



## The Main Modern Trends in the Economy and Society in the Development of Tourism

### Las principales tendencias modernas en la economía y la sociedad en el desarrollo del turismo

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#### ABSTRACT

Research aimed to reveal the character of the links between main modern trends in the economy and society and the development of tourism as one of the sectors of the Russian economy, on the one hand, and the type of human activity, on the other. In order to realize this goal, the main trends of the modern Russian economy were identified: economic crisis caused by pandemic coronavirus; rapidly developing digitalization of economy; the growing influence of ecological component on economic development and the increasing role of customer orientation in providing competitive positions of business. The study of trends in tourism, based on the use of methods of statistical analysis, confirmed the hypothesis that tourism is the sphere in which they are most clearly manifested. In particular, it concerns the following regularities: tourism as a branch of the Russian economy has suffered the most because of the economic crisis caused by pandemic coronavirus; tourism is the sector of the economy in which digitalization penetrates most actively; natural resources of Russia create boundless possibilities for ecological tourism development; client-oriented approach in tourism is not a declared principle, but a real business philosophy in modern conditions; increasing demands of Russian tourists for safe.

**Keywords:** economy, modern trends, economic crisis, digital technology, customer focus.

#### RESUMEN

La investigación tuvo como objetivo revelar el carácter de los vínculos entre las principales tendencias modernas en la economía y la sociedad y el desarrollo del turismo como uno de los sectores de la economía rusa, por un lado, y el tipo de actividad humana, por el otro. Para realizar este objetivo, se identificaron las principales tendencias de la economía rusa moderna: crisis económica causada por la pandemia de coronavirus; digitalización de la economía en rápido desarrollo; la creciente influencia del componente ecológico en el desarrollo económico y el creciente papel de la orientación al cliente para proporcionar posiciones competitivas de negocios. El estudio de las tendencias del turismo, basado en el uso de métodos de análisis estadístico, confirmó la hipótesis de que el turismo es el ámbito en el que más claramente se manifiestan. En particular, se refiere a las siguientes regularidades: el turismo como rama de la economía rusa ha sufrido más debido a la crisis económica causada por la pandemia de coronavirus; el turismo es el sector de la economía en el que la digitalización penetra de forma más activa; los recursos naturales de Rusia crean posibilidades ilimitadas para el desarrollo del turismo ecológico; el enfoque orientado al cliente en el

turismo no es un principio declarado, sino una filosofía comercial real en las condiciones modernas; crecientes demandas de los turistas rusos por seguridad.

**Palabras claves:** Economía, tendencias modernas, crisis económica, tecnología digital, enfoque en el cliente.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an alluring word that leaves few people indifferent. When they talk about tourism, they mean, first of all, travel. It is interesting that the term "tourism" only entered the international and Russian lexicon in the early XIX century, while the word "travel" has a much longer history of use. In its original sense, tourism means "a journey made by a person in his/her spare time for recreational, cognitive, professional-business, sports, religious and other purposes" (Vinokurov, 2004, p. 19). This interpretation of tourism is very popular, although it does not reflect all aspects of the phenomenon which is designated as tourism. Indeed, such a multifaceted phenomenon as tourism is difficult to fit into the framework of one definition. When considering this concept, the following approaches to its definition are possible:

- 1) tourism as a type of economic activity;
- 2) tourism as a sphere or sector of the economy;
- 3) tourism as a kind of active recreation;
- 4) tourism as a way of perceiving the world;
- 5) tourism as a type of socio-cultural activity, etc.

Each of these approaches has the right to exist. Attempt of their systematization allows to allocate two interconnected parties of tourism: tourism as the phenomenon of economic and social life of a person. Accordingly, tourism represents one of components of social and economic system at all its levels.

The purpose of research is to reveal the character of connections between the main modern tendencies of economy and society and development of tourism as one of the sectors of the Russian economy, on the one hand, and a type of human activity, on the other hand.

