

**LATVIAN EXPERIENCE ORGANIZATION OF CONSULTING SYSTEM
FOR SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

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Abstract. *Today in the agricultural policy of advanced countries the emphasis shifts to support the development of agriculture and rural areas, so the jurisdiction of the agricultural advising service becomes more and more questions of sustainable rural development.*

In the post-Soviet countries that are now EU members, advisory services supported by the state either through government funding, and through a variety of grant programs. For Ukraine as an agricultural country, has chosen the European way of development, in the process of formation of a unified of the system consulting and regional development, of particular interest is the experience of the Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre (LRATC). The article considers the peculiarities the organization of advisory system in the agricultural sector in Latvia

Keywords: *sustainable rural development agricultural extension services, agrarian consulting, rural development, farmers, rural tourism*

Analysis of research and publications. Analysis of international experience shows that consulting activity occurred during the industrial revolution, thanks to the development of entrepreneurship and competition has forced manufacturers to improve knowledge management. So, consulting and extension service, as it is called in the world, has its deep historical roots [4, 7].

Agricultural extension services functioning in 130 countries over 100 years, including all European countries and North America. In recent years they have actively created in the post-soviet countries of Central and Eastern Europe and Asia and the developing countries.

For the purpose of legal regulation of agricultural consultative activity Verkhovna Rada of the of Ukraine was accepted in 2004 the Law of Ukraine "About agricultural consultative activity", which provides for government support consultative activities from the funds state and local budgets [1, 2].

The main tasks of agricultural extension are:

- practical assistance to farmers and rural population to learn methods of managing profitable in a market economy;

- improving knowledge and practical skills of farmers and rural populations;
- providing individual advice to farmers and rural population on marketing, management, use of modern technologies and social development;
- orientation of agricultural science to conduct applied research to meet the needs of farmers and rural populations;
- promotion of executive bodies and local authorities in shaping and implementing state agricultural policy [4].

Creation and development of a consulting system as well as improving the skills of profitable farming - the main task of the Extension Department (founded in 2001) of the National University of Life and Environmental Sciences of Ukraine and "National Association of Agricultural Advisory Services of Ukraine" (founded in 2003).

Ukrainian experience in the formation and organization of information and consulting services improved through the works of scholars and practitioners among which should be noted M. Kropyvka, T. Kalna-Dubinyuk, R. Korinetz, O. Lokutova and others [3, 4].

Regulation number 73/2009 of the EU provides for the mandatory presence of the Member States of the EU of the system advising of farmers, which should help them to get more information in order to meet the standards of high-quality, modern agriculture. Article 404 Chapter 17 "Agriculture and rural development" Agreement of Association between Ukraine and EU envisages promoting the extension service to farmers [6].

In the post-socialist and post-Soviet countries that are now EU members, advisory services supported by the state either through government funding, and through a variety of grant programs. For Ukraine as an agricultural country, has chosen the European way of development, in the process of formation of a unified of the system consulting and regional development, of particular interest is the experience of the Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre (LRATC).

Our aim was to analyze the issues the organization of work LRATC for further possible use of the Ukrainian agricultural consulting system.

Results and discussion. The territory of Latvia Republic is 64,559 km² (almost 10 times less than the territory of Ukraine), is at the one climatic zone and like Ukraine has exit to the sea. According to the indicators of environmental performance at Yale and Columbia Universities, Latvia in 2012 was the second greenest country in the world - 69% of the territory of Latvia is green.

Latvian farming system is extensive. The level of fertilizer use is the fifth country, the lowest in the EU. thus in Latvia are grown ecological products. 94% of local governments of Latvia declared itself free of genetically modified crops. 16% of the land suitable for breeding of cattle. Long vegetation period (more than 5 months), the availability of natural pastures exempt from the need for supplementary feeding, contributes to the development of organic livestock.

