

# The Development of Travel and Tourism Industry in Iran

Aleksandr B. Orishev\*, Azer A. Mamedov, Igor Yu. Zalyzin, Dmitry V. Kotusov and Sergey L. Grigoriev

*Russian State Agrarian University Named after K.A. Timiryazev, Timiryazevskaya Street, 49, 127550, Moscow, Russia*

**Abstract:** The article presents the results of scientific research devoted to the study of tourism in the countries of the Far East, obtained at one of its stages. The purpose of the article is to characterize the state of rural tourism in Iran. The article shows how the attitude to tourism has changed in this country, uncovering the main reasons for the growth of domestic and international tourist flows in recent years. There are several areas of rural tourism in Iran, which include visits to historical villages and free trade zones, camping in nomad tents, recreation in parks and natural resorts, and trips to the desert. The main research findings of the authors demonstrate the problems facing rural tourism in Iran and identify the risks that arise in this sector of the economy.

**Keywords:** Iran, Tourism Industry, Village, Rural Territories, Travel.

## INTRODUCTION

Dependence on oil revenues is one of the prominent features of Iran's economy, which has increased in the last three decades. Although Iran's oil reserves are very rich, it will be depleted in the not-too-distant future. Therefore, the importance of the tourism industry in Iran, especially in the coming decades when the country's facilities will be more limited than oil revenues is not hidden from anyone. Today, most countries in the world in close competition seek to enjoy the economic, social, cultural benefits, and in particular to receive a greater share of income and increase the level of employment due to the tourism industry in their country (Naderi, Vosta, Ebrahimi and Jalilvand 2019).

It is well known that the COVID-19 pandemic has dealt a powerful blow to a full range of services. The tourism industry, and above all, international tourism, took the very first blow, and even with favourable circumstances, it will take several years to recover. Only the pace of recovery will be different. It can only be said with full confidence that the crisis will certainly be an impetus for the development of domestic tourism, in which rural tourism takes a large share. That is fully true of a country like Iran, which has been hit hard by the pandemic. In addition to this, Iran continues to suffer losses from economic sanctions.

Iranian scientists pay the most serious attention to the importance of developing rural tourism. This is evidenced by publications in the scientific literature of

recent years. It is noted that "Tourism plays an important role in the diversification of the rural economy, and its expansion contributes to the sustainability of the population and the economy of these areas" (Nooripoor, Khosrowjerdi, Rastegari 2020). "Tourism is an important component of farm development," Iranian scientists said (Nematpour & Khodadadi, 2020). They draw attention to factors that Europeans underestimate. In particular, they speak of the conflicts that arise between country dwellers and tourists. The reason is that foreigners photograph them without their permission. As a result, Iranians have become more cautious in communicating with foreigners (Ghaderi & Beal, 2020). Issues related to the social component of rural tourism in Iran are being widely discussed (Naderi *et al.*, 2019). Studies are being carried out to identify motivational factors in rural tourism and rural segmentation (Bayat, Rastegar, Salvati, Darabi 2019); Varmazyari, Asadi, Kalantari, Joppe and Rezvani 2018).

The aims of the study are to characterize the state of rural tourism in Iran and to show it as a driver for the reconstruction of the tourism sector affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

## METHODS OF RESEARCH

During the process of writing this article, the following methods, developed by modern science, were applied: system analysis, content analysis of tourist sites, extrapolation, and forecasting. We attempted to analyze tourist-related websites and recent studies to gain comprehensive knowledge of Iran's tourism industry over the last years and make some recommendations in order to improve this lucrative industry.

