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**RESEARCH OF FACTORS INFLUENCING THE STRATEGIC  
DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM AND TOURIST FLOWS**

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***Abstract***

The article is about the study of "tourism" actual phenomenon, it is now recognized by the authorities of the Russian Federation as one of the Russian Federation economy priority branches. A significant role of tourism at the world level is also recognized by authoritative scientists and some large foreign tourist organizations (for example, the World Tourism Organization, experts of the World Economic Forum). The conducted research shows the scope of tourism as factors variety results. The study proved that Russia is currently a donor of world tourist flows, that is, Russian citizens' outflows exceed domestic ones. At the same time, making outcoming tourist trips Russians make significant expenses on tourism in the countries visited, while foreign tourists are distinguished with moderate expenses for international tourism. The study also showed that not only Russia has a significant untapped natural and recreational potential, but also countries of Central and Eastern Europe. As the findings have shown, the development of tourism is also affected with political, economic, environmental factors, the availability of natural and recreational and cultural-historical resources, the level of necessary infrastructure development, personnel and information support, socio-demographic factors. In addition to the factors, the author identifies actual problems and trends in the tourism industry development.

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**Keywords:** Tourism, factors, tourist flow, tourist routes, trends.



## 1. Introduction

At present, tourism is a relevant area observed in numerous works of foreign (Andrades, 2017; Franck, 1990; Liu & Pratt, 2017; World Tourism Organization UNWTO, 2017) and domestic scientists and specialists (Golubchikov, 2015; Plotnikova, Korneva & Ustuzhanina, 2015; Kuznetsova et al., 2017). In the modern world, the sphere of tourism is developing quite actively and is of great importance for social and economic development of territorial entities, since it increases the revenues of the budgets of the Russian Federation budget system; ensures the creation of jobs; develops and interacts with 53 differently directed industries; creates and develops providing and tourist infrastructure in tourist centers; promotes the preservation and development of folk crafts and traditions, development of culture; ensures the growth of local population life level and quality; restores spiritual and physical strength of tourists, as well as promotes a healthy lifestyle, and according to conclusions of some Russian scientists is able to prevent drug addiction and alcoholism. Tourism affects the level of goodwill, hospitality, and socio-cultural services for tourists; increases the prestige of the area where it develops and functions, strengthens interregional and international relations in the implementation of joint tourism projects (clusters, events, tourist routes). The scale of the subject under study causes some complexities and problems emergence that hamper its development and the effective usage of the tourist and recreational potential. In this regard, the article examines the main typical factors and current trends that affect and characterize the level of tourism development in the country, preventing its development.

The study of the factors influencing tourism allows identifying difficulties and problems that impede the tourism development.

The study of modern trends in the tourism sphere allows to characterize and to reveal its features, as well as to determine the specificity of its development for a particular country.

## 2. Problem Statement

Tourism today is an important area of the economy for many countries, as it has an impact on:

- level of socio-economic development;
- an increase in budget revenues of the country's budget system;
- development of new working places;
- development of providing and tourist infrastructure;
- preservation and development of folk crafts and traditions, development of culture;
- an increase in the living standards of local population;
- restoration of tourists spiritual and physical strength;
- the prestige increase of the area where it develops and functions;
- strengthening of inter-regional and international relations implementing joint tourism projects.

Many foreign countries effectively use their natural potential, thus receive significant revenues and benefits from tourism industry functioning.

Russia has rich natural and recreational potential, but it is not fully used, and it is emphasized with the low position held in the world tourism ratings (for example, the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index) and is explained with multitude of existing problems.

### **3. Research Questions**

Research issues include the study of the most significant international tourist flows, the identification of world tourist donors, the study of the main tourist categories.

The impact of factors will allow to identify the weak spots in the tourism industry and to choose the necessary effective management approach in future.

The study of trends will make possible to characterize the tourist sphere and modern international tourist flows.

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the article is to study the main factors affecting the development of the tourism sector in general, including international tourist flows (Russian, as well as Eastern European countries).

The study covers such factors as promotion, security, and tourism ecology, comparison of the largest tourist expenses and incomes of foreign countries, information support, and tourist infrastructure development.

The study covers such tourist trends as the popularity of tourism, the increase of incoming and outgoing tourist flows.

### **5. Research Methods**

Methods used in the study:

- scientific generalization is to identify common types of tourism factors;
- a comparative analysis is used to compare the largest international tourist spending and revenues;
- systemic and situational approaches are used to represent the tourism sphere as a system, as well as the definition of modern tourist trends.

