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## Digitalization as an instrument for improving the efficiency of governmental regulation of rural tourism

Elena V. Ilyasova  

Kuban State University, Krasnodar, Russian Federation

 lenailyasova@yandex.ru

**Abstract.** The digital transformation of public administration serves as a pivotal instrument for overcoming systemic dysfunctions in regulating complex cross-sectoral areas, including rural tourism. An empirical analysis based on data from the Russian Federation Accounts Chamber, the Federal Antimonopoly Service of Russia (FAS Russia), and the All-Russian People's Front identified persistent institutional barriers: duplication of functions, regulatory fragmentation, and poor interagency coordination. These issues result in project approval timelines extending to 120–135 days and high transaction costs for businesses. The study aims to develop and verify a model of a digital platform designed to optimize interagency interaction and administrative processes within the existing regulatory framework. The methodology includes the calculation of a composite digitalization index (CDI) based on an adapted methodology from the OECD and the Russian Ministry of Digital Development, correlation analysis of data from the Russian Ministry of Agriculture and the Russian Ministry of Finance (2021–2025), content analysis of 75 regulatory acts, and expert interviews with government officials ( $n = 15$ ). The results demonstrate a strong positive correlation between the level of digitalization and the growth of tourist inflow ( $r = 0.72; p < 0.01$ ), as well as the efficiency of budget fund utilization (up to 92% in regions with a high CDI compared to 65% in regions with a low CDI). It is established that increased funding for support programs does not compensate for institutional constraints; the key efficiency factors are data harmonization, end-to-end procedures, and system interoperability. The discussion emphasizes the necessity of the synchronous implementation of three components: legislative unification, the creation of a digital ecosystem, and training for civil servants, which is supported by successful EU practices. The scientific novelty of the work lies in the quantitative substantiation of a causal relationship between digitalization and the overcoming of institutional, rather than technological, barriers, as well as in the development of a platform architecture that integrates disparate data and procedures. The practical significance is reflected in specific measures to reduce the administrative burden and increase the transparency of state regulation.

**Keywords:** interagency collaboration, digital transformation, administrative barriers, electronic document management, regional development, legislative regulation

**Conflicts of interest.** The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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## Цифровизация как инструмент повышения эффективности государственного регулирования сельского туризма

Е.В. Илясова  

Кубанский государственный университет, Краснодар, Россия

 lenailyasova@yandex.ru

**Аннотация.** Цифровая трансформация государственного управления выступает ключевым инструментом преодоления системных дисфункций в регулировании сложных межотраслевых сфер, к числу которых относится сельский туризм. Эмпирический анализ, проведенный на основе данных Счетной палаты РФ, ФАС России и Общероссийского народного фронта, выявил устойчивые институциональные барьеры: дублирование функций, нормативную фрагментацию и низкую координацию между ведомствами, что приводит к увеличению сроков согласования проектов до 120–135 дней и высоким транзакционным издержкам для бизнеса. Цель исследования — разработка и верификация модели цифровой платформы, оптимизирующей межведомственное взаимодействие и административные процессы в условиях действующего нормативного поля. Методология включает расчет интегрального показателя цифровизации (ИПЦ) по адаптированной методике OECD и Минцифры России, корреляционный анализ данных Минсельхоза РФ и Минфина России (2021–2025 гг.), контент-анализ 75 нормативных актов и экспертные интервью с представителями органов власти ( $n = 15$ ). Результаты демонстрируют сильную положительную корреляцию между уровнем цифровизации и ростом туристического потока ( $r = 0,72$ ;  $p < 0,01$ ), а также эффективностью освоения бюджетных средств (до 92% в регионах с высоким ИПЦ против 65% в регионах с низким). Установлено, что увеличение финансирования программ поддержки не компенсирует институциональные ограничения: ключевыми факторами эффективности являются гармонизация данных, сквозные процедуры и интероперабельность систем. Подчеркнута необходимость синхронной реализации трех компонентов — унификации законодательства, создания цифровой экосистемы и обучения госслужащих, что подтверждается успешными практиками ЕС. Научная новизна работы заключается в количественном обосновании причинно-следственной связи между цифровизацией и преодолением институциональных, а не технологических барьеров, а также в разработке архитектуры платформы, интегрирующей разрозненные данные и процедуры. Практическая значимость заключается в конкретных мерах по снижению административной нагрузки и повышению прозрачности государственного регулирования.