\*Address correspondence to this author at the Russian State Agrarian University Named after K.A. Timiryazev, Timiryazevskaya Street, 49, 127550, Moscow, Russia; E-mail: o.publication34@mail.ru

## RESULTS OF THE STUDY AND THEIR DISCUSSION

Iran is a country that became attractive to tourists during the pre-Islamic period. For centuries Europeans sought to learn the wisdom of the peoples of the East and to come into contact with a unique local culture. During the reign of the Pehlevi dynasty, as part of the "White Revolution" orchestrated by Reza Shah, a number of activities were carried out in the country to develop domestic, including rural tourism. However, the Shah regime did not complain to foreigners, deeming their stay in the country as a threat to national security. The exception was made for Americans, whose share in the total tourist flow reached 70%. They came to Iran usually for beach holidays on the Caspian Sea coast.

Islamic revolutionaries who came to power in 1979 began to view tourism not only as a source of economic benefit, but also as an important instrument of ideological influence over other countries. And it is understandable: the Islamic Republic of Iran is a recognized center of Shiism, one of the two directions in Islam. Hence, its own philosophy of tourism emerged: travel for Muslims as another way to acquire wisdom and prove the greatness of Allah, who created this unfathomable world. These principles formed the basis of the first tourism development program for 1989-1993.

However, economic sanctions have forced the Iranian government to change its emphasis somewhat, focusing on tourism as a source of income. Tourism revenues were to replace oil revenues. This calculation turned out to be correct: the number of foreign tourists visiting Iran grew year by year, and by 2016 tourism made up already 7.7% of the gross domestic product of the country. The most rapid growth was observed during the period of 1995-2015. During this period the number of foreigners who arrived in the country increased 20 times, reaching 5.24 million people (Mazrai Tuchai & Fokeeva, 2017).

The progress made inspired the Iranian authorities. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani said that it is necessary to increase the number of foreign tourists to 20 million by 2025 (Soroko, 2017). Note that Iranians themselves were equally willing to travel around their country. About 80% of Iranian citizens make at least one trip annually, spending three days traveling.

In order to promote tourism, local filmmakers made a documentary about Iran's tourist attractions and broadcast it on a local television channel. The Iranian

authorities launched audiovisual guides for tourists into mass production. Representatives of the private sector providing tourism services were granted tax incentives. Measures were also taken to establish tourism management, suggesting that responsible persons in Iran understand the need to train their citizens involved in tourism. The Iranian government has begun to train qualified personnel and cultivate relationships with tourism organizations.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Iran was one of the top ten most attractive countries for tourism with significant tourist resources. However, not more than two per cent of the country's population is employed in this sector, indicating the great potential of the tourism sector. The involvement of more citizens in this business and the attraction of foreign tourists can lead not only to the growth of the economy as a whole but also give impetus to the development of rural areas. Naturally, all these can be done only after overcoming the consequences of the world pandemic. Sadly, the emergence of COVID-19 has caused significant damage to Iran's tourism industry. Subsequently, the number of visitors travelling to Iran has decreased by almost half over the past year (Ghaderi and Beal 2020; Bykova, Garnov, Stroev and Pivovarova 2019).

For the general public, tourism in Iran is associated primarily with pilgrimage tours and travels to historical and cultural monuments. Indeed, the development of tourism in this country in recent years has been mainly due to travels to Iranian cities, which are characterized by a rich cultural and historical environment (Shenasa, 2011). In many ways, this is the merit of the central authorities, who have approached this issue in a comprehensive manner. The organization of numerous festivals, fairs, exhibitions, sports, and cultural and mass competitions resulted in a surge of interest in Iran as a tourist destination.

However, Iranian rural tourism is less known to the general public. In Iran, it is seen as a supplement to other types of tourism. A characteristic feature of rural tourism in this country is the decentralization of the management of this sector. Its development is mainly carried out by local structures. They are also engaged in accurate accounting of revenues received in this area and have a budget. The funds received from tourism are used to establish communications in rural areas, a condition of which leaves much to be desired. It is no secret that roads in the provinces, instead of even pavements, are ordinary tracks. The development of rural tourism in Iran also supports local handicrafts,

such as carpetmaking, felting, pottery production, and other crafts (Hoseini & Zore, 2013). It is also fight against poverty, which is stressed in the works of Iranian authors (Torabi, Rezvani and Badri 2019).