### **6. Findings**

**6.1.** The conducted research allows drawing a conclusion that currently the Russian Federation is a donor of the tourist flow for foreign countries. Citizens of the Russian Federation constitute a significant outgoing tourist flow, and it predominates over the incoming flow into the Russian Federation. The most significant outgoing tourist flows from Russia in 2014-2016 Russians made mainly to the countries of Eastern Europe, as well as to Turkey and Egypt until 2016. The most significant incoming tourist flows into the Russian Federation in 2014-2016 were also the countries of Eastern Europe, Finland, and China.

While making tourist trips, tourists carry out corresponding expenses. Russians make significant expenses on tourism in visited countries, while foreign tourists are distinguished with moderate expenses for international tourism. This fact is proved with the working tour operators structure in the Russian Federation, most of them (59%) work in the international outgoing tourism field, 40% is in the domestic

market, 12% is in international incoming tourism, i.e. the smallest part of the Russian tour operators is engaged in organizing the tourism of foreign citizens wishing to visit the Russian Federation.

Four of the international tourism expenses donor countries from 2013 to 2015 include China, the United States, Germany and the United Kingdom. The Russian Federation exchanged places with France from 2014, dropped to the line below, and occupies the sixth position (see Tables 01, 02).

Among the top six donor countries of the tourist flow, the United States and France have more tourism incomes than expenses, while the rest of the countries have the opposite.

However, it should be noted that the Russian Federation citizens as foreign tourists spend 3-4 times more finance than foreign tourists entering the Russian Federation territory, and it is a negative phenomenon; i.e. in Russia, the value of tourist services imports exceeds the cost of their exports. In 2015, Russians spent most of their finances in Turkey, Egypt, Germany, Finland, Italy, while only these foreign countries (Kazakhstan, the Ukraine, Germany, Poland and China) spent most of their foreign investment in Russia. For comparison: in 2015 Russians spent \$ 2,646 million in Germany, while German citizens spent \$ 585 million in Russia, and it is 4.5 times less (Shkurenko, 2016).

**Table 01.** Countries with the largest international tourism expenses (Shkurenko, 2016; World Tourism Organization UNWTO, 2017)

No	Country	2013, (bln US \$)	2014, (bln US \$)	2015, (bln US \$)	2016, (bln US \$)
1	China	128.6	234.7	292.2	261.1
2	USA	104.1	105.5	112.9	123.6
3	Germany	91.4	93.3	77.5	79.8
4	United Kingdom	52.7	62.6	63.3	63.6
5	France	42.9	48.7	38.4	40.5
6	Russian Federation	53.5	50.4	34.9	...

**Table 02.** Comparison of incomes and expenses for tourism of foreign countries in 2015 (Shkurenko, 2016)

No	Country	Income in 2015, (bln US \$)	Expenses in 2015, (bln US \$)
1	China	114.1	292.2
2	USA	204.5	112.9
3	Germany	36.9	77.5
4	United Kingdom	45.5	63.3
5	France	45.9	38.4
6	Russian Federation	---	34.9

The Russian Federation has a significant potential for the domestic and incoming tourism development. To attract the tourist flow to the Russian Federation, a number of international events are being implemented by the authorities, according to them the number of incoming foreign tourists has recently increased (2014-2015); in 2012 Russia entered the top 10 countries by the number of foreign tourists arrivals, however Russia earns 5 times less than foreign countries by it in a similar situation. Due to growing competition in the world in the tourism sphere; the Russian Federation tourism industry is

low-profit because of existing problems, the level of its development, and so the domestic tourist product is uncompetitive at a price. Foreign authors recognize Russian tourist potential, and among the key problems hampering its development, allocate a tourist image, the infrastructure development level, quality of providing tourist services and management problems (Andrades, 2017).

However, the tourist potential is not fully used not only in the Russian Federation, the author Christian Franck notes that countries of Central and Eastern Europe also have untapped tourism potential, necessary to be developed using careful planning and investment (Franck, 1990).

Promotion of the Russian tourist product to the domestic and international markets is one of the actual trends in tourism today, to solve this problem, the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation and the Federal Agency for Tourism have opened a network of marketing offices "Visit Russia" (FSUE "National marketing center for tourism") in the following countries: Russia, Finland, United Arab Emirates, Italy, Iran, Vietnam, Spain. Also for this purpose, Russia annually participates in international exhibitions presenting the domestic tourism product; at the same time, local exhibitions are organized in Russia, as well as various regional events that contribute to the presentation of unique tourist products to domestic and foreign tourists.