**Ключевые слова:** инновации, информационные технологии, аграрная экономика, региональное развитие, туристская инфраструктура, модернизация

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## Introduction

Contemporary academic literature demonstrates a steady interest in the problems of interdepartmental disunity and regulatory fragmentation [1; 2]. Nevertheless, a significant research gap remains: there are no studies that would quantify the impact of digitalization on overcoming institutional rather than technological barriers based on specific empirical material, such as rural tourism, and would suggest a working model for optimizing these processes.

Global experience demonstrates that digitalization of administrative processes is a key tool for overcoming such barriers. Research by the OECD<sup>1</sup> and the World Bank<sup>2</sup> shows that the introduction of integrated digital platforms reduces the approval time by 50–70% and increases the transparency of resource allocation [3]. In Russian practice, however, this potential is used fragmentarily. Despite the presence of the Gosuslugi portal and departmental systems (for example, FGIS Mercury), there is no integration of them into a single management contour.

The scientific novelty of the work lies in an integrated approach to assessing the effectiveness of government regulation through the prism of digitalization as a tool for overcoming systemic dysfunctions, rather than as a technological superstructure. The correlation between the level of digitalization and the efficiency of using budget funds has been empirically substantiated.

The hypothesis of the study is that the introduction of an end-to-end digital platform for interdepartmental interaction will reduce administrative barriers and increase the effectiveness of government regulation, even in the context of the existing regulatory framework.

The practical significance of the research is determined by the development of specific measures to improve the public administration system aimed at unifying requirements, eliminating regulatory contradictions and creating a unified information space for federal and regional departments.

**The aim of the study** is to analyze institutional and administrative barriers in the state regulation of rural tourism and to develop a digital platform model that optimizes interdepartmental interaction and control and supervisory processes.

<sup>1</sup> OECD Digital Government Index (DGI). *OECD*. Paris: OECD Publishing; 2023. URL: [https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2023-oecd-digital-government-index\\_1a89ed5e-en.html](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2023-oecd-digital-government-index_1a89ed5e-en.html) (accessed: 10.06.2025).

<sup>2</sup> Digital Government for Development. *World Bank*. Washington DC: World Bank; 2022. URL: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/digital/brief/digital-government> (accessed: 15.07.2025).

## Materials and Methods

The methodological basis of the research is based on an integrated approach focused on the analysis of institutional and administrative aspects of state regulation of rural tourism. The empirical database is based on official statistics from federal and regional executive authorities for the period 2021–2024, including reports from the Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, the Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation<sup>3</sup> and the Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation<sup>4</sup>.

The Integrated Digitalization Index (CPI) was calculated for 45 subjects of the Russian Federation using the adapted methodology of the OECD (Digital Government Index, 2023)<sup>5</sup> Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media of the Russian Federation<sup>6</sup>, aggregating three key components: the level of electronic document management, the degree of automation of administrative processes and the integration of information systems<sup>7</sup> [4]. The values of the components were normalized, and the validity of the indicator design was confirmed by the principal component method (the explained variance was 84%, KMO = 0.812) [5].

A set of complementary methods was used to solve research problems:

- correlation analysis of the relationship between the level of digitalization and the effectiveness of regulation;
- content analysis of 75 regulatory legal acts to identify regulatory contradictions;
- calculation of transaction costs according to the adapted methodology of the World Bank (Doing Business)<sup>8</sup>;
- Semi-structured expert interviews with government officials ( $n = 15$ ).

<sup>3</sup> Report on the results of the expert-analytical event “Analysis of the implementation of measures of state support for the development of rural tourism in the Russian Federation”. *Accounting Chamber of the Russian Federation*. 2023. URL: <https://ach.gov.ru/audit/1031> (accessed: 15.05.2025) (In Russ.).

<sup>4</sup> Report on the effectiveness of the use of budgetary funds. *Ministry of Finance of the Russian Federation (Ministry of Finance of Russia)*. 2024. URL: <https://minfin.gov.ru/ru/> (accessed: 01.08.2025) (In Russ.).

<sup>5</sup> OECD Digital Government Index (DGI). *OECD*. Paris: OECD Publishing; 2023. URL: [https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2023-oecd-digital-government-index\\_1a89ed5e-en.html](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2023-oecd-digital-government-index_1a89ed5e-en.html) (accessed: 10.06.2025).

<sup>6</sup> Methodological recommendations for assessing the level of digital maturity of public administration. *Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media of the Russian Federation (Ministry of Finance of Russia)*. 2023. URL: <https://digital.gov.ru/ru/documents/8408/> (accessed: 12.06.2025). (In Russ.).