Before we go into analysis of main directions of rural tourism in Iran, we will review basic terminology. According to modern interpretation, "rural tourism" can refer to various types of tourism, in the process of which rural areas are developed. In other words, apart from the agricultural tourism itself, when a tourist is directly involved in agricultural work, these are other activities that contribute to the preservation and maintenance of rural life, crafts, traditions, etc.

The first direction of rural tourism in Iran is to visit the so-called historical villages, special locations in which tourists find ancient and original Iran. Today there are about a hundred such villages in the country, in which the traditional way and authentic culture of Persian and other tribes are preserved. The oldest of these have been submitted for inclusion into the UNESCO World Heritage List.

By the degree of fame and recognition, Meymand, a settlement located in Kerman Province, can be placed in the first place. This village is notable for its houses built in rocks. In 2015, it was included in the list of UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Asia as an outstanding example of a man-made structure with a traditional way of using land. The inhabitants of Meymand are nomadic tribes, the descendants of ancient Aryans. They have no imagination about the urban way of life, living four months a year in their village and the rest of the time in pastures or agricultural areas. There nomads grow products for their own consumption. A hotel has been built for tourists in Meymand, with several cafes and a restaurant of national cuisine.

The village of Masule, inhabited by the Talysh and located in Gilan Province, is considered to be a pearl among the attractions of northern Iran. It is at the same height as the summit of Elbrus (1,050 meters). Masule attracts tourists to its unusual architecture. The houses are built in the form of tiers: the roofs of the lower ones are the foundation for the upper ones. Iranian experts claim that this village "is analogous to no other place in the world" (Shenasa, 2010). And it really is not. Tiers are connected to each other by means of narrow stairs leading to upper terraces. The main building material is wood or clay. The rear walls of the houses are rocks. Roads on the roofs of houses are so narrow that places

resemble paths on which two people can barely disperse. There were times when the village lived at the expense of trade. However, the decline of the merchant business created unemployment and the outflow of residents. Consequently, tourism became a rescue for Masule, allowing local residents provide tourism services to escape poverty.

From the point of view of ethnography, the visit to Masule is a wonderful way to learn as much as possible about the life of Talysh, one of the national minorities of Iran, about which information is scarce and contradictory (Mamedov, Orishev, Zalyzin, Fomina and Paikidze 2018). The Talysh sell to tourists' handmade souvenirs that are woven, knitted, molded from clay, and cut from wood. Some examples of Talysh jewelry include dolls, knives, assorted socks, sweaters, and caps. They treat tourists in a rustic way in which guests are fed delicious meals until they are very full. The most popular local dish, Mirza Gasemi, is prepared with eggplants fried on coal.

Many Iranians would like to have summer houses in Masule in order to get out of the megacities and go into the shady gorge of the mountain rivers (Traditional villages in Iran, 2018). In order to further develop tourism, the Iranian government has proposed to list Masule as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. It remains to be added that due to the vicissitudes of the local climate, when there are heavy snowfalls in winter and heavy rains in autumn, the best time to visit the village is in spring.

The village of Uramanat, located in Iranian Kurdistan, also represents an interesting location for rural tourism. A patient traveler who reaches this spot will see here not only a beautiful mountainous landscape, but also get acquainted with the traditional way of life, almost unchanged in many decades. The cultural and historical landscape around the village of Uramanat is also a candidate for the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site.

The village of Abyani, one of the most ancient settlements in Iran, whose history dates back to more than 2,000 years, became a famous cultural center. It is sometimes called a red village due to the soil there having a reddish shade. Abyani is also a candidate for inclusion in the UNESCO World Heritage List. The villagers have maintained the tradition of hand-weaving for centuries, thus attracting tourists who enthusiastically buy the products of local artisans. Equally interesting are the Abyan women dressing in traditional garments and vests. The pride of the local

people is their language: they speak the ancient Persian dialect *Pehlevi*, which is more melodious and sonorous than Farsi. Majority of permanent residents are of old age, since almost all young people have left the village. Young people come here only during summer, at the height of the tourist season. If the flow of tourists increases, then we can predict the return of young people to their native places as the need for hotels, cafes and commercial real estate increases.

