

# Regional Aspects on the Impact of Covid-19 on Inside Tourism of Russia

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**Abstract:** The period covered by the study reflects the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the development of domestic tourism in Russia. We used statistics from the Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation and data from international and Russian travel organizations. During the Covid period, governments restricted movement between countries and regions. As a result, the number of arrivals of tourists to the Russian Federation from other countries and domestic Russian tourism declined. The entire tourism and hotel business was in crisis. We compared data on the arrival of foreign citizens in Russia, and on the accommodation of foreign and Russian tourists in hotels by regions of the country. We identified the leading regions of the domestic tourism business (Moscow, the Moscow region and St. Petersburg still remain among them), and realized the scale of the decline in tourism at the regional level.


## 1 INTRODUCTION


At present, huge flows of people are moving on our planet, not only within their states, but also between regions and countries, that is, around the world. These are international migrations. But in connection with the spread of a new viral infection, called COVID-19, the world community has faced an unpredictable situation since 2019, which has resulted in serious changes in population movement. They were forced to drop sharply.


In the media, on the Internet, every day there are new data on the number of people sick and recovering during a pandemic in different countries. This is a global epidemic caused by the spread of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus. On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a global emergency, and on March 11, 2020, a pandemic. The unfortunate statistics on morbidity and mortality from COVID-19 continue to rise. As a result, international traffic between the countries has sharply decreased. Many international sporting, religious, political and

cultural events, etc. are postponed or canceled. Classes are held online (if necessary) in universities and schools, and even work in many enterprises. Lockdown is defined as "the imposition of severe restrictions on movement, social contact and access to public places." Many international conferences are now held in a new mode (remotely), excluding direct communication between people or reducing it to a minimum.

There is no doubt that the COVID-19 pandemic is having a negative impact on all areas of human activity around the world. The current situation could not but affect both international and domestic tourism. 2020 was the worst year in modern international tourism history. This is not only reported by UN WTO experts (World Tourism Organization, 2020). Many international organizations (UN, WTO, WEF) devote their reports, analytical reviews on the impact of COVID-19 on the development of international tourism (Policy Brief, 2020).

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Facts and statistics have shown that the global economy is more dependent on this sector of the economy than previously thought. And the point is not only that the number of tourists has decreased. Yes, this is the main factor. But after all, many sectors of the economy related to tourism found themselves in a very difficult situation. These are all types of transport (aviation, rail, water, including cruise), airports, port and storage facilities, logistics structures, trade, travel agencies, the entertainment and leisure sector (restaurants, the industry of attractions, museums, theaters, sports arenas, etc. concert halls) hotel business, food industry, handicraft production of souvenirs, parks and reserves, etc. The spread of the virus around the planet had a huge impact on the situation on the labor market, which led to a sharp reduction in jobs, including in the field of travel, tourism and hospitality. All these factors influence the development of domestic tourism in the states.

Economists and scientists are trying to calculate losses and predict the development of the situation in the industry for the near future. But there is no accurate information and statistics on the number of cases, deaths and recoveries in countries, especially in less developed countries (and we understand that this is virtually impossible). Many scientific articles are currently devoted to the study of this problem (including in Russia) (Shinhyo, 2020). Some of the articles describe the problems of especially large cities (which have the highest concentration of population in a limited area) in conditions of limited movement of the population during a pandemic (Turgel', 2020; Mahrova, 2021; Panin, 2021; Lopata, 2021). Others analyze the emergence of the so-called "pandemic of fear" due to the huge flows of information about the spread and consequences of COVID-19, and analyze its impact on the demographic processes in the country (Loguncova, 2020; Aleksandrova, 2020). The measures applied by state structures and private business for the development of domestic tourism and the entire tourism industry are discussed. It is noted that they contributed to the growth of domestic tourism, increasing the attractiveness of travel for citizens in their country in the current environment. The article analyzes the proposed post-crisis measures for the restoration of the tourism industry in the world, including in Russia. The regional features of the development of international and domestic tourism in Russia are analyzed (Skolkovo, 2020; The Official Website of Federal Agency for Tourism, 2021).

In our opinion, the monograph "Counting the Cost of COVID-19 on the Global Tourism Industry", 2020,

is very interesting (Nhamo, 2020). The book presents the preliminary findings of scientists on the impact of COVID-19 on the travel, tourism and hospitality sector. The focus is on global tourism value chains (including aviation, airports, cruise ships, car rentals, hotels, restaurants, sports, religious tourism, and the stock market). Analyzes the relationship between the impact of COVID-19 on the economy and the tourism sector and the Sustainable Development Goals. The book contains material on economic incentives to rebuild the tourism sector after COVID-19.