## 2. METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

It is well known that each part of some totality to a greater or lesser extent manifests the regularities and properties inherent in this totality. When conducting the research, we proceeded from the assumption that tourism is a type of economic and social activity, in which the tendencies of economy and society are most vividly manifested. The systematic and comparative approaches to research, methods of statistical analysis served as a methodological basis. The works of domestic and foreign scientists on the considered subjects were used as a theoretical basis.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Let's turn to consideration of tourism from the economic positions and trace its connection with the basic tendencies of economic development.

Perhaps, the most obvious tendency of the modern economy is the crisis caused by pandemic coronavirus. This is one of the leading news topics discussed by economists today. Moreover, if earlier forecasts about

the duration of this crisis covered a time lag of 1-2 years, now they are becoming more and more pessimistic. Coronavirus pandemic due to the introduction of strict sanitary epidemiological restrictions had a negative impact on many sectors of the Russian economy, but most devastatingly on tourism. Selected data on some of the most important types of economic activity, presented in Table 1, clearly illustrate this situation.

Table 1. Turnover of organizations (legal entities) in the Russian Federation in the context of types of economic activities, billion rubles\*

Indicators	2017	2018	2018 / 2017,%	2019	2019 / 2018,%	2020	2020 / 2019,%
Agriculture, forestry, hunting, fishing and fish farming	2283.2	2629.9	115.2	2778.6	105.7	3181.7	114.5
Mining	13995.2	17637.7	126.0	18130.3	102.8	15237.1	84.0
Manufacturing production	36504.8	43450.2	119.0	46123.8	106.2	45112.3	97.8
Construction	4031.4	4390.2	108.9	5672.0	129.2	4828.0	85.1
Tourism	3270.7	3661.5	111.9	3867.5	105.6	1767.51	45.7

\*compiled according to the data of the Federal State Statistics Service and Rostourism

One of the types of economic activity – “Agriculture, forestry, hunting, fishing and fish farming” presented in Table 1, has proven to be resilient to the crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic. For this type of economic activity throughout the entire period under consideration, there has been a steady growth, while in 2020, which was hit by the brunt of the crisis, the turnover of products increased compared to 2019 by 14.5%. This is largely due to two factors:

- economic support of these industries and, first of all, agriculture from the Government of the Russian Federation;
- more favorable conditions in terms of competition with foreign producers due to the introduction of restrictions on the supply of products from abroad as a response to the imposed economic sanctions.

All the other types of economic activity under consideration did not escape the negative impact of the crisis: in 2020, compared with 2019, the decline in turnover was 6% in mining, 4.9% in construction, and 2.2% in manufacturing. Against the backdrop of these figures, the more than twofold drop in tourism turnover (by 54.3%) looks impressive. It should be noted that this fall would have been much more significant if the Russian government had not taken emergency measures to support the tourism industry and the development of domestic tourism.

Thus, a simple statistical analysis reveals the closest connection of tourism as a type of economic activity and sector of the economy with the economic crisis caused by the pandemic coronavirus. This connection is investigated in more detail in the works of many domestic and foreign specialists (Gladkey, 2020, p. 3; Gössling et al., 2020, p. 1; Gretzel et al., 2020, p. 187; Sigala, 2020, p. 312).

The second most significant trend of the modern economy is the rapid penetration of digitalization in all sectors of the economy (Rogova, 2020, p. 93; Zenkina, Ivina, 2021, p. 48). This trend is also a global one. Although Russia is still lagging behind leading Western countries, Russian business leaders are aware of the need to join the digital race and understand that "without the use of digital technology, they can no longer compete successfully in either domestic or foreign markets" (Bondarenko, 2021, p. 63). Digitalization in Russia is most actively penetrating the sphere of public services. If we take the commercial sector, the highest positions in the use of digital technology are occupied by the IT financial sector itself (Kuzin, 2019, p. 89).