Other historic villages include Filband, a small village at 2,700 meters on the slope of Mount Damavand, resembling an islet, surrounded by clouds on all sides; Sara Agha Sayed which is a unique settlement in the Zagros Mountains whose inhabitants lead a casual lifestyle like its inhabitants used to hundreds of years ago; and Kandovan which is a village in the province of East Azerbaijan. All residential, economic, and public buildings in Kandovan village are carved in rock. Even the local water pipeline is not laid through pipes but is knocked out in the thickness of stone.

The second direction of rural tourism in Iran is to live in tent camps of nomads, a national minority in Iran. Here tourists are invited to get acquainted with the life and ancient crafts of Kashkayan, Lur, Bahtiar, Baloch, and Shahsevan peoples. Interest in these tribes is caused by the fact that their way of life is significantly different from that of ordinary villagers, including the Persians who are the titular nation in Iran. The number of the latter is 45 million 860 thousand or 55% of the population of the country (as of September 2019).

Kashkayans are one of Iran's national minorities, a nomadic people whose numbers in Fars Province reach 2 million people. They are more hospitable than are the Persians and many other tribes that inhabit modern Iran. Kashkayan people differ from other Iranian peoples in their headgear in that each Kashkai wears a wool hat. In winter, the cap protects them from cold, and in summer from debilitating heat. Tourists are invited to live in tents, a temporary shelter of Kashkayans. Every evening, family members gather around a tent under the light of a kerosene lantern and have conversations, summing up the day and building plans for the future. Tourists also take part in these gatherings. This is the first level of immersion into the Kashkai life.

The second level of immersion is direct participation in the nomadic life. Twice a year Kashkayans move to a new place, covering on average a path of 250 km.

The journey lasts three to four weeks. It is not unusual that sometimes tourists join the nomads. They get acquainted with Kashkai life, their mentality, and traditions. Foreigners are struck by the Kashkai's commitment to five local symbols of success: fire, eagle, dog, hearth, and woman. If one misses something from this list, he becomes subject to universal condemnation. Tourists also learn to unravel the Kashkai cultural code encrypted in their clothes. The number of colored pompons behind the back of a Kashkai indicates the number of children he has. If there are such pompons in front of his garment, it indicates that he is married.

In the province of Luristan, tourists are waiting to get acquainted with the Lurs. Their total number in Iran is 5 million people. Living with them represents the romance of life in the mountains. Two large Lur tribes are of interest: Pushtekoh and Peshkoh. They are engaged in cattle farming, sometimes farming, and have still maintained a tribal way of life.

Of interest for rural tourism is familiarity with the Bakhtiaris, a people that lead nomadic and semi-nomadic lifestyles, whose number does not exceed 570,000 people in Iran. They sacredly honor their centuries-old traditions, but also do not abandon modern amenities. In summer, they live in mountainous villages and engage in farming. In winter, their place of residence becomes Garmsir, a hot lowland coast of the Persian Gulf. Here they arrange for local factories and spread their famous tents on free platforms. In contrast to older times, they do not cover themselves with goat skin, but with tarpaulin. The second sign of modern life here is a car nearby. Bakhtiari women are of particular interest to tourists. Unlike Persians, they dress in bright colors. Each woman wears several skirts of different colors, colorful shawls, and ancient national decorations with beads made of ancient coins, rings, and bracelets. Some women wear a small silver ring in their nostrils and tattoo several dots are on their foreheads and chins.