In 2016 the organization "Visit Russia" launched the project "Time to rest in Russia!" in Russia, it is a single brand aimed at promoting domestic tourism and inter-regional national tourist routes. Within the project framework 30 regions of the Russian Federation took part (there were 15 regions in 2015), a large advertising company was launched, media and Internet resources were involved, familiarization tours for tourism workers were organized, and videos showing national tourist routes were shown in 15 cities of the Russian Federation. Such a joint project allows to solve the promoting domestic tourism tasks with joint efforts considering limited budget resources of the Russian Federation allocated to this sector (compared to foreign countries, the difference in spent finance for advertising is in dozens times, for example, London spent 12 million Euros, Finland spent 26 million Euros, the Russian Federation spent 1.3-1.4 million Euros) (Federal Agency for Tourism, 2016).

To provide information support to the activities of tourist enterprises and tourism in general, a system of tourist information centers is also being developed in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, national performance standards were developed in 2015 for them (GOST R 56197-2014 (ISO 14785: 2014). Tourist information centers. Tourist information and reception services. Requirements, 2014). In April 2015, TICs operated in 70 regions of the Russian Federation.

Also, to create a unified information database on the tourist potential of the Russian Federation subjects, assess of the tourist potential and investment attractiveness of the Russian Federation subjects, a project of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation was launched to create Unified Tourist Passports of the Russian Federation subjects in 2016. The project is a tourist passport of the subject, developed in a single form containing statistical, descriptive, informational data and marketing information about features and attractiveness of the subject from the tourist part.

Another modern trend in the tourism development is cross-years holding that promotes strengthening of international relations, joint projects implementation (for example, mutual routes, congresses, exhibitions, simplification of visa regimes) and a significant increase in mutual tourist flows in the participating countries. Since 2012 the first partner of Russia was China, as a result of this event,

the increased interest of the Chinese to the Russian Federation contributed to an increase by 46% in the tourist flow to Russia from this country. In 2013-2014 Italy became a partner of the Russian Federation; it launched the program Russian Friendly and so did not lose the Russian tourist flow at the end of 2014 against the background of its decline to European countries. In 2014-2015 it was planned to hold a cross-year tourism with Poland, but in July 2014, due to the initiative of Poland the joint year was cancelled. In 2015-2016 there was a cross-year tourism of Russia and Spain, and a cross-year of cultural tourism in Russia and France. Russia holds the 2016-2017 year of tourism jointly with Austria implementing the interregional tourist route (Moscow, Kaluga region, St. Petersburg) in 2017, "Russia is the homeland of cosmonautics", and 2017-2018 is planned to be held jointly with India.

The optimization of the visa regime also affects tourism flows. In 2016 citizens of the Russian Federation could visit 105 foreign countries in a visa-free regime, whereas foreign citizens only from 35 countries could arrive into the Russian Federation in a simplified visa order. Despite the actions taken by the authorities of the Russian Federation in simplifying the visa regime, representatives of Russian tourism companies (in the incoming tourism sphere) believe that the main factor hampering the tourist flow entry is the strict visa policy of Russia, to simplify it experts offered authorities the introduction of electronic visas and development of visa-free transit through the Russian Federation for European tourists (The weakening of the visa regime, 2016). Also for event tourism, namely for the forthcoming World Cup in Russia, a law on visa-free entry for foreign fans was adopted.

The safety of tourists and its provision is one of the most important problems in the subject under study due to the complex political situation in the world. Tourists are now interested in safe areas for life and health. Authors Anyu Liu and Stephen Pratt study the vulnerability of tourism stressing that personal security is the main problem for a modern tourist (Liu & Pratt, 2017).

The ecological nature of tourism, careful attitude to nature, to natural-recreational and cultural-historical resources is also a modern world trend in tourism today noted at SPIEF 2016.

At the same time, another trend in Russia is the development of associations in the tourism field allowing to unite efforts and to develop tourism in certain territories by joint efforts of association members, for example, the emergence of the Association of Small Tourist Cities, that includes 11 small ancient provincial cities (Azov, Gorokhovets, Dmitrov, Yelabuga, Yelets, Kargopol, Kungur, Myshkin, Suzdal, Tobolsk, Uglich) mainly developing tourism, where, on average, one resident has a hundred tourists; Interregional Association of Economic Cooperation of the Russian Federation Subjects "Siberian Agreement"; Interregional Association of Economic Cooperation of the Russian Federation Subjects "Far East and Transbaikalia"; Association "Association of Tour Operators in the Field of Outcoming Tourism "Tourist Help" etc.

