	32.4
Affordable prices, low cost of holidays	50.4	40.0	24.0	18.0	51.7	13.7
The opportunity to meet rural life, new people, habits and customs	11.5	-	12.5	17.0	25.8	5.6
Close contact with nature (environmental cleanliness) natural and cultural values	49.6	31.0	37.5	21.0	20.0	11.0
Willingness to spend free time actively (e.g. horse riding, mushroom picking, bathing in the river, etc.)	20.4	-	14.6	10.0	10.8	4.1
Healthy organic food	13.3	2.0	36.5	19.0	17.5	11.1
Popularity of the place (checked object)	36.3	3.0	-	-	10.0	14.3
Other	4.4	24.0	-	8.0	-	8.5

The respondent could indicate more than one answer.

<sup>a</sup>(Roman, 2014), <sup>b</sup> (Sokół, 2012), <sup>c</sup> (Roman, 2018), <sup>d</sup>(Dąbrowski *et al.*, 2018), <sup>e</sup> Present data.

To the important conditions for choosing agritourism as a form of recreation is the tourist offer, which can ensure the attractiveness of spending free time. Every tourist who comes to agritourism farms takes into account different forms of spending their time depending on individual interests and preferences. Often, such trips allow you to learn more about life in the countryside, and also acquire new skills, e.g. participation in folk handicraft workshops. This can affect regeneration and relax and rest from daily duties.

Table (8) presents the preferences for the use of free time by respondents on an agritourism farm. According to own research shows that the majority of respondents

preferred to spend their free time on walking and hiking. In addition, during such trips people visited the nearby area, used the surrounding rivers, lakes (swimming, water sports, canoeing), as well as organized a bonfire or barbecue. It can be seen that the respondents most often chose those forms of recreation that do not require the need for additional equipment, often specialized (cycling, fishing). Table (9) presents the forms of gastronomy on an agritourism farm. The own research, as well as of other authors, shows that the majority of respondents used the catering services of the facility's owner or prepared meals themselves. Every fifth respondent dined at nearby gastronomy points.

**Table (8): Activities and accompanying services during organization of free time in an agritourism farm (%).**

Specification	2010* N=256	2019** N=120	Standard deviation
Walking, hiking, including hiking trails	63.7	83.3	9.8
Sightseeing in the immediate area	-	67.5	-
Swimming, water sports (e.g. canoeing)	45.1	55.8	5.3
Cycling	62.8	54.2	4.3
Fishing	39.5	14.2	12.7
Grilling, bonfire	85.2	11.7	36.8
Mushrooming	51.6	10.8	20.4
Traditional handicraft workshops (e.g. pottery)	-	7.5	-
Horse Riding	16.8	6.7	5.1
Fishing equipment rental	42.6	2.5	20.1
Other	4.7	1.7	1.5

The respondent could indicate more than one answer.

\*(Roman, 2014), \*\* present data.

**Table (9): Forms of gastronomy on agritourism farms in the respondents' opinion (%).**

Specification	2010 <sup>a</sup> N=226	2015 <sup>b</sup> N=100	2016 <sup>c</sup> N=200	2019 <sup>d</sup> N=120	Standard deviation
I eat at the hosts	56.6	61.0	>70.0	33.3	12.2
I prepare my own meals in the facility	33.3	9.0	4.0	31.7	13.1
I use the services of small eateries in nearby towns	-	16.0	7.0	20.0	5.4
I go to restaurants to cities or small towns	-	14.0	-	14.2	0.1

<sup>a</sup>(Roman, 2014), <sup>b</sup> (Dominik, 2015), <sup>c</sup> (Szczepanowska & Witkowska, 2016), <sup>d</sup> Present data .

The conducted own research shows that the majority of respondents (72%) positively assessed their experiences related to agritourism services, and only for 6% of respondents such trips were negative. Other people could not express their opinion clearly. The last part of the research was to identify

the strengths and weaknesses of agritourism services. Each tourist has an individual approach to choosing a given place and may have different expectations before using a given service. Table (10) presents the strengths of agritourism in the respondents' opinion.