Along the border with Pakistan, there is another nomadic tribe, Baloch, whose number is determined to be only 5-7 million people in Iran. According to some reports, the Baloch, as well as Talysh, are ancient descendants of Midians. They live off cattle breeding and raise livestock, mainly goats and camels. The exception is only pigs, whom they, as Muslims, ignore. Some tourists are interested in their religious practices. Despite the fact that the majority of Baloch are Sunni Muslims, among them there are also pagans, or stone-

worshippers. Traditional occupations of this tribe, such as production of cannabis, cotton and tobacco, and carpeting are also of interest. Most Baloch live in poverty, practically without medical care and education due to their attachment to tradition. In a situation where fried locust is already a joy for the average Baloch, tourism can be the solution to their economic problems and will allow them to overcome the poverty threshold.

In northern Iran, tourists are expected to meet with Shahsevans, one of the Turkic-speaking tribes, whose numbers are based on approximate data. Hunting, archery, carpet-weaving are activities of Shahsevans, that are of interest to tourists. Otherwise, their way of life is little different from that of ordinary villagers.

The third direction of rural tourism is resting in parks and natural resorts. First of all, we should mention the islands in the Persian Gulf, Qeshm and Kish, which are able to receive up to a million tourists a year. Qeshm forests, for example, attract many local and foreign tourists. Guests ride on high-speed boats passing through the overgrowth. Here tourists can also closely watch tropical birds, such as flamingoes, sea swallows, blue hawks, green herons, and gray pelicans. Coral reefs in the vicinity of the island pique the interest of divers. Note that both the islands of Qeshm and Kish are free economic zones with special tourism regulations. Here the Islamic dress code is less observed and the sale of alcohol is allowed.

Among the famous national parks, we will name Golestan, Khar Turan, and Khabr. According to the program of one of the tours, the trip to Golestan involves a safari in the park in search of spotted leopards, simple trekking for two or three hours on a hilly forest steppe and broadleaf forest, and a night in ecolodge. Tourists also get an opportunity to get acquainted with the life of one of Iran's small nationalities, the ethnic Turkmen, and to taste their national cuisine (<https://www.otkrytie.ru>).

Khar Turan National Park attracts visitors to its diverse wildlife. It is a vast habitat of various species of animals living in the desert, the most famous of which are Asian cheetahs and Iranian zebras. When visiting Khar Turan, the residence of tourists becomes the village of Gale-bala, located among gardens with famous eastern fruits of pomegranates, apricots, yellow figs, grapes and walnuts.

Khabr is generally considered Iran's largest national park. It is an amazing green oasis in the desert climate of Kerman Province.

The above parks are only part of the national parks complex established in Iran. In early 2013, the Iranian authorities announced their intention to open 65 thousand hectares of Friendship Park on the Armenian-Iranian border. This project was to promote the development of rural tourism both in Iran and Armenia (Areshev, 2015).

It is also necessary to mention such a direction of rural tourism in Iran as trips to the desert, for example, to Dasht-e Kavir, located near the holy city of Kum. Desert lands are classified as inter-village territories, which together with rural settlements constitute the concept of rural territories. The fresh air of the desert and the romance of dinner on a carpet catching sand are attractive to foreigners as well as the Iranians themselves, travelling inside the country.

Additionally, the centers of ancient religion of Iran, Zoroastrianism, are Yazd and Kerman, which are very popular among tourists for their beautiful gardens and huge deserts. Tourists visit Dasht-e Lut Desert in order to admire the beautiful starry skies. In Yazd, the Zoroastrian temple of fire, known since the mid fifth century B.C., is of great interest to tourists, too.

Rural tourism in Iran has a number of advantages. First of all, it offers competitive prices for basic tourist services. But it should be noted that if it is one price for a Persian, for a foreign tourist it increases two to three times. Experts note this feature of rural tourism in Iran for its relative cheapness compared to other types of tourism. "It does not require a large amount of investment," notes M. Daliri especially (Daliri, 2012).