Development of the Federal list of tourist facilities with the support of the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation is aimed at classification of accommodation facilities, ski slopes, beaches, and providing reliable information on the status of classified facilities and the quality of the services provided.

Development and implementation of pilot inter-regional tourist routes, such as "The Great Tea Road", "Eastern Ring of Russia", "Siberian highway" allows to create the tourists flow in the participating regions, to strengthen inter-regional cooperation and enhance socio-economic development of regions implementing such events.

In view of current identified trends characteristic of the tourism industry, existing problems hindering its development in Russia are to be highlighted. According to T. Rifai "Russia is one of 10 the most popular places of tourism, but the tourism not to be stopped, everything must be done, namely to solve the existing problems," 2016 St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (The weakening of the visa regime, 2016).

One important current problem of the studied field is the lack of providing and tourism infrastructure development of the tourism industry in the Russian Federation: means of accommodation, entertainment, power, road network, transport industry system, transporting passengers. At the state level the tourism infrastructure development stimulation is carried out in the framework of the federal target program "Development of domestic tourism in the Russian Federation (2011-2018)" from 02.08.11 No 644, since 2012 it is a program-target tool GP of Russia "Development of culture and tourism" for 2013-2020.

It is also a problem preventing the growth of incoming and outgoing flows to Russia of tourism services high costs not only for Russians, but even for foreign tourists - Europeans. It is due to expensive services of transport services (70% of the value of domestic tourism products accounts for transportation costs). It is worth noting the lack of transport infrastructure development and wear and tear high degree of transport required for tourists transfer and transportation.

Another problem of the tourism industry is insufficiently developed information environment: lack of available relevant information, including the proposed tourist services in the "Internet" network, failure and fragmentation of information resources on the tourist programs in the RF regions, etc. One can cite as an example the fact that outdated and irrelevant information, namely inactive SR strategy, strategy (concept) for the development of tourism, non-performing regional programs, is posted at official websites of public authorities in many subjects of the Siberian Federal District.

Also the tourism industry is characterized with deficiency of some available accommodation facilities with a modern level of comfort, namely Hotels economy class 1\* and 2\*, a problem due to the fact that developers prefer to build hotel category 4\* and 5\* in Russia, because the payback period in such projects is reduced due to the high prices of the services.

Contamination of the environment and natural areas is also an important problem. For example, in a survey of "Domofond.ru" and "Avito" Internet sites users Domofond.ru analysts made environmental rating of the top 100 locations in Russian Federation based on the local residents' views. In total, 310.1 thousand people from all regions of Russia participated in the survey. In "10 cities outsiders of environmental rating evaluation by local residents," the town SFD subjects took 4 positions: Omsk, Krasnoyarsk, Bratsk, and Novokuznetsk. Environmental area purity is one component of the tourist attraction flow (Shkurenko, 2016).

Unfavorable economic environment to attract investors resulting in low activity of entrepreneurs in the tourism sector depends mainly on the implementation of investment projects developed.

Currently, the importance of ensuring the tourists safety, insufficient security level and risks involved in the tourism sector are factors that hinder the tourist flow growth.

Harsh climatic conditions, a small amount of warm and sunny days in some regions of Russia (for example, it is typical for East Siberian subjects) is not conducive to a strong demand for tourism.

Insufficient promotion of the Russian Federation tourist product is confirmed with poor funding of advertising of tourism in the world tourism market, compared with European countries. Golubchikov (2015) notes that the costs in this part are 2.5 million Euros per year in the Russian Federation, while the European countries spend 31 million Euros per year, and it shows a significant difference in dozens of times.

Also, the negative images of the Russian Federation tourist industry, the lack of tourist brands in subjects with developing tourism are urgent problems in the tourism sphere today.

Along with the above-mentioned problems it is also worth noting the failure of possessing practical skills of graduates, receiving vocational training in the tourism sector, as well as the fact of lack of personnel in the tourist and recreational complex in the Russian Federation (State Council of the Russian Federation. Report "On the development of tourism in the Russian Federation", 2015). Training for any field is a very important factor, because the personnel competence significantly influences the quality of the work they do.

