

REGIONAL ECONOMY

The issue theme: **TOURISM**

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The phenomenon of tourism

In the article the growing role of tourism in a modern society is characterized, the huge importance of the development of tourism for economic, social and cultural rise of Russia and its regions is marked.

Tourists' product, features of consumption, social and culturological importance.



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The attention to tourism as to a specific kind of social and economic activity has recently grown both in a separately taken country, and all over the world. Among its reasons and pre-conditions it would be desirable to emphasize the main thing: tourism represents one of those kinds of human activity which most of all corresponds to one of main principles of process of globalization namely to free relocation of the big quantity of people. Relocation of people or travel (from French *tourisme*) is a patrimonial attribute of tourism.

It is also necessary to note, that the increasing speed of globalization in the field of the communication means' development, found the scale and intensity in the second half of the XX century. The organizational legal registration of this process took place, as it is known, in 1994 when the World trading organization (WTO) which activity, first of all in the economic sphere, extended its attention to tourism.

Since the times of the disintegration of the Soviet Union during the radical sociopolitical

and economic changes in our country, which were expressed in the total liberalization, the number of relocating people in the world has essentially increased.

Opening of the country's borders, which was one of the positive consequences of the Russian transformations, allowed many people to leave abroad. The purposes of that were different: study, work, trade, family affairs and the eternal desire of knowledge. Unlike the former times the opportunity to leave the country was determined basically by the presence of corresponding financial assets and passports for travel abroad. Russia was not among the countries-founders of WTO (and it is still not a member of this organization now), but the global processes, including ones in the tourist sphere, influenced its policy. In this field in particular and in the economy as a whole, our country at the end of 20th century confidently took its place at the periphery. The tourist potential of our country existing at the Soviet period has been almost completely lost.

The problem of the country's revival, its obtaining the status of the world power, getting back its steady and safe development of potential assumes the so-called "collecting of stones" not only in the sphere of economy. There is a vital question of moral, psychological and physical health of the nation, its consolidation on the basis of the traditional values, scientific studying of the features of the present condition both in the societies in general, and in separate branches of social activity in particular.

Among many branches, important and potentially productive for solving the mentioned above problems, tourism has taken its place. The experts from the Academy of tourism, created in Saint Petersburg in 1994, while analyzing a situation in this branch in the beginning of the 1990s, marked, that "tourism is one of the largest, highly remunerative and most dynamical branches of economic. The sphere of tourism includes about 6% of the world total national product (TNP), 7% of world investments, one of 16 workplaces, 11% of world consumer charges, 5% of all tax receipts". They regretfully admitted that Russia with its enormous tourist potential occupies a rather modest place in the tourist market, having less than 1% in a world tourist stream (The Works of the Academy of Tourism. – Vol. 1. – SPb., 1995).

The economic aspect of this problem of the tourism development in Russia still remains the most important but not the only one. There exists a very complex problem of the scientific studying resulting from the nature of this phenomenon. It appears at the first stage of generating the conceptual device, for example, at the stage of making a definition of tourism. It is known, that the frequent use of any concept can generate the illusion of its adequacy and total recognition. But it is also known, that any logic operations with the uncertain definitions are capable to result in false conclusions and forecasts. The outstanding philosopher and mathematician Rene Descartes stated: "Specify a word meaning, and you will relieve the mankind of half of its errors".

The Explanatory Dictionary of Russian by D.N. Ushakov defines the idea of tourism in the following way: "Tourism is a kind of sports or travel in which entertainments and rest in-

corporate to the general educational purposes". The other definitions of tourism in the Explanatory dictionary of Russian by S.I. Ozhegov and N.J. Shvedova, in the Big Explanatory Dictionary of Russian (1998) and in the New Dictionary of Foreign Words (2003) don't differ much from each other. The definition of UNESCO of 1954 states: "Tourism is the productive leisure influencing the strengthening of health, the physical development of a person, connected with the movement beyond the boundaries of a constant residence". The General Assembly of the World Trade Organization (WTO) has offered another variant: "Tourism is a kind of the productive leisure, representing the travels made with the purpose of getting acquainted with the other areas and the new countries, combined with the elements of sports".

There are a lot of definitions, and only the comparative analysis of their semantic contents allows choosing the most adequate one. Such definition of tourism is represented in the Federal law of the Russian Federation "About the bases of the tourists' activity in the Russian Federation" (October, 4, 1996): "Tourism means temporary departures (travels) of citizens of the Russian Federation, foreign citizens and persons without citizenship from a constant residence to some other places for cognitive, professional and business, sports, religious and other purposes without any paid activity in the country of the temporary stay". This almost initial definition would be completed after inserting a word "time" following the word "voluntary".

As the given definition concerns a separate person or a group of persons realizing their various needs with the help of travel, and as these definitions do not reflect the activity of establishments which make possible the realization of traveler's needs they should be considered revealing only one of the aspects of the phenomenon of tourism. For supporting the full legal correctness the law contains a lot of accompanying definitions, such as *tourist activity, tourism industry, a tourist product, promotion of a tourist product*. Even this brief list confirms the earlier stated thesis about the dual nature of tourism. On the one hand, it is the expense actions corresponding to individual aspirations

and desires of the basic subject of the tourist attitudes as the tourist himself. On the other hand, it is the system-defined economically caused activity of the specialized industrial structures providing the tourist's actions.

Economic, legal and organizational aspects of tourism represent its basis upon which the set of other features which dynamically varies.

There exist two basic points of view on the origin of the considered phenomenon.

According to one of them, tourism originated from the first relocations of people, from travel. From the psychological point of view a determining attribute of tourism was the freedom to choose even if it was a slight choice. From this point of view it is necessary to recognize as tourist trips the ones with the educational purposes, for treatment and rest, for visiting sacred places known since the times of antiquity, and Middle Ages' pilgrimage.