It is also worthy to note the absence of inter-ethnic conflicts and the loyal attitude of the local population toward tourists. Iranians are incredibly fond of tourists, ready to host them for a night, give them a ride anywhere, treat them to meals, give gifts, etc. Many Iranians, if they don't speak English, then they at least understand it. The English language is taught in schools along with Farsi. We also pay attention to the liberalization of the dress code. Foreigners, including women, are no more subject to the strict requirements as they were 15-20 years ago. In particular, the mandatory wearing of *chador* has been abolished. In any case, however, men should cover their knees and for women it is mandatory to cover their heads with a scarf or turban.

At the same time, the development of rural tourism in Iran is hampered by a variety of factors. Above all,

these are the vicissitudes of the local climate. The very nature of Iran limits the flow of tourists as not everyone is able to withstand sharp changes in temperature. Most of Iran has very hot days and very cold nights. At the same time, on the coasts of the Persian and Oman gulfs, the average temperature in July is 32 degrees Celsius (Christov, 2013).

The difference in mentality plays a role as well. There are also subjective reasons since not all European tourists are able to adapt to the realities of the Muslim Shiite country.

The development of tourism is also hampered by politics. It is known that people who have previously visited Israel, which is referred to here as the Occupied Palestine, are prohibited from entering Iran. We will name such a problem as the information war against Iran launched by the Western media. Nor can we not mention the ignorance of Europeans, who often confuse Iran with neighboring and not the most prosperous Iraq. Moreover, some Europeans are convinced that Arabic is spoken in Iran.

One cannot help but mention the sanctions imposed on Iran by the West. Iran does not operate international payment systems Visa and MasterCard. Even online payment systems are impossible with these cards (Patrakeeva, 2017). Therefore, foreign tourists have to stock cash currency.

The work of transport in Iran leaves much to be desired. Foreigners express dissatisfaction with the fact that buses taking them to villages are generally classified as obsolete. They have the same outdated seats in the salons, and the air conditioning much needed in the local climate is not available. Beaten Jeeps of different models do not meet the needs of foreign tourists. Therefore, the issue of improving tourism services is on the agenda.

There is a need for a comprehensive tourism education for the development of rural tourism. The population should accept and understand tourism for its overall economic importance for the country as well as for individual households. It is necessary to improve the legal framework for tourism, to create a map of tourist zones, and to define new routes. Additionally, there is a common problem for all countries affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. They not only need to ensure the safety of tourists, but also to convince them that their health will not be threatened when travelling to Iran.

## CONCLUSIONS

Summing up the study, we note that despite significant positive developments in the improvement of rural tourism and considerable potential of this sector of the economy, there are a whole range of problems both internal and external. After at least some of the problems are solved, the Islamic Republic of Iran may well become one of the leaders of rural tourism in the Middle Eastern region. And if the flow of foreign tourists as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic is significantly reduced, the tourism industry in Iran will be able to recover its losses through domestic tourism and above all, rural tourism. And this scenario is seen as the most likely.

