



4th World Conference on Business, Economics and Management, WCBEM

PROSPECTS AND TRENDS OF TOURIST DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT (AS EXEMPLIFIED IN THE REPUBLIC OF TATARSTAN)

Mishakin T.S.^{a*}, Razumovskaya E.M.^a, Berdnikova O.A.^a, Ivanov S.E.

^a*Kazan Federal University, Institute of Management, Economics and Finance, Kazan, 420008, Russia*

^b*Committee on tourism of the Republic of Tatarstan*

Abstract

The given article presents prospective lines of tourist destination development in the Republic of Tatarstan. The main achievements in this industry over the year of 2014 are defined and the basic lines of tourism development are determined.

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Peer-review under responsibility of Academic World Research and Education Center

Keywords: tourism industry; tourist destination; tourist product

1. Introduction

At present tourism is one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world. More than a billion journeys were made in 2014. Over the past few years travel industry in the Republic of Tatarstan showed persistently high rates of growth in the tourist infrastructure and tourist traffic.

The State Program Development of Travel and Hospitality Business in the Republic of Tatarstan in 2014-2020 determining the main directions and measures in the tourist sector development in the Republic of Tatarstan was approved by the Resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers on July 21, 2014. The activities under the the Program are put into practice in compliance with the Russian Federation Tourism Development Strategy up to 2020.

* Mishakin T.S.. Tel.: +4-4554-34-232.

E-mail address: timur.mishakin@mail.ru

Thanks to the mutual efforts of ministries and agencies in contributing to the creation of favorable conditions for the hospitality sector and facilitating the region's promotion on the international and domestic market, as well as due to the effect of the World Summer Universiade held in the Republic, its tourist flow dynamics in 2014 left average performances of the last five years far behind.

According to the preliminary data, the tourist flow (including one-day visits) to the Republic made over 2.5 billion in 2014 which is 16.3% more than in 2013. Within the period of 2010-2013 the average increase of tourists' visits to the Republic of Tatarstan amounted to 14.4 %.

For reference, the world tourist destinations show the following: Prague and Vienna receive 4.9 billion tourists per year while Vancouver hosts only 3.4 billion.

Nowadays the Republic of Tatarstan comes the 5th among the Russian Federation subjects, according to the number of tourists. However, such regions as Krasnodar Krai, Moscow, Saint Petersburg and the Republic of Crimea are still ahead of Tatarstan.

for reference:

Krasnodar Krai– 12.3 million tourists

Moscow – 8.6 million tourists

Saint-Petersburg–6.3 million tourists

the Republic of Crimea– 3.8 million tourists

The second key index in the Republican tourism development appears to be the scope of services. In 2014 the scope of tourism services (without regard to related sectors) made more than 10 billion, which is 20.6% more than in 2013. The given indicator comprises tourists' expenses for accommodation, sightseeing, and health resort services. Taking into account auxiliary expenses of tourists coming to the Republic of Tatarstan, their scope is at least twice as much.

The contribution of tourist business into the Republican budget makes 3.5 % of rendered services total volume. Thus, budget revenue from tourist field amounts to at least 350 million rubles per year.

Today, tourist business creates a large number of jobs within the Republic. According to the data from the World Tourism Organization, every thousand tourists create 15 individual workplaces. For the moment, more than 37 thousand people are engaged in tourist business of our region.

2014 has become a hard year for Russian tourist industry. A number of Russian tour operators went out of business in view of financial problems. Tourist market is in the process of transformation caused by unstable exchange rate and other economic phenomena. The economic recession emerged at the end of 2014 undoubtedly influenced the outbound tourism negatively.

However, today the positive aspects of the situation at hand must not be underestimated: they are related to the market of both domestic and inbound tourism. In view of persistently growing prices for outbound tourism the marked increase in domestic tourist traffic will be anticipated in 2015. Moreover, travels to Russia are now more attractive for foreigners since they have become much cheaper.

It is possible to attract the maximum number of tourists and to move to a new level of tourist business development in the Republic in the new year of 2015. To accomplish this, it is necessary to solve some vital tasks.