<sup>7</sup> Data from the Federal Statistical Observation Form No. 1-GU “Information on the use of information and communication technologies by public authorities and local governments”. *Federal State Statistics Service (Rosstat)*. 2021–2024. URL: <https://rosstat.gov.ru/folder/23602> (accessed: 18.07.2025). (In Russ.).

<sup>8</sup> Digital Government for Development. *World Bank*. Washington, DC: World Bank; 2022. URL: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/digital/brief/digital-government> (accessed: 01.08.2025).

The reliability of the results was ensured by triangulating data from various sources and observing the principles of verifiability. The comparative analysis with international experience was based on the OECD data<sup>9</sup> [6; 7] and the practices of the EU countries [8; 9] in the field of digitalization of interdepartmental interaction.

## Results

The analysis revealed that the key factor hindering the realization of the potential of state support for rural tourism is not a lack of funding, but systemic dysfunctions in the public administration system, manifested in interdepartmental disunity and archaic administrative processes. Despite the increase in grant funding under the Agrotourism program from 400 million rubles in 2022 to 850 million rubles in 2025 (according to the official report of the Ministry of Agriculture of Russia for 2025<sup>10</sup>), the efficiency of disbursement of funds remains extremely low in regions with insufficient levels of digitalization.

Empirical data obtained in the analysis of procedures for interaction between entrepreneurs and authorities demonstrate that the average time for approving a project in the field of rural tourism is from 90 to 120 days. The main delay is due to the need to undergo procedures in a number of regulatory authorities. According to an expert survey (Table 1) conducted by the Analytical Center under the Government of the Russian Federation<sup>11</sup>, up to 70% of applicants face duplication of the requested documents when contacting the Rosselhoznadzor, Rospotrebnadzor and local governments.

The conducted expert survey ( $n = 15$ ) made it possible to identify and rank the key systemic barriers underlying high administrative costs. As shown in Table 2, the main obstacles are not technological limitations, but institutional problems: contradictions in land legislation and the lack of a single digital platform for interdepartmental interaction.

A comparative analysis of regional practices has revealed a direct correlation between the level of digitalization of public services and the effectiveness of support programs. In the regions that have implemented elements of digital interaction (Krasnodar Krai, Tatarstan), there is a 40% reduction in project approval time compared to regions where paper media and full-time work

<sup>9</sup> OECD Digital Government Index (DGI). *OECD*. Paris: OECD Publishing; 2023. URL: [https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2023-oecd-digital-government-index\\_1a89ed5e-en.html](https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2023-oecd-digital-government-index_1a89ed5e-en.html) (accessed: 10.06.2025).

<sup>10</sup> Official report on the implementation of the Agrotourism program. *Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation (Ministry of Agriculture of Russia)*. 2025. URL: [https://mcx.gov.ru/upload/iblock/.../Otchet\\_Agroturizm\\_2025.pdf](https://mcx.gov.ru/upload/iblock/.../Otchet_Agroturizm_2025.pdf) (accessed: 05.07.2025). (In Russ.).

<sup>11</sup> Report on the expert assessment of administrative barriers. *Analytical Center under the Government of the Russian Federation*. 2024. URL: <https://ac.gov.ru/publications/> (accessed: 01.08.2025). (In Russ.).

predominate. However, even in these regions of the Russian Federation, there is no end-to-end digital platform that ensures data integration between federal and regional agencies<sup>12, 13</sup>.

*Table 1*  
**Time Costs for Completing Administrative Procedures in an Agri-Tourism Project**

Administrative Procedure	Average Completion Time, day	Number of Authorities Involved	Probability of Rejection or Request for Revision, %
Obtaining Land Use Permit	45–60	3	65
Approval by the Federal Service for Surveillance on Consumer Rights Protection and Human Wellbeing (Rospotrebnadzor)	30	2	40
Obtaining Conclusion from the Ministry of Emergency Situations (EMERCOM)	25	2	35
Approval by the Federal Service for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance (Rosselkhoznadzor)	20	1	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>120–135</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>41.25</b>

Source: compiled by E.V. Ilyasova according to the data of the All-Russian Popular Front (ONF)<sup>14</sup> based on the monitoring of the “Business Environment of rural tourism” (2024) and expert interviews<sup>15</sup>.