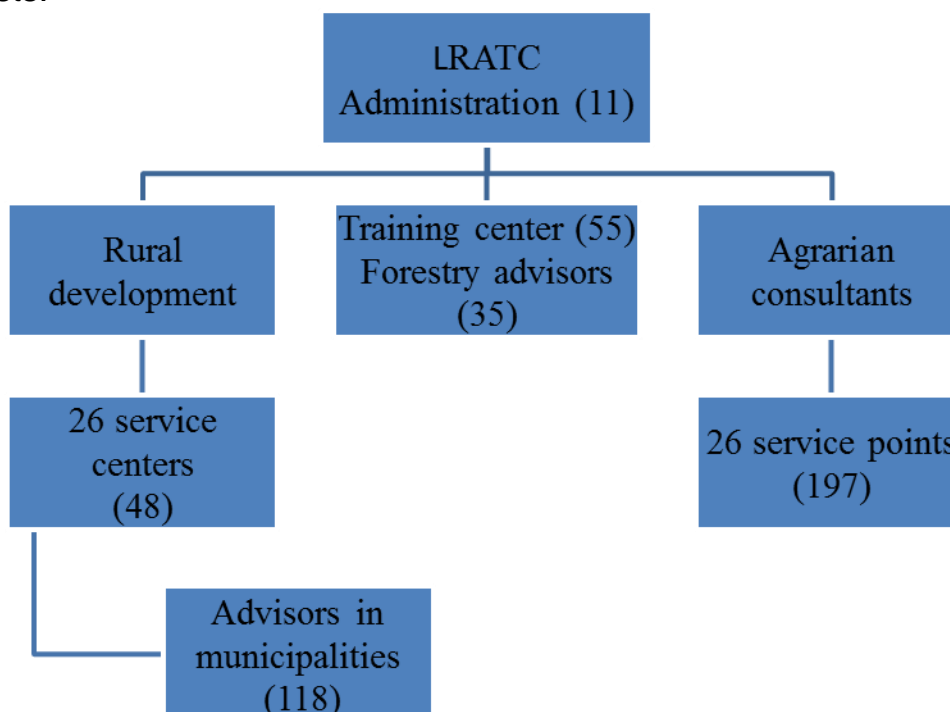
Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre (LRATC) was founded in 1991, after the country's exit from the USSR. Until 1997 it was a state budgetary institution and in the period from 1997 to 2004 - a non-profit organization. In 2004 the country became a full member of the European Union and to the present day LRATC - Limited Liability Company, 1% of the capital of which belongs to the Latvian federation of farmers, and 99% of the capital - to the state. LRATC is the

leading organization in the field of consulting services for the development of the village in Latvia.

Main mission LRATC - to provide rural entrepreneurs, organizations and residents of the consultation and planning services industry manufacturing processes, accounting and business, as well as the implementation of research, training and information. LRATC customers working in the field of agriculture, forestry, fish farming and other rural business activities and are members of various social groups in rural areas [5].

In order to provide services in the regions of the country, LRATC created 26 regional units that provide a wide range of services. The central office is Centre forestry advisory services (they have 16 regional offices), the secretariat of Cooperation Network fish economy, the Secretariat of State of rural networks and 13 Departments that enforce administrative functions and serve as knowledge transfer center.

Figure shows structure of LRATC, where the numbers show the number of specialists.



Structure of the Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre

LRATC includes the following Departments:

- Accounting and Finance;
- Crop production;
- Livestock;
- Economy;
- Information;
- Center livestock competence;
- Technical Engineer;
- Fish economy Department;
- Education and training of personnel;
- Rural development;
- Projects and development;

- Forestry advisory services.

Since its formation LRATC specialists have realized international projects in the following areas:

- improvement of activity sectors: crop production and animal husbandry;
- development of the rural environment;
- development of rural tourism;
- improvement of management in relation to the environment.

LRATC has the following strategic aims:

- over the next 3 years to create in the village of 200 new businesses;
- to be a bridge for cooperation between rural sector representing various businesses, organizations, institutions, management, education, research institutions and the country's citizens;
- increase opportunities for rural residents, businesses and organizations, conducting information and educational events for up to 20 000 people every year;
- to provide expertise and research of public and private sector customers in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and rural development;
- to ensure the transfer of innovative technologies of agriculture, forestry, fisheries and best practices, in order to increase process efficiency, improve productivity and product quality, careful management of natural resources;
- ensure qualified management processes in all of the value chain;
- the creation of agricultural products, forestry and fisheries - from primary production to the final consumer, including the support of short food chains;
- to increase the revs of commercial activities services for business customers [5].

LRATC turnover shows a constant trend of increasing - from 4.2 million EUR in 2009 to 8.3 million EUR in 2015.