## REFERENCES

- Areshev, A.G. (2015). Economic relations between Iran and the states of the South Caucasus in the context of partial easing of sanctions, Russian-Iranian relations. Problems and prospects. Compilation of international conference articles. WILLOWS OF RAS; Under Ed. E.V. Dunayeva, V.I. Sazina. M.: IVRAN, 104-108.
- Bayat, N., Rastegar, E., Salvati, L., Darabi, H. (2019). Motivation-based Market Segmentation in Rural Tourism: The Case of Saman, Iran. *Almatourism-Journal of Tourism Culture and Territorial Development*, 10(19), p. 1-24.
- Bykova, O. N., Garnov, A. P., Stroeve, P. V., & Pivovarova, O. V. (2019). Employment management policies in single-industry towns in the light of existing issues of precarious employment. <https://doi.org/10.35808/ijeba/377>
- Christov, T.T. (2013). Modern state, problems and prospects of tourism development in Iran. *Scientific bulletin of MGIT*, 1(12), 24-31.
- Daliri, M. (2012). Distinctive features and prospects of tourism management in the Islamic Republic of Iran. *Economic sciences*, 8(17), 79-81.
- Discovery of Iran: Persian culture, national parks and the Caspian. URL: <https://www.otkrytie.ru/iran/otkrytie-irana-tegeran-shiraz-isfahan-yazd-meshhed-kaspiyskoe-more> (дата обращения 17.11.2019).
- Ghaderi, Z., & Beal, L. (2020). Local impression of tourist photographing: A perspective from Iran. *Tourism Management*. February. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10708-020-10153-z>
- Hoseini, S.H., & Zore B.A. (2013). Problems and prospects in the development of Mazenderan (Iran), *NAT Gazette*, 3(27), 59-61.
- Mamedov, A., Orishev, A., Zalysin, I., Fomina, T., & Paikidze, A. (2018). Formation of the Talysh Ethnos Worldview under Geoethnic Conservation Area Conditions. *Journal of History Culture and Art Research*, 7(2), 155-167. <https://doi.org/10.7596/taksad.v7i2.1604>
- Mazrai Tuchia D.R., & Fokeeva L.V. (2017). Modern state and peculiarities of tourism development in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Belarus in the modern world. Materials of the XVI International Scientific Conference dedicated to the 96th anniversary of the formation of the Belarusian State University. 2017. Minsk: Publishing Center of BSU, 250.
- Naderi, A., Vosta, L.N., Ebrahimi, A., Jailvand, M.R. (2019). *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*. 39(9/10), 719-737. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSSP-06-2019-0124>

- Nematpour, M., & Khodadadi, M. (2020). Farm tourism as a driving force for socioeconomic development: a benefits viewpoint from Iran. *Current issues in Tourism*. January. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2020.1711712>
- Nooripoor, M., Khosrowjerdi, M., Rastegari, H. *et al.* (2020). The role of tourism in rural development: Evidence from Iran. *Geojournal*. February. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10708-020-10153-z>
- Patrakeeva, A.I. (2017). Territorial structure of tourist and recreational potential of Iran, Tourism and regional development. *Collection of scientific articles. Smolensk: Universum*, 183-186.
- Shenasa, H. (2010). Development of Tourism in Iran. *Architecture and Modern Information Technologies*, 2(11), p. 93.
- Shenasa, H. (2011). Organization of tourist activity area in the cities of Iran, *Architecture and Modern Information Technologies*, 2(15), p. 6.
- Soroko, P.O. (2017). Factors of the attractiveness of Iran as a tourist destination for the Belarusian entry tourism market, Belarus in the modern world. Materials of the XVI International Scientific Conference dedicated to the 96th anniversary of the formation of the Belarusian State University. Minsk: Publishing Center of BSU, 258-260.
- Torabi, Z-A., Rezvani, M.R., & Badri, S.A. (2019). Pro-poor tourism in Iran: the case of three selected villages in Shahrud. *Anatolia-International Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Resaerch*, 30(3), 368-378. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13032917.2019.1595689>
- Traditional villages in Iran. February 17, 2018 URL: <https://bazariran.ru/tradicionnye-derevni-v-irane/> (date of appeal 13.11.2019).
- Varmazyari, H., Asadi, A., Kalantari, K., Joppe, M., & Rezvani, M.R. (2018). Predicting potential agritourism segments on the basis of combined approach: The case of Qazvin, Iran. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, July-August. Vol. 20. N 4, p. 442-457. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.2195>

Received on 28-10-2020

Accepted on 03-12-2020

Published on 27-12-2020

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.6000/1929-4409.2020.09.257>© 2020 Orishev *et al.*; Licensee Lifescience Global.

This is an open access article licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/>) which permits unrestricted, non-commercial use, distribution and reproduction in any medium, provided the work is properly cited.