In Russia in 2020 a serious monograph "Society and a Pandemic. Experience and lessons of the fight against COVID-19 in Russia " (Society and pandemic. Experience and Lessons from COVID-19 Fighting in Russia, 2020). The study was carried out by scientists and specialists from leading Russian universities and research centers of the Russian Federation. The book analyzes the problems faced by healthcare and education, social and economic policy, and the public administration system in Russia in connection with the coronavirus pandemic. The system of measures that were taken in Russia to combat the epidemic is examined in detail.

The work of scientists from the Center for the Study of Financial Technologies and Digital Economy SKOLKOVO-NES "Measures to stimulate the tourism industry during the COVID-19 pandemic: global experience" was important for understanding the current situation in the field of tourism and travel (Skolkovo, 2019). The study aims to study and structure incentive measures for tourism and related industries that have been initiated and undertaken by the ministries of tourism and businesses in different countries. It is shown that stopping the activity of the tourism industry has very large-scale socio-economic effects. The paper emphasizes that the recovery of the industry depends on the coordinated actions of the participants in the tourism industry ecosystem and the adaptation of best practices. Among the obstacles to the recovery of the industry, they highlight the lack of coordination between countries in the introduction of restrictions to combat the pandemic (including when using different vaccines for the virus), as well as the general deterioration of the economic situation in all countries of the world.

However, without a doubt, many aspects of the impact of the pandemic on the tourism business, including geographic ones, remain uncovered. This article is devoted to the analysis of regional features of the impact of COVID-19 on domestic tourism in Russia based on the analysis of individual indicators of the industry's development.

## 2 METHODS

Sources of information - websites of international institutions (UNWTO, IMF), and official websites of government departments of the Russian Federation (Federal Agency for Tourism; Federal State Statistics Service; website of the Government of the Russian Federation), etc. Research methods: synthesis, statistical, analytical, comparative, cartographic and etc.

We analyzed the data of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) on indicators of tourist arrivals and income from tourism activities by regions and countries of the world, including the position of Russia in world and European indicators. To identify the regional features of the impact of the pandemic on domestic tourism in Russia, a comparison of statistical data on the number of inbound tourist trips of foreign citizens to the Russian Federation was carried out. We remind you that the official statistical information on this indicator is formed on the basis of the official statistical methodology for assessing the number of inbound and outbound tourist trips, approved by order of Rosstat dated 12.08.2014 No. 510 (for 2014-2019), and the official statistical methodology for assessing the number of inbound and outbound tourist trips, trips approved by order of Rosstat dated October 31, 2019 No. 640 (starting from the 1st quarter of 2020). <https://www.gks.ru/folder/23457>

We analyzed Rosstat data on the number of foreign and Russian citizens placed in collective accommodation facilities (CAF) in the regional aspect for the constituent entities of the Russian Federation and federal districts (regardless of the purpose and duration of their stay in Russia).

## 3 RESULTS

Analysis and comparison of data showed that in 2019-2021. outbound tourism for Russians was expected to be distributed only between tourist destinations and countries open to foreign citizens. A significant decrease in indicators is recorded. For comparison: in 2018, 41.96 million tourist trips were carried out, in 2019 - 45.3 million, in 2020 - 12.4 million trips (Statistics. Federal Agency for Tourism of the Russian Federation, 2021).

The number of arrivals of foreign tourists to our country has also significantly decreased from 24.6 million in 2019 to 6.4 million in 2020 (a decrease of 74%). Although the share of Russia in international

tourism in terms of the number of arrivals of foreign citizens is only 1.6% of the world indicator (2020). The share of Russia in Europe is 2.7%, in the region of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) - 13.4%. The share of Russia in terms of income in the international tourism business is 2% of the world indicator (the share of Russia in Europe is 4.7%, the share in the CEE region is 41%) (calculated according to: UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, 2021).