In its activities LRATC cooperates with the Ministry of Agriculture of Latvia, farmers, agro-cooperatives, non-governmental organizations, owners of agro-fairs. For example, LRATC cooperates with the non-governmental organization «Lauku ceļotājs», which is engaged in the development of rural tourism in Latvia. As the environment is the main attraction of rural tourism, «Lauku ceļotājs», helps in the organization of exhibitions, festivals, preservation of cultural heritage and develops thematic routes, culinary tours, etc.

LRATC has connections with leading EU advisory centers and the countries of the former Soviet Union, including Ukraine. LRATC specialists are international internships in leading EU countries, and willing to share their own experiences.

A special place in the work takes LRATC organization of courses and seminars, development projects and consultations. Professional, educated, positive thinking and motivated team of specialists from the Centre, has many years of experience, both in the country and at the international level. All this makes it possible to provide its customers with high quality services, providing a comprehensive and individual result-oriented approach.

Conclusion. Analysis of the work of Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre allows make the following conclusions.

The organizational structure of LRATC informs covers all regions of the country, considering their agricultural specification.

Sources of financing and competent its distribution makes it possible to complex decision of questions which have the Latvian farmers - from the

organization of consultations, seminars, trainings and workshops up to obtain financial support, which may be either from the state as well as international projects.

The development of agricultural consulting of Ukraine goes in the direction of sustainable rural development, agricultural production, protection of natural resources, efficient use and safety of agricultural and food products and their compliance with national and international standards. This is why the work experience of Latvian Rural Advisory and Training Centre is particularly useful for Ukraine.

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ЛАТВІЙСЬКИЙ ДОСВІД ОРГАНІЗАЦІЇ КОНСУЛЬТАЦІЙНОЇ СИСТЕМИ ДЛЯ СТАЛОГО РОЗВИТКУ СІЛЬСЬКИХ ТЕРИТОРІЙ

М. Цімерманіс, О. Локутова, Л. Сіліна

Анотація. На сьогодні в аграрній політиці розвинених країн зосереджено увагу на підтримці розвитку сільського господарства та сільської місцевості, тому до юрисдикції сільськогосподарських дорадчих служб входить дедалі більше питань сталого розвитку сільських районів.

У пострадянських країнах, які нині є членами ЄС, консультативні послуги, підтримуються як державою, так і різними грантовими програмами. Для України як аграрної країни, що обрала європейський шлях розвитку, особливий інтерес становить досвід Латвійського центру сільських консультацій та освіти. У статті розглянуто особливості організації сільськогосподарської консалтингової (дорадчої) служби в аграрному секторі Латвії.

Ключові слова: сталий розвиток, дорадчі служби, аграрний консалтинг, розвиток сільських територій, сільський зелений туризм

ЛАТВИЙСКИЙ ОПЫТ ОРГАНИЗАЦИИ КОНСУЛЬТАЦИОННОЙ СИСТЕМЫ ДЛЯ УСТОЙЧИВОГО РАЗВИТИЯ СЕЛЬСКИХ ТЕРРИТОРИЙ

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Аннотация. Сегодня аграрная политика развитых стран акцентирована на поддержке развития сельского хозяйства и сельской местности, поэтому в юрисдикции сельскохозяйственных совещательных служб входит все больше вопросов устойчивого развития сельских районов.

В постсоветских странах, которые сейчас являются членами ЕС, консультативные услуги поддерживаются как государством, так и различными грантовыми программами. Для Украины, как аграрной страны, избравшей европейский путь развития, особый интерес представляет опыт Латвийского центра сельских консультаций и образования. В статье рассмотрены особенности организации сельскохозяйственной консалтинговой (совещательной) службы в аграрном секторе Латвии.

Ключевые слова: устойчивое развитие, совещательные службы, аграрный консалтинг, развитие сельских территорий, сельский зеленый туризм

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DEVELOPMENT AND INNOVATION OF EXTENSION SYSTEM IN THE USA AND UKRAINE

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Abstract. It reveals the history of development and the role of extension service in the USA and other countries of the world. The innovative directions of the modern extension system in the USA and its possibilities in Ukraine are shown.

Introduction. The US Agricultural Cooperative Extension System has had 100 years history assisting agricultural producers and rural communities. The Agricultural Cooperative Extension System was titled as such because the Federal, state and county governments cooperatively support the funding for the Extension Service. The contributions of the Federal and the state governments have declined in recent years due to many factors but importantly the change in emphasis to private versus public education in the university system as a whole. This has causes the Cooperative Extension System to look elsewhere for funding. There is still a strong demand for the extension services but increasingly an evolution to a different funding model.

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