Throughout the Russian Federation, most higher education institutions, training staff for tourism is concentrated in the regions of the Central Federal District (254 institutions) and PPO (112 institutions), and the SFO in 2014 (among 8 the RF federal districts) occupied a middle position - fourth place (75 institutions) (Federal Agency for Tourism, 2016).

Thus, on the basis of the existing problems and trends in the tourism industry, one highlights key typical factors that are crucial elements of the study scope, and facilitate or hinder the tourism development in the territory.

Natural and recreational factors are the availability of attractive tourist natural objects in a certain territory: mountain landscapes, seashores, medicinal springs and mud, beautiful landscapes, mild climate, forests, waterfalls, caves, etc. The individual natural objects or their complex contribute to the emergence of demand for travel services, such as relaxing on the beach resorts it is possible to visit remote scenic attractions (caves, waterfalls, mountain lakes, and so on) when using travel services.

Cultural and historical factors contribute to the existence of cultural and historical sites in the territory, such as the remains of the ancient ruins/towns, historic monuments, buildings and so on. Some Russian cities (Arzamas, Tutaev, Great Rostov and others) are historical, having the similar status. Other cities, not being historical in general, have separate cultural and historical sites that are of interest for tourists.

Traditional factors can also be a separate group, since Russia is a multinational country, and there are various interesting life, history, lifestyle and traditions of people's national cultures in our country.

The infrastructure, depending on its level of development also affects the functioning of the tourism industry; an important role for the study sphere is the state of the transport infrastructure, accommodation facilities and entertainment of tourists, food items and excursions. Each of these factors on a certain area can be developed in different degrees or not developed at all, and it affects the image of the territory and demand from tourists (HSEB Notes, 2013; Trends and Factors affecting the Travel and Tourism industry, 2017; Point, 2017).



Socio-demographic factors also exert their specific effects. This group of factors includes age, number of population, birth rate and death rate, the number of employed and unemployed, levels of education, and so on.

Human resources are determined with the possibility of population to obtain vocational education in institutions in a particular area. The quality of the work performed by specialists depends on knowledge, abilities and skills to a greater extent.

Information environment affects the attraction of tourists, and promotion of tourism products, provided that it is developed and is at an appropriate level, otherwise undeveloped information environment does not allow to the willing to obtain reliable and timely information about available tourism products and to assess the tourism development level in the territory. It is worth noting such factors as the presence/absence/incomplete data and reliable information on tourism and its components on web sites, common/fragmented system of the tourist navigation signs, presence/absence of possibility to book tickets for guided tours, museums, and transport using Internet-sites.

The political situation also plays a key role in the tourist attraction flow in a certain country. At present the latest developments in Egypt and Turkey (that until recently occupied the leading position in the number of countries Russian tourists visited) led to lack of demand from Russian citizens on tourist travel to these countries. It follows from the following group of factors - the tourism industry safety, that is relevant in modern times due to political events; with poor transport infrastructure: bad roads, aging vehicles carrying out transportation, transfer, tourists excursion service; wear leisure facilities (amusement).

Economic group of factors also plays a key role because it determines the possibility of tourism development in the territory. This group may include such factors as availability of financial resources, investment projects, investors, the minimum wage, and so on (World Tourism Organization UNWTO, 2017).

Environmental factors significantly affect the attractiveness of the territory, where tourism is developing as people making tourist trips want to improve their health (among other intentions), but not to worsen it, for example, being in the city, that is in the rating of the top-100 "polluted cities in Russia".

## **7. Conclusion**

The study showed the factors (political, economic, ecological, natural and recreational, cultural and historical resources, the level of infrastructure development, human resources and information provision, socio-demographic) are basic, and they can be represented as a single standard system that characterizes tourism development not only in Russia, but also in any other country.

The tourism sector is shown to be a large scale; in this regard, it is exposed to a variety of different factors, due to them tourism in Russia is experiencing a many serious problems (the level of tourism infrastructure development, the quality of tourist services, insufficient number of accommodation facilities of the middle segment, visa regime, etc.) that affect the level of its internal development, and prevent formation of significant incoming tourist flow.

The article shows that there is a need to develop specific measures to address the identified problems and optimization that is practiced in the ongoing legal documents regulating the tourism development in the Russian Federation. In addition to ongoing activities there is also a need for selecting effective management approach, and it is a subject of interest for further research of the author.

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