

Analysis of the Impact of the COVID-19 Coronavirus Infection Pandemic on the Processes of Tourism Development in the Russian Federation

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Abstract: The article examines topical issues related to the impact of the COVID-19 coronavirus infection on the tourism industry. The deterioration of the epidemiological situation in the world has led to noticeable changes and restrictions in the field of tourism. The author identifies the factors of adverse impact, presents a study of the economic indicators of the tourism sector in dynamics. The author also revealed a change in consumer preferences of most tourists associated with new travel formats, introduced restrictive measures and development of digital technologies in the field of tourism. Serious attention is paid to the study of the requirements for tourists traveling to foreign countries on tourist visas, and the requirements for the entry of foreign citizens into the Russian Federation in the context of a worsening epidemiological situation due to the spread of the new coronavirus infection COVID-19. Based on the results obtained, a number of measures and actions were offered to reduce the adverse impact of COVID-19 both on the enterprises of the tourism industry and on tourists.

1 INTRODUCTION


For many years, the tourism sector has been a highly profitable and rapidly growing sector of the country's economy. Traveling to different countries of the world, participation in cruise and bus international tourist trips, contributed to the development of outbound tourism. The positions of inbound and domestic tourism were strengthened. Starting in 2020, the tourism industry began to be influenced by unfavorable factors in many countries of the world.

The main factors contributing to formation of an unfavorable market situation in the tourism sector were primarily the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19), which led to an intensification of the crisis in this area, a decrease in the number of citizens traveling to other countries for tourism, a decrease in the purchasing power of the population, an increase in leading foreign currencies against the ruble, which led to a reduction in travel and tourism costs. "The rapid spread of COVID-19 has had a significant

impact on global tourism, which has suffered severe consequences, especially in attractive tourist destinations such as France, Italy and Spain, as well as in countries where outbound tourism is extremely common, such as China and the United States. According to the CNBC report, nearly 200,000 flights from and to China were canceled in 2020 (Lukovic and Stojkovic, 2020).

One of the most important factors that became the basis for the decrease in income from tourism activities was the closure of the borders of many states for tourists and the practically stop of sales of tours to many countries of the world.

In accordance with the decision of the Government of the Russian Federation, the country identified the industries and areas of activity that were most affected by the emergence and spread of COVID-19. "These industries included: the organization of leisure and entertainment, tourism, hotel business, catering, cinemas, and etc." (Decree of

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the Government of the Russian Federation of 04/03/2020 No. 434).

“Tourism businesses were among the first to feel the negative impact of the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. Due to closure of most states of the borders, the usual options for recreation and travel on tourist vouchers were violated, opportunities for travel were reduced” (Lavrova, 2020).

These factors have an impact on the change in consumer behavior of tourists, which requires serious research.

“The tourism industry has experienced a sharp drop in revenues. The shock affects both the demand side (restrictions on freedom of movement, closure of borders, guests' fear of infection) and the supply side (closure of hotels and catering establishments, as well as recreation facilities used for tourism)” (Ugur and Akbiyik, 2020).

Based on the changing tastes and preferences of tourists, as well as considering the introduction of new digital formats for the functioning of many organizations and enterprises of the tourism industry, they are forced to adapt to changing conditions in order to increase the level of profitability during the crisis.

2 STUDY METHODS

In this article, the author used empirical research methods, studying the sources of information on this topic. The statistical method of the study was actively used, namely, the study of indicators of tourism development in dynamics was carried out, as well as the method of comparative analysis and the method of a systematic approach associated with the consideration of the tourism industry as a holistic, interconnected in all elements of the system.

3 STUDY RESULTS

As a result of the study, the author identified certain patterns of the influence of the new COVID-19 coronavirus infection on the tourism development. There is a sharp decline in tourist flows, especially tourist trips associated with visiting other countries, the borders of which were closed to tourists. The most difficult situation arose in the second quarter of 2020. Table 1 presents the main economic indicators of tourism development in Russia during the pandemic.

Table 1: Indicators of tourism development in Russia - Q2 2020 vs. Q2 2019.

Ser. No.	Name of indicator	Q2 2019	Q2 2020	Growth Q2 2020 to Q2 2019, in %
1	The number of persons placed in the DAC, thousand people	17,313.2	2,094.9	- 87.9
	including:			
	- citizens of Russia	14,706.0	1,955.9	-86.7
	- foreign citizens	2,622.6	139.0	-94.7
2	DAC income from services provided, RUB mln.	135,393.4	16,382.6	-87.9
3	Number of inbound tourist trips, thousand	6,650.0	66.5	-99.0
4	Number of outbound tourist trips, thousand	11,610.0	116.1	-99.0
5	The scope of services provided by health resort organizations, billion rubles	34.9	2.3	-93.4

Done by the author on the basis of data (Rosstat Statistical Bulletin for World Tourism Day, 2020).