The contribution of tourism to Russia's GDP in 2019 was 3.9% (in 2011 - 3%). It should be noted that the official statistics on international tourism (inbound and outbound) is somewhat peculiar. Thus, the Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation indicates the following. "A visitor is a traveler who travels to any main destination outside his usual environment for a period of less than a year with any main purpose (business trip, vacation or other personal purpose)" (Federal State Statistics Service, Rosstat, 2021 –<https://www.gks.ru/folder/23457>). This statistic does not include migrant workers, individuals undergoing long-term training, public transport crews on both regular and non-scheduled flights, diplomats, consular officials and military personnel.

According to the official data of Rosstat, out of the total number of foreign citizens who arrived in Russia in 2020, 81% are citizens from the CIS countries (the most significant flows of foreign citizens arriving in Russia come from Ukraine - 50%, Kazakhstan - 11%, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan). Among the non-CIS countries, Finland is leading - 2.6%, Poland - 1.7%, Estonia - 1.5%, China - 1.3%, Latvia, Germany, Lithuania. At the same time, about 5-6 times fewer people entered Russia from most European countries in 2020 than in 2019. From Germany - 13 times fewer. And the influx of visitors from China decreased by 23 times compared to 2019, which actually had an impact on the development of domestic tourism in Russia.

Although the concept of a tourist (visitor) does not always accurately characterize the situation. Thus, according to the Federal State Statistics Service, the flow of foreign citizens into Russia (taking into account trips to visit relatives, on business trips, etc.) decreased in January-September 2020 by 73% in annual terms, amounting to 5.1 million foreigners. Of these, according to the border service of the FSB of Russia, only 0.33% arrived for the purpose of tourism (and this is only 12.9 thousand people). And the decrease in tourists affects the income from visiting tourist sites in Russia by foreign citizens. Therefore, in 2020, domestic tourism developed, as residents of

Russia still continue to travel, although the flow of tourists also decreased within the country.

Let us describe the current situation with domestic tourism in Russia in more detail. The period we are analyzing (before and during the pandemic) is extremely interesting from the point of view of assessing the impact of extreme factors on the system of centers of attraction of domestic tourism in Russia that has already formed in previous years. And it can be noted that practically no noticeable changes were found.

Recall that up to 2020, domestic tourism in the Russian Federation was dynamically developing and on the eve of the pandemic reached its maximum values. This could be partly explained by the fact that the rise in prices for overseas tours significantly outstripped the changes in prices on the domestic tourism market. For example, in 2019, compared to 2016, the number of officially sold tourist packages in Russia increased by 2.0 million units and amounted to 5.3 million units, showing an increase of almost 60% over this period (Bulletin on Current Trends ...). The main demand for domestic tourism has always been formed in the regions of the European part of Russia. More than 70% of officially registered tourists live there. This situation practically did not change during the pandemic (COVID-19). Rostourism experts name the following regions leading in terms of the number of tourists. These are Moscow, Krasnodar Territory, Moscow Region, St. Petersburg, Republic of Crimea, Republic of Tatarstan, Sverdlovsk Region, Republic of Bashkiria, Nizhny Novgorod and Rostov Regions (Statistics. Federal Agency for Tourism, 2021).

But due to the restrictions due to the increase in the incidence of people with coronavirus COVID-19 in Russia and restrictions on movement at the federal and regional levels, the demand even for tour packages within the country decreased. During 2020, Russian tourists in the direction of domestic tourism made about 40-42 million trips around the country, which is 35-38% less than the statistics of 2019, when the total number of trips around the country amounted to 68 million. 2020 compared to 2019 showed a decline in demand for tourism services. The largest reduction in the number of tourists was noted in the two Russian capitals (Moscow - a 72% reduction; St. Petersburg - 80%), where restrictive anti-bank measures were most severe. The least decline was experienced by the regions located near the sea coast, where tourists went, even despite the restrictions and prohibitions. These are recreational zones familiar to Russians (Krasnodar Territory - 33% and the Republic of Crimea - 18%) (Bulletin on current ...)

Although the number of citizens of Russia and other countries vacationing near the Black Sea is quite possibly still higher than the official statistics of Rosstat. For example, tourists and vacationers could stay in the private sector or with their relatives and friends, rather than registering at hotels, motels, holiday homes and sanatoriums.