As for the tourism industry, there is clearly insufficient statistical data reflecting the level of digitalization of the tourism industry. However, based on the studies of domestic and foreign researchers, it can be argued that tourism is one of the most advanced industries in terms of digital transformation (Blal et al., 2018, p. 85; Morozova, 2020, p. 11; Vishnevskaya, 2019, p. 12). Moreover, computer reservation systems as precursors of digitalization of tourism appeared in the United States and Europe as early as the 1960s, long before digital transformation began to penetrate other commercial sectors of the economy. Today, tourism is increasingly going digital. Among the digital technologies successfully used in tourism today, experts highlight:

- reservation of tourism services using online services;
- online sales of tourist services (including carrier services, accommodation, transfer services, insurance, etc.);
- artificial intelligence technologies, which, in combination with big data technologies, make it possible to conduct in-depth research into customer preferences of tourists and create a more reliable portrait of consumers belonging to different segments of the tourist market;
- digital service technologies and the Internet of Things, which enable the creation of a comfortable environment, adapted to the needs of the tourist, in hotels;
- technologies for navigating tourists in urban spaces and museums;
- chat-bots for automating routine business processes in tourism and information support for tourists.

Among modern economic trends, a special place is taken by the increasing influence of the environmental component on economic development. Concern for the preservation of the planet today is not just a fashionable slogan, but the realization of the new reality, which cannot be ignored by business. According to research data, "humanity's consumption of natural resources for the first time exceeded the volume of their recovery in 1985, and at the beginning of the XXI century we consumed 25% more resources than we could regenerate. The Earth's ability to regenerate itself no longer matches the rate of consumption of its resources-people are turning them into waste faster than the planet can turn waste into natural resources" (Robin et al., 2016, p. 126).

The "green" agenda is now at the forefront of the world's media. As a consequence, numerous rankings of environmental compliance by various countries and businesses have appeared. One of these rankings, based on 22 indicators of environmental performance, including the assessment of the state of the natural environment, the conservation of its biodiversity, the state of public health, the effectiveness of government policy in the field of ecology, etc., is prepared annually by the Yale Center for Environmental Law and Policy (Table 2).

Table 2. Rating of countries by the level of ecology (Rating of countries by the level of ecology, 2020)\*

A place	Country	Index
1	Denmark	82.5
2	Luxembourg	82.3
3	Switzerland	81.5
4	United Kingdom	81.3
5	France	80.0
6	Austria	79.6
7	Finland	78.9

8	Sweden	78.7
9	Norway	77.7
10	Germany	77.2
11	Russia	50.5
12	Liberia	22.6

\*created by the authors

Unfortunately, Russia ranks only 58th out of 180 countries analyzed in this rating. However, a lot has been done in recent years to change this situation. The adopted national project Ecology provides for the allocation of 4,041 billion rubles until 2024 for these purposes (National projects: targets and results, 2019). Russian business is also aware of the need for positive changes in terms of its impact on the natural environment.

Tourism as a sector of the economy is not left out of the "green" agenda. The active development of ecotourism is one of the leading trends in the global tourism industry, opposing overtourism. The term "overtourism" now refers to the phenomenon of excessive growth of tourist visits to certain tourist destinations, leading to a negative impact on cultural monuments, natural sites and the culture of local communities (Goodwin, 2017).

Russia's unique natural resources create limitless opportunities for the development of ecotourism. The reorientation of Russian tourism to domestic tourism due to the coronavirus pandemic has served as an additional driver for the development and implementation of eco-tours by tourism organizations. The results of the online survey of the tourism industry representatives in December 2020 showed that it was the demand for eco-tourism that was less affected by the anticoviral restrictions compared to other types of tourism (Table 3). Of course, the influence of the coronavirus pandemic is obvious here, but representatives of the tourist business believe that the interest in eco-tourism in Russia will gain significant momentum in the absence of this factor.