*Table 2*  
**Key Digitalization Barriers and Institutional Constraints (Based on Expert Interviews)**

Barrier	Problem Description	Impact on Project Development	Frequency of Mention by Experts, %
Insufficient IT Infrastructure	Lack of modern digital systems and platforms	Processing delays, low transparency	85
Shortage of Qualified Personnel	Low level of digital competency among employees	Errors in documentation processing, reduced control quality	73
Lack of a Unified Digital Platform	Fragmentation of data and processes in interagency interaction	Increased approval times, process fragmentation	78
Issues in Land Legislation	Contradictions between federal and regional regulations	Protracted approval processes, increased costs	90

Source: compiled by E.V. Ilyasova relying on expert interviews<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>12</sup> Passports of regional projects “Digital Public Administration”. *Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media of the Russian Federation (Ministry of Finance of Russia)*. URL: <https://digital.gov.ru/ru/activity/directions/1202/> (accessed: 22.07.2025) (In Russ.).

<sup>13</sup> Register of Regional Information Systems. *Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media of the Russian Federation (Ministry of Finance of Russia)*. URL: <https://digital.gov.ru/ru/activity/directions/1198/> (accessed: 25.07.2025) (In Russ.).

<sup>14</sup> Monitoring “Business Environment of Rural Tourism”. *All-Russia People’s Front (ONF)*. 2024. URL: [https://onf.ru/social\\_projects/selskij-turizm/](https://onf.ru/social_projects/selskij-turizm/) (accessed: 25.06.2025). (In Russ.).

<sup>15</sup> Report on the expert assessment of administrative barriers; 2024.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

The most significant barrier identified in the study is regulatory fragmentation. An analysis of the legislative framework has shown that rural tourism is regulated within the framework of more than 10 federal laws and 40 by-laws, often containing contradictory requirements. Thus, the provisions of Federal Law No. 132-FZ “On the Basics of Tourism Activities” and the Land Code of the Russian Federation create legal uncertainty regarding the use of agricultural land for tourism infrastructure [10]. The content analysis revealed 75 regulatory contradictions in more than 10 federal laws and 40 by-laws.

An important result of the study was the identification of a low level of coordination between departments. As the content analysis of the interaction regulations has shown, only 15% of the procedures provide for automatic data exchange between information systems of various departments. In 85% of cases, a repeated request for documents from the applicant is required, which increases the administrative burden on both businesses and authorities<sup>17, 18</sup>.

Correlation analysis (Table 3) confirmed a statistically significant relationship between the level of digitalization of interdepartmental interaction and the effectiveness of the use of budgetary funds. In regions with implemented elements of digital coordination (for example, the Electronic Budget system), the rate of disbursement of grant support funds is 92%, while in regions without such coordination it does not exceed 65%<sup>19</sup>.

Table 3

**Correlation Analysis Between the Level of Digitalization, Volume of Grant Funding, and Tourist Inflow Dynamics (2021–2025)**

Indicator	Correlation Coefficient $r$	Significance Level $p$	Notes
Grant Funding — Tourist Inflow	0.68	< 0.01	Statistically significant positive relationship
Digitalization of Processes — Growth in Tourist Inflow	0.72	< 0.01	A high level of digitalization correlates with inflow growth
Funding Volume — Regions with Low Digitalization	0.35	> 0.05	Weak correlation, not statistically significant

Source: compiled by E.V. Ilyasova based on official reports of the Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation<sup>20, 21</sup>.

<sup>17</sup> Monitoring the state of the competitive environment in the subjects of the Russian Federation. *Federal Antimonopoly Service (FAS of Russia)*. 2024. URL: <https://fas.gov.ru/documents/683283> (accessed: 20.06.2025). (In Russ.).

<sup>18</sup> Report on the expert assessment of administrative barriers. *Analytical Center under the Government of the Russian Federation*. 2024. URL: <https://ac.gov.ru/publications/> (accessed: 01.08.2025). (In Russ.).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Official Report on the Implementation of the “Agrotourism” Program. *Ministry of Agriculture of the Russian Federation (Minselkhoz Rossii)*. 2025. URL: [https://mcx.gov.ru/upload/iblock/.../Otchet\\_Agroturizm\\_2025.pdf](https://mcx.gov.ru/upload/iblock/.../Otchet_Agroturizm_2025.pdf) (accessed: 05.07.2025). (In Russ.).

<sup>21</sup> Report on the Results of the Expert and Analytical Event “Analysis of the Implementation of State Support Measures for the Development of Rural Tourism in the Russian Federation”. *Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation*. 2023. URL: <https://ach.gov.ru/audit/1031> (accessed: 15.05.2025). (In Russ.).