Against the background of the spread of coronavirus infection during the period of restrictions on the departure of Russian citizens to foreign countries in 2019-2021. increased interest in the development of domestic tourism from the state and business. A new national project "Tourism and hospitality industry" was launched (2021-2030). The Strategy for the Development of Tourism in the Russian Federation until 2035 was also adopted. The Concept of the Federal Target Program "Development of Domestic and Inbound Tourism in the Russian Federation (2019-2025)" and others was developed and approved. expenses for the purchase of tours in Russia and booking tickets). This program to support Russian tourists was extended until the end of 2021. Among other state initiatives for the development of this industry, the launch of grant support for entrepreneurs in the field of domestic and inbound tourism in 2020 should be noted. In addition, Russia is launching a program for issuing concessional loans (at a rate of 3 to 5% per annum) in the hotel business (for the construction of hotels), etc. The developed national project "Tourism and hospitality industry" will include three federal projects aimed at creating high quality and diverse tourism products, increasing the availability of tourism products, as well as improving the quality of public administration and removing administrative barriers in the industry. The authorities of many Russian regions consider the development of domestic tourism as a condition for the recovery and diversification of the economy.

In December 2020, on the basis of big data, the first in Russia "Index of Regions for Tourism Development" was developed (Index of Regions for Tourism Development., 2020). And according to the tables of the National Tourist Rating, we compared the importance of Russian regions in terms of tourist arrivals in dynamics until 2020 (National Tourism Rating, 2020). Note that the five leading regions in this rating remain unchanged. It was only in 2020 that the Moscow Region became the leader of domestic tourism for the first time. This is due to restrictions on the departure of Muscovites to other cities of the Russian Federation during a pandemic. But many of them went to the existing tourist centers of the Moscow region (in the near Moscow region). This

region has always had a developed tourist infrastructure, there are many monuments of history and culture known to tourists. This fact confirms another trend in the development of domestic tourism. The number of trips of Russian tourists within the regions of their residence (within their regions or republics), and to neighboring (with the region of residence) regions is growing. Many people discover new corners of their native region. For such trips, there is a separate term - "staycation" ("rest near home") (Zyablova O., 2021).

Domestic tourism in general is more complicated than foreign tourism lends itself to statistical analysis. Many residents of Russia do not always use the services of tour operators for their travels, and they often prefer a private car as a transport. Nevertheless, we will try to assess the development of domestic tourism in terms of the hotel sector (although, as you know, it is used not only for tourism purposes). According to Rosstat, the number of persons accommodated in hotels and other collective accommodation facilities: sanatoriums, rest homes, boarding houses, etc. (hereinafter referred to as CAF), in 2019 amounted to 76 million people. (including 10.9 million foreigners). Moscow was the leader in terms of the number of people accommodated in the CAF (over 20% of the total tourist flow, and in terms of the resettlement of foreign citizens - 50%). This was followed by the Krasnodar Territory, St. Petersburg, the Moscow Region and the Republic of Crimea.

In 2020, the number of persons (in total, Russian citizens and foreigners) accommodated in hotels and other collective accommodation facilities decreased in Russia as a whole by 1.6 times (from 76 to 47 million people). Further, we will separately consider the change in the situation with the accommodation of Russian citizens traveling around the country and foreign citizens (including residents from the CIS countries) (Tables 1 and 2).

Table 1: The number of citizens of the Russian Federation placed in collective accommodation facilities (people).

Region	2019	%	2020	%	2019/ 2020
Russian Federation	65 185 770	100	45 223 223	100	1.4
Moscow city	10 388 303	15.9	6 232 571	13.78	1.4
Krasnodar region	8 069 907	12.4	6 221 507	13.76	1.7
Moscow region	4 586 111	7.0	2 906 713	6.4	1.3
Saint Petersburg city	3 835 825	5.9	2 777 133	6.1	1.6

Republic of Crimea	2 308 769	3.5	1 915 709	4.2	1.4
Republic of Tatarstan	2 228082	3.4	1 423917	3.1	1.2
Tyumen region	1 624451	2.5	1 079325	2.4	1.5
Leningrad region	1 1062 413	1.6	953 320	2.1	1.1
Sverdlovsk region	1 532558	2.4	952364	2.1	1.6
Republic of Bashkortostan	1 239294	1.9	884279	2.0	1.4
The sum of 10 constituent entities of the Russian Federation	36 875 713	56.6	21 477559	56.0	1.7

Calculated according to (the Official Website of Federal State Statistics Service - Rosstat, 2021)

The calculated share of the leading regions in the reception and accommodation of Russian citizens in the CAF allows us to conclude that the total number of visitors has decreased by 1.4 times. Moscow remains the most important tourist destination. At the same time, the share of subjects of the Russian Federation out of the top ten has remained practically unchanged (and in aggregate amounts to 56%) (Table 1).