Table 3. Decrease in demand for various types of tourism (Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic..., 2020)\*

Types of tourism	Share of respondents who noted a drop in demand, %
Cultural tourism	74
Event tourism	58
Health tourism	48
Beach tourism	48
Business tourism	42
Sports tourism	39
Extreme / adventure tourism	25
Ecological tourism	22

\*created by the authors

Another very significant trend in today's economy is increased attention to customer focus as a key factor in business competitiveness. Today, only a lazy man is talking about customer focus. At one of the meetings of the World Economic Forum in Davos in 2020, customer focus was defined as a key competence which provides professional excellence of specialists in any sphere of activity. It should be noted that true customer focus is possible only with an individual approach to the client, which is very doubtful in a mass production environment. As for tourism, it has long indicated the rejection of the so-called package tours and focus on an individual approach to each client as a leading vector of development.

Thus, our analysis has shown that the most significant trends of modern economy find a clear manifestation in tourism. Let us turn to the consideration of the most significant societal trends. We emphasize that these trends are inextricably linked with economic trends, because economy and society do not exist outside each other.

The economic crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic has caused the emergence of a new trend - a change in consumer behavior in favor of security. Experts consider this trend to be long-term (Orekhin, Netroba, 2020). This trend is most vividly manifested in tourism. Safety is the most important indicator of tourist services quality. Even in the most favorable countries from the point of view of travel a tourist can face a number of safety threats: natural disasters, political instability, street crime, man-made disasters, terrorism, epidemics, threats connected with ignorance of national culture and legislation, etc. Conscientious tourism organizations always strive to reduce these risks or at least inform their tourists about them.

Russian domestic tourism is characterized by quite high travel safety. As for Russian tourists, they often tend to be rather careless about their own safety (Afanasyev, Afanasyeva, 2020, p. 7). Nevertheless, the coronavirus pandemic has caused significant changes in the consumer behavior of Russian tourists in terms of safety. As studies show, these changes in consumer behavior are reflected in various aspects of consumer preferences (Table 4).

Table 4. Changes in the shopping preferences of tourists due to increased safety requirements (Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic..., 2020)\*

Shopping preferences	Share of respondents,%
Increased requirements for cleanliness and disinfection	55
Avoiding crowded places	41
Changing geographic preferences towards regions less affected by the pandemic	35
A selection of small, secluded hotels	27
Choice of travel over shorter distances	26
Choice of individual accommodation, food intake and movement	22
Selection of travel companies offering contactless services	eleven

\*created by the authors

The digitalization of the economy is accompanied by a steady increase in public demand for digital technology (Orekhin, Netroba, 2020, p. 39). Again, consumers of tourism services are at the forefront of the use of digital technology. Today it is difficult to imagine a tourist who does not use digital services to purchase tickets, book accommodation and obtain other tourist services. According to the Association of Tour Operators of Russia, the share of organized tourists (tourists who use the services of travel agencies) in the domestic tourism market in Russia was only 21% in 2020 (ATOR summed up the tourism results..., 2020). The trend of tourists' transition to independent planning and implementation of travel using digital technology in the coming years will only intensify. The new generation, the so-called Generation Z, who cannot imagine their life without smartphones, will clearly prefer digital solutions.

Social networks play a special role in tourism today. They are widely used by tourists in planning and organizing trips, sharing impressions, and play a major role in shaping the image of tourist destinations and organizations by publishing reviews and travel fashions through travel-blogging (Bogomazova, Klimova, 2021, p. 3).

One of the manifestations of digitalization is the virtualization of the modern world, the main features of which are interactivity and globality. As F.O. Shamkhalov (2008, p. 159) notes, virtualization involves "the alienation of the individual from traditional institutions and the movement of his interests into the field of the virtual, where an increasing role is played by human communication with images, signs, stereotypes".