**Table (10): Strengths of agritourism in the opinion of respondents (%).**

Specification	2019 (N=120)
Quiet and peaceful place	25.8
Affordable prices	24.2
Contact with nature	15.8
Nice family atmosphere	14.2
Contact with farm animals	10.0
Possibility to try regional products	7.5
Contact with rural folklore	2.5
Possibility to accompany the hosts with daily activities	1.7
Other	0.8

Among the surveyed people, the strengths of agritourism include silence and peace, a diverse cuisine, a wide range of activities and opportunities for active leisure, a friendly family atmosphere on the part of the owners and a sense of comfort, as well as a combination of agritourism with everyday life in the countryside. Therefore, it can be assumed that the surveyed Warsaw residents, working professionally, were looking for cheap places where they could rest and relax. What they most appreciated during their stay at the agritourism farm was the fact that they come away from work, school and everyday duties.

The weaknesses of agritourism may result from the lack of an offer to potential customer

segments. Detailed data is presented in table (11).

More than half of the respondents said that most often the offers of agritourism farms lacked activities during bad weather conditions. In addition, the lack of recreational equipment rentals, the lack of tours organized by the hosts to attractive places in the area, and the lack of activities for children was a major impediment to recreation. The research shows that the respondents wanted additional activities that meant that they would not be bored and would feel satisfied even in bad weather conditions.

**Table (11): Weaknesses of agritourism in the opinion of respondents (%).**

Specification	2019 (N=120)
No activities during bad weather	55.8
There are no sports and recreational equipment rentals	21.7
No tours organized by the hosts	15.8
No regional dishes	14.2
No activities for children	7.5
Other	4.2

Table (12) presents the respondents opinion on the popularity of agritourism. Over half of the respondents said that agritourism is becoming an increasingly popular form of

recreation. On this basis, it can be concluded that agritourism is growing in popularity in Poland.

**Table (12): The popularity of agritourism in Poland in the opinion of respondents [%]**

Specification	2019 N=120
Definitely yes	17.5
Rather yes	54.2
Hard to say	15.0
Rather no	7.5
Definitely no	5.0

## Conclusions

The dynamic development of agritourism in Poland is associated with a growing demand for rest in the bosom of nature, away from the bustle of a big city, surrounded by nature and in the company of friendly people who can enrich the life experience and knowledge of tourists with stories of traditions and customs that have already been forgotten in cities. New agritourism farms are still being created, which are dynamically developing in attractive natural and cultural regions of Poland. The number of tourists enjoying this form of recreation is also increasing, and the proverbial "vacation under the pear" has ceased to be something to be ashamed of, but has even become "a fashion manifestation". Guests using agritourism services can enjoy beautiful views, enjoy the beauties of nature, taste regional cuisine, and spend their leisure time meeting new people, cultures and customs. It is also possible to combine nature relaxation with attractive forms of physical recreation by using accompanying infrastructure. Based on the own research, several conclusions were made:

Most often respondents used agritourism services for several days spending their stay together with their family, the main motive

for choosing the place of rest by the respondents was peace and quiet, as well as price attractiveness, most of the respondents spent their free time on agritourism farms on walks and hikes, and exploring the surrounding area.

The article contains content on the conditions for choosing agritourism as a form of recreation. The presented issues have a significant impact on showing selected factors that stimulate the development of agritourism. There are dynamic changes in rural areas, which is why it is worth carrying out similar research on the development of agritourism in the future on a larger research sample in Poland and in selected European countries. One of the aims of the article was to compare own research with other studies.

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## شروط اختيار مكان الاستراحة في السياحة الزراعية في بولندا

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المستخلص: كان الغرض من الدراسة هو عرض العوامل المشروطة لاستخدام خدمات السياحة الزراعية. أجريت الدراسة في ايار 2019 باستخدام مسح تشخيصي باستخدام استبيان على عينة من 120 شخص عشوائياً شملهم الاستطلاع في وارسو في بولندا. الأشخاص الذين تمت دراستهم يستخدمون خدمات السياحة الزراعية لعدة أيام حين يقضون إقامتهم مع العائلة. كان الدافع الرئيسي لاختيار مكان الراحة من قبل تلك الاشخاص هو السلام والهدوء، وكذلك الأسعار المناسبة. يقضي الأشخاص الذين شملهم الاستطلاع وقت فراغهم في خدمات السياحة الزراعية على المشي في الاماكن العامة والمشي لمسافات طويلة في الطبيعة واستكشاف المنطقة المجاورة.

الكلمات المفتاحية: السياحة الريفية، السياحة الزراعية، الظروف، أوقات الفراغ، المناطق الريفية.