But statistics on the placement of foreign citizens in the CAF show a slightly different picture. It is largely due to quarantine measures in the context of a pandemic and a decrease in the entry of foreign citizens into Russia in general. And also the level of concentration of foreign tourists (or citizens of foreign countries) in some of the most significant regions for them is much higher. Only the first 5 leading regions account for 76% of foreign visitors to the CAF (Table 2).

Let's see what caused this. For example, the arrival of residents to Russia from China decreased by 23 times in 2020 (compared to 2019). The entry of foreign citizens from Germany and the Republic of Korea decreased 13 times, from the USA, Spain and Australia - 17 times, from Great Britain, Brazil, Iran, Indonesia - 11 times, from Japan and India - 8 times, etc. ... (Feder service of state statistics ... Rosstat, 2021). It was these data that served us to explain some of the regional features of the impact of restrictions on movement between states due to the coronavirus on domestic tourism in Russia. Although we certainly remember that from the CIS countries (according to statistics) over 80% of foreign citizens enter Russia (and, first of all, from Ukraine - 50%).

Table 2: The number of foreign citizens accommodated in collective accommodation facilities in the leading regions (people).

Region	2019	%	2020	%	2019/ 2020
Russian Federation	10 855 969	100	2 159 235	100	5.0
Moscow city	5 161 380	47.5	1 097 631	50.8	4.7
Saint Petersburg city	2 269 160	20.9	303 647	14.1	7.5
Moscow region	438 592	4.0	110 491	5.1	4.0
Krasnodar region	228 712	2.1	76 905	3.6	3.0
Irkutsk region	274 767	2.5	54 323	2.5	5.1
The sum of 5 constituent entities of the Russian Federation	8 372 611	77.1	1 642 997	76.1	5.1

In general, the number of foreign citizens (including citizens from the CIS) placed in the CAF in Russia in 2020 compared to 2019 decreased by 5 times (from 10.9 to 1.2 million people). But in some Russian regions, the arrival and accommodation of foreign citizens decreased to a greater extent. In Moscow (the leader in visiting foreign citizens - 50%), there was a 5-fold decrease, in St. Petersburg - 7.5 times, in the Kaliningrad region - 8 times, in the Novgorod region - 15 times. In the cities and regions of the "Golden Ring" familiar to visiting foreign visitors, there was also a sharp decrease in the indicators of tourist activity in servicing foreigners (especially in the Vladimir region - almost 30 times, from 121 thousand people in 2019 to 4 thousand people in 2020 G.). In the Far East, also due to a sharp decrease in the arrival of tourists from China, Hong Kong, the Republic of Korea, Japan and other countries, the Primorsky Territory, Khabarovsk Territory, Kamchatka Territory, Irkutsk Region, the Republic of Buryatia and the Jewish autonomous region (reduction of visits by 10 times or more).

You can continue the analysis of statistical data on the development of domestic tourism in Russia. Although detailed statistics for 2020 and 2021. not yet, but it can be assumed that even the coronavirus could not destroy domestic tourism as a branch of the Russian economy. New measures of state support for the travel, tourism and hospitality sector have emerged. At the same time, there are still many problems in the regions of the Russian Federation. For the development of new routes, programs, excursions, it is necessary to develop infrastructure. We need good roads, cheap domestic flights,

comfortable and fast train connections, and hotels with affordable prices for the residents of the country.

## 4 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

According to experts' forecasts, the restoration of international tourism with a significant improvement in the situation with the incidence of coronavirus in the world may take several years. In a way, the development of domestic tourism can become an alternative for business and the population of Russia. Tourism is an important item of profit for any state, especially one as vast in territory and rich in landscape and natural-climatic diversity as Russia.

Even with a general decline in the number of tourists traveling in Russia, domestic tourism has suffered less than international tourism. At the same time, the leading centers of attraction for tourists in Russia during the period under review remained unchanged. Residents of Moscow, St. Petersburg and other large cities remain the leaders in the formation of demand for domestic tourism. But it should be noted that the number of regions where the main flow of tourists traveling around their country is formed is still insignificant.

In general, the situation associated with the pandemic has led to the emergence of new trends in the development of domestic tourism. Interest has grown not only in well-known, but also in new tourist destinations in Russia.

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