This aspect of the modern world is directly related to tourism (Vishnevskaya *et al.*, 2017, p. 22). In fact, the end result of receiving a tourist service are images and impressions. These images and impressions, stored in the tourist's memory, are the product of rational and emotional perception of the tourist destination as a whole and its individual components. In the period of restrictions caused by the coronavirus pandemic, the reception of tourist experiences has shifted from an objective reality to a virtual one. Many museums, exhibitions and other tourism enterprises have turned to digital platforms to provide virtual tours to customers. Specialists believe that the interest in virtual reality on the part of tourists will persist even when restrictions on movement are lifted.

The problem of ecology is one of the most acute problems of modern society. The model of the consumer society orienting people to excessive consumption of material goods is gradually being replaced in people's consciousness by the model of conscious, sufficient consumption. This trend is also evident in Russian society today. According to P&G, 70% of Russian consumers are concerned about environmental protection (Makarova, 2021).

Consumers of tourist services are no exception. This is manifested, firstly, in the growth of the number of ecotourists. According to the results of international research Criteo (Ecotourism Trends in 2020, 2019) the share of ecotourists in Russia is 12% with the maximum value of this indicator 22% (Germany). Secondly, it is reflected in the intensification of the search and development of new tourist routes to reduce the burden on the most popular routes. This direction in tourism, opposing overtourism, is now called underground tourism.

The growing popularity of ecotourism is caused not only and not so much by the desire for social distance and the desire to avoid places with large crowds of people. The given tendency in tourism is supported by growing popularity of a healthy way of life, desire of the psychological comfort which is provided thanks to the communion with the nature.

The increasing diversity of individual characteristics of people, expressed in the individualization of tastes and the growing differentiation of purchasing preferences is another very noticeable trend in modern society. This trend is caused both by people's desire for self-expression, manifestation of their "I" and by the increasing differentiation of society, including growing income inequality (The main trends of 2020: the view of economists, 2020).

In tourism, this trend is manifested in the growing dynamics of tourists' rejection of package tours and the construction of individual tourist trajectories. As for differentiation of tourists' incomes, its influence is manifested in the great variety of offers in the market of tourist services on the price factor. For example, in the market of accommodation services today there are hotels for very wealthy clients, as well as hotels, whose clients are ready for a minimum set of amenities and services. The latter include, above all, hostels, the growing popularity of which leads to an increase in their weight in the hotel business. In the Russian Federation, the increase in demand for hostel services can be seen in the dynamics of beds in accommodation facilities (Table 5). While the share of the number of hotel beds in the total number of all accommodation facilities decreased from 72.3% to 67.1% from 2017 to 2020, the same indicator for hostels increased from 9.2% to 13.4%.

Table 5. Statistics of places in accommodation facilities of the RF (Number of places in collective accommodation facilities, 2021)\*

Indicators	2017	2018	2019	2020
In hotels and similar accommodation facilities - total, thousand, including:				
hotels	1137	1299	1348	1362
	822	889	912	914

hostels	105	158	155	182
Share of hotels by location in the total population, %	72.3	68.4	67.7	67.1
Share of hostels by location in the total population, %	9.2	12.2	11.5	13.4

\*created by the authors

#### 4. CONCLUSION

In the course of the study, the main trends in the modern economic and social life of Russia were identified. Among them, the first were:

- 1) the economic crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic;
- 2) digitalization rapidly penetrating into all sectors of the economy;
- 3) strengthening the impact of the environmental component on economic development;
- 4) increased attention to customer focus as a key factor in business competitiveness;
- 5) changing consumer behavior in favor of safety;
- 6) active growth in population demand for digital technologies;
- 7) gradual replacement in the minds of people of the model of a consumer society, which orientates people to excessive consumption of material goods, to a model of conscious sufficient consumption;
- 8) the increasing diversity of the individual characteristics of people, which is expressed, inter alia, in the individualization of tastes and the growing differentiation of consumer preferences.

The conducted research has confirmed the stated assumption that in tourism, as in a mirror, all these tendencies are most vividly reflected.

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