The first one is the effective use of the existing infrastructure.

Over the past few years Tatarstan has put in a lot of effort to create up-to-date transportation, sporting, and hotel infrastructure but the rates of its growth currently come well ahead of the increase in tourist traffic. After the World Summer Universiade average room occupancy in the hotels of Kazan, the capital of the Republic of Tatarstan, has dropped from 60% in 2013 to 47% in 2014. Hence, the existing infrastructure as of today is capable to receive twice as many tourists than it does now.

The solution of the given problem lies in strengthening efforts in promoting tourist capabilities of the Tatarstan destination in Russian and international markets as well as in implementing activities and newsworthy events that are in tourists' demand.

The second task is the formation of tourism and recreation clusters.

At present the Republic of Tatarstan possesses the unique natural resources in the Volga and Kama rivers water zone currently not being used by the tourism sector.

In order to address the challenge adequately, investment projects on developing tourism and recreation clusters in Verkhniy Uslon, Spasskiy, Rybnaya Sloboda (Fishermen's village) and Kamskoye Ustye municipal districts of the

Republic were prepared for the first time in 2014. Each cluster has its own unique concept and a set of attractions. For the first time ever the Republic can offer distinct and specific proposals for the investors in tourist business. This year the State Committee of the Republic of Tatarstan for Tourism conjointly with Tatarstan Investment Development Agency commenced the activities on search of potential investors to put the given projects into practice and their inclusion into the federal target program Development of Inbound and Outbound Tourism in the Russian Federation (2011-2018). Implementation of the given projects will be carried out in compliance with the Strategy of Social and Economic Development in the Republic of Tatarstan up to 2030 within the framework of Volga-Kama tourist traffic expansion.

The third task is the work of preparation and carrying out of large international events: World Aquatics Championship and FIFA World Cup of 2018. These events are to be not merely athletic games but tourist attractions as well. In this connection the task of raising hospitality level and service quality grade becomes particularly topical.

The fourth focal area is the development of tourist business with application of up-to-date information technologies. The solution of this problem lies in maximal availability of the Republican tourist capabilities on the internet, creation and launching the present-day digital service units for tourists and equipping the sightseeing objects with innovative digital equipment. All the objects of tourist infrastructure (transportation junctions, museums, restaurants and entertaining centers) must be involved in this work.

The fifth task suggests cooperation with national and cultural Tatar autonomies and expatriate communities.

It makes sense to exploit opportunities of Tatar autonomies' representatives both in Russia and abroad for promoting tourist attractions of Tatarstan among the residents and travel companies in the appropriate regions.

The sixth task appears to be the development of tourist business in the municipal districts of the Republic.

In 2014 the work with 17 municipal districts of the Republic for them to determine their own tourist specialization was successfully accomplished by accepting individual municipal programs of tourism development.

The seventh task is the elaboration of new prospective holiday destinations.

Nowadays the Republic of Tatarstan most often offers the guests a routine tourist product pertaining to the cultural and educational tourism. Today it is necessary to develop new forms of tourism such as:

1. Medical tourism. Today the Republic of Tatarstan possesses hi-tech medical centers rendering world class services. Based on this resource, the Ministry of Health conjointly with the local tour operators should create a new medical tourism product for Russian residents and prospectively foreigners as well.

2. Educational tourism. The Republic of Tatarstan has a large number of higher educational institutions, which is why it is necessary to promote it as a region for receiving education. By solving this problem we mean the creation of special career guidance tours to the Republic in order to make young people familiar with its higher educational institutions and their main academic programs.

3. Rural tourism. The world practice shows that tourism is currently developed not only in large cities but in rural areas as well. In this time of mass urbanization, more and more people want to know the household and the way of life in the countryside. Achievement of this task is possible through rural tourism clusters formation in the Republic.

Besides, the Republic of Tatarstan is abundant with rich resources for developing industrial, hunting, and fishery tourism.

Based on the results of 2014, Tatarstan has become the winner of the national award My Planet as the Best Region for Travelling in Russia. All things considered, it may be concluded that the Republic is up and coming in promoting its tourist destinations in the domestic and international markets.

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