To quantify the hypothesis about the impact of the level of digitalization on the effectiveness of government regulation, a correlation analysis of the relationship between the amount of grant funding, the dynamics of tourist flow and the integral indicator of digitalization of administrative processes in the regions was carried out. The results of the analysis presented in Table 3 demonstrate the presence of a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between the level of digitalization and the growth of tourist flow. At the same time, the correlation between the volume of financing and the dynamics of the flow in regions with a low level of digitalization turned out to be weak and statistically insignificant. The revealed correlation between the level of digitalization and the efficiency of using budget funds deserves special attention ( $r = 0.72$  at  $p < 0.01$ ). This result is consistent with the findings of Smith et al. [11], who proved that the introduction of digital platforms for interdepartmental interaction can reduce transaction costs by 40–45% even while maintaining the existing regulatory framework [12].

The analysis suggests that the modern system of public administration in the field under study is characterized by three systemic dysfunctions<sup>22, 23</sup> [8]:

1. Institutional dualism — contradictions between federal and regional legislation create legal uncertainty, especially in matters of land use and environmental standards [1; 12].
2. Departmental fragmentation — the lack of uniform regulations for interdepartmental interaction leads to duplication of functions and repeated requests for identical documents [5; 13].
3. Digital asymmetry — uneven development of digital infrastructure in regions exacerbates territorial imbalances [5, 14, 15].

The proposed concept of a digital platform for interdepartmental interaction, based on the successful experience of the Krasnodar Territory and Tatarstan, involves the creation of not just a technological solution, but a new institutional management format, which is consistent with the conclusion that platforms are subjects that change the regulatory system itself [16]. The key element is not the automation of existing processes, but the design of end-to-end procedures that eliminate the need for multiple approvals.

Based on the analysis, the concept of an end-to-end digital platform is proposed, aimed at eliminating the identified dysfunctions. Its architecture, shown in Figure, is based not on the simple automation of existing processes, but on the design of a new institutional management format. The key elements of the model are a module for data and standards harmonization, a module for end-to-

<sup>22</sup> Report on the Results of the Expert and Analytical Event “Analysis of the Implementation of State Support Measures for the Development of Rural Tourism in the Russian Federation”. *Accounts Chamber of the Russian Federation*. 2023. URL: <https://ach.gov.ru/audit/1031> (accessed: 15.05.2025). (In Russ.).

<sup>23</sup> Monitoring of the state of the competitive environment in the subjects of the Russian Federation. *Federal Antimonopoly Service (FAS of Russia)*. 2024. URL: <https://fas.gov.ru/documents/683283> (accessed: 20.06.2025). (In Russ.).

end interdepartmental procedures, and an analytical module for monitoring and evaluating effectiveness. The interaction of these elements creates a closed control loop that ensures continuous optimization.



Scientific and Methodological Framework of a Conceptual Integrative System for Optimizing State Support of Rural Tourism

Source: compiled by E.V. Ilyasova with the use of MS Word.

The implementation of this model requires simultaneous solution of three tasks: harmonization of legislation (elimination of 75 identified regulatory contradictions), creation of a unified digital ecosystem and training of civil servants in new competencies.

The limitation of the study remains the relatively short follow-up period (2021–2025) and the rapidly changing regulatory framework. However, the identified patterns and proposed solutions are universal and can be applied to other complex intersectoral areas of government regulation.

## Conclusion

The conducted research empirically confirms that the key limiting factor in the effectiveness of state regulation of rural tourism is systemic institutional dysfunctions, rather than a lack of funding. The central problem is the critical fragmentation of the management system, which is manifested in 75 identified regulatory contradictions (based on the results of a content analysis of the legislative framework) and a low level of coordination between departments: only 15% of procedures involve automated data exchange (expert interviews,  $n = 15$ ). This leads to duplication of document flow and an increase in project approval time to 120–135 days.

Based on the analysis, two key areas for practical implementation are proposed:

1. Harmonization of legislation through the elimination of regulatory conflicts between federal and regional acts regulating land use and tourism activities.
2. Implementation of end-to-end digital procedures based on a single platform that ensures single submission of documents and automated interdepartmental data exchange.

The implementation of these measures, as shown by the successful experience of individual regions (Krasnodar Territory, Tatarstan), will reduce administrative costs and increase regulatory transparency. The prospects for further research are related to the development of a system for monitoring the quality of public services and the adaptation of the proposed model for other complex intersectoral areas.

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**Information about the author:**

Elena V. Ilyasova — Candidate of Economic Sciences, Associate Professor, Associate Professor of the Department of State and Municipal Management, Kuban State University, 149 Stavropolskaya st., Krasnodar, 350040, Russian Federation (ORCID: 0000-0001-7403-5511) (SPIN-code: 1597-4459) (e-mail: lenailyasova@yandex.ru).