The second point of view is based substantially on the attributes concerning the basic aspects, first of all expressed in legal and economic sense. It concerns the creation of legal conditions and economic preconditions as the guarantees of freedom to move, the occurrence of the advanced types of transport and the advanced transport infrastructure, the industry of services supporting traveling. As well as availability of capital in seeking to address such unprofitable business, as the journey. All conditions created finally the basis of opportunities for people relocation not determined by the aims of simple survival (for example, nomadism). In Europe such conditions fall at the periods after bourgeois revolutions.

Mentioning these two points of view, it is possible to believe that tourism arose in societies of the advanced level of material benefits' security allowing a person to satisfy the needs of higher a order. The need for self-cognition on the basis of comparison with the life conditions of other people, enrichment by the life experience, expansion of the knowledge of the world around became necessary for the realization of a person.

In Russia where for many centuries even the supreme class could not travel without the

permission and the control of the supreme authority, the occurrence of tourism took place later. The freedom to move was received by the representatives of this class only after the acceptance in 1762 by Peter of III the Manifest on nobiliary's liberation, according to which noblemen received *the right* to be free to go abroad, but to the requirement of the government should come back to Russia. Despite of the granted liberties, the free travel in 18th century in Russia didn't have mass character. The wars in Europe, on the Caucasus, in the Crimea, the extremely complex process of the development of the submitted territories, the serfdom in its most severe form, the inertia in the national psychology and many other things slowed down the process of free relocations both in Russia and abroad.

The second quarter of the 19th century was the period of the relative stability in Russia; the time of active relocations of Russians to Europe, to the East, to sacred places, to the south of Russia with its mineral waters and the sphere of services, recreation and health services which are directly related to the satisfaction of travelers' cognitive needs began to expand rapidly. Travels were made for both treatment and rest; they were the way of satisfaction of cognitive and spiritual needs. All that was not tourism in its contemporary understanding, but it contained all the attributes of the future tourist branch. The orientation on the cognitive, intellectual kind of tourism, coupled with the sports and healthcare which was kept in the pre-revolutionary period, actively supported during the Soviet times and is emerging nowadays was laid at that very time. In the beginning of the 20th century the Russian scientist tour-guide *M.I. Greves* wrote: "The ambitions to travel are numerous, the achieved results of travel are great, the achieved pleasures are enormous, and they ascend up to the level of the strongest spiritual pleasures of life".

The modern Russian researchers of tourism, alongside with its high estimation as an economic category, consider it to be an extremely important phenomenon in the field of the national psychology and culture. In the

middle of the 1890s the vice-president of the Academy of tourism D.E.S I.D. Afanasenko wrote, that "tourism is treated as a special type of the interpersonal activity which in the conditions of internationalization turned into the form of free time use, into the means of interpersonal relations during political, economic and cultural contacts, into one of the factors determining the quality of life" (The Works of the Academy of Tourism. – Vol. 1. – SPb., 1995). He also noted that tourism, carrying out the functions on rapprochement of the various public systems, is based on different cultures, differently perceiving the world and the universal values.

All the mentioned above features essentially influence the taking of the tourism as the branch of economy, as one of the spheres of market relations. The production of the given branch can be divided into three basic categories. *The first* is the production made and consumed within the same framework of the branch (services, accompanying goods, souvenirs, etc.). *The second* involves the tourist products which are not the products of the human work (such as mountains, reservoirs, sources, air and so forth). *The third* category is the cultural and historical heritage (architectural and engineering constructions, artificial landscapes, museums, etc.).

If consuming the first category's products is completely adjusted by the laws of the market consumption, consuming tourist products of the second and the third categories demands special public regulation. The fact is consumer resources of the third category are irreplaceable, and the resources of the second category at inadequate consumption are capable to lose their consumer appeal. These circumstances imply both the preservation and maintenance of the inhabitancy and the nature, and the preservation of the historical and culturological heritages.

Solving these problems extends beyond the frameworks of the economic rationalism, and, mentioning tourism as an economic category, at the same time we mention its attributes as

those of a moral category. The careful, sensitive attitude towards the nature, supporting all necessary conditions for the existence of fauna and flora allows a person to feel in harmony with the world around and with himself (herself), to feel measure in the consumption of the natural resources.

Historical and cultural monuments such as temples, palaces and other architectural and engineering constructions, ancient settlements and necropolises, sacred places, etc., represent the most attractive objects for the intellectual type of tourism. And still they cannot be named simply tourist products. These monuments, the opportunity to see them and to comprehend their role in the history and culture of the country give a traveler the feeling of being close to the history of his native land. Without it the understanding of a continuous social spiritual development of all people and "self-standing" of a separate person are impossible. Traveling about the native land enables to feel its unity, colorfulness and harmony. Such emotions strengthen the pride of the country, raise one's self-respect and confidence and allow getting acquainted with other countries and peoples to feel as a full-fledged part of mankind.

The researchers of the problems in the field of modern Russian tourism mark that nowadays in Russia the imbalance between the foreign and inland types of tourism takes place. On the one hand, it is the consequence of rather late opening of our country to the world. On the other hand, the low level of the domestic tourist industry's development especially in the sphere of service, does not allow attracting great number of tourists to the internal routes. Nevertheless we can still hope that all the difficulties are temporary, because Russia is one of the few countries of the world where there are conditions for the development of all existing and just appearing kinds of tourism.

Russia will never become mainly a tourist country, as it is the self-sufficient state; but tourism as a specific and complex in its structure sphere of social activity has remarkable prospects of development.