In accordance with the presented data, it can be concluded that the main indicators of tourism development have been catastrophically reduced and the work of many tour operator companies that sell tours to international destinations has been suspended. Tourism development indicators fell by 80 % to 99 %. At the end of 2020, the situation in the field of tourism has improved somewhat, but we cannot talk about achievement of the results of tourism activities, which were recorded before the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. Table 2 presents data on the dynamics of tourist flows for the period of 2019 - 2020.

Done by the author on the basis of data (Federal Agency for Tourism of the Russian Federation. Statistics).

At the end of 2020, there is a steady trend towards the recovery of indicators for the development of domestic tourism, for example, the number of Russian citizens accommodated in hotels and other collective accommodation facilities decreased by only 31.4 %, which indicates a gradual reorientation of the tourist flow, and most Russian citizens were on vacation during this period and traveled through the territory of Russia, which was the most important factor in the intensification of tourist activity in various regions of the country.

Table 2: Data on the dynamics of tourist flows for the period of 2019 – 2020.

Ser. No.	Name of indicator	2019	2020	Growth 2020 to 2019, in %
1	The number of inbound tourist trips of foreign citizens to the Russian Federation (units)	24,418,749	6,358,959	-73.9
2	Number of outbound tourist trips of citizens of the Russian Federation abroad (units)	45,330,433	12,360,742	-72.7
3	Number of citizens of the Russian Federation accommodated in collective accommodation facilities (people)	65,921,280	45,223,224	-31.4
4	The number of foreign citizens accommodated in collective accommodation facilities (people)	10,855,969	2,159,235	-80.1

“Using data from a sample of over 90 countries, we find a positive and meaningful relationship between past international tourism records and the current cumulative number of confirmed cases and deaths from COVID-19. More effective coordination between health and immigration authorities, monitoring of international borders is required” (Farzanegan, 2020).

It is important to compare the total tourist flows of outbound and domestic tourism before the pandemic and during the pandemic in order to feel the negative impact of the adverse situation for tourism.

Figure 1 shows data on movement of tourist flows in Russia before the pandemic of COVID-19 coronavirus infection.

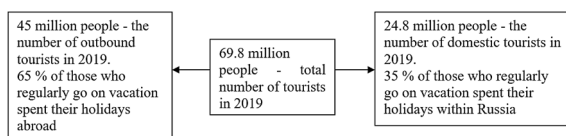


Figure 1: Characteristics of outbound and domestic tourism in Russia before the pandemic in 2019 (COVID-19 as an opportunity for domestic tourism. Domestic tourism. National Research University Higher School of Economics).

Figure 2 presents data on the movement of tourist flows in Russia during the pandemic of COVID-19 coronavirus infection.

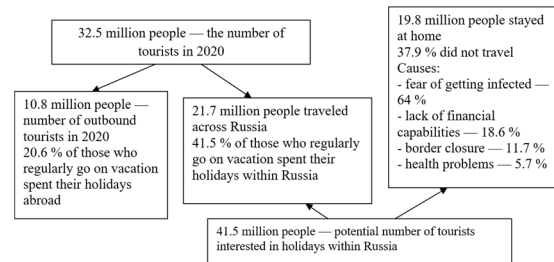


Figure 2: Characteristics of outbound and domestic tourism in Russia during the pandemic in 2020 (COVID-19 as an opportunity for domestic tourism. Domestic tourism. National Research University Higher School of Economics).

As a result of restrictions on visiting most countries of the world due to the epidemiological situation and the restrictions imposed by countries, the number of tourists going on vacation to other countries has sharply decreased. However, there has been a sharp increase in the number of tourists who have reoriented themselves to travel within Russia, or are planning to carry out a tourist trip through the territory of Russia in the near future.

4 RESULT DISCUSSION

Having studied the results obtained on the impact of the new coronavirus infection on the tourism sector, the author developed and offered measures related to the adaptation of tourism to new economic conditions and contributing to the improvement of the position of tourism in the near future.

Measures to adapt the tourism sector to new conditions include the following:

- an increase in the scope of tourism financing from state and regional budgets for implementation of additional support measures for enterprises of the tourism industry;
- development of international booking systems and formation of digital platforms reflecting the possibilities of the tourist and recreational potential of the regions to attract more tourists;
- development of virtual tours to the most interesting destinations in Russia and the world to enhance the purchasing activity of potential tourists;
- development and implementation of new tours and tourist routes across the territory of the Russian Federation;

- monitoring the transport system of the country.

In addition to the offered activities, the following areas of activity are topical issues of improving the tourism sector in the context of the spread of COVID-19:

“Advanced training of specialists in the field of tourism; expansion of additional services; attraction of investments for reconstruction and construction of tourist facilities” (Lavrov, 2021).

It is necessary to pay attention to the change in the structure of decision-making on tourist trips and the implementation of any excursions and travel. The requirements of Rospotrebnadzor to toughen measures in relation to citizens, including in relation to tourists, have led to a noticeable change in the logic of the decision-making process about travel. These processes were influenced by the following factors: mandatory confirmation of the process of passing a medical check, a different protocol of actions in the regions, the danger of being in the quarantine zone upon arrival on vacation, the obligatory provision of a QR code, information about a past illness or a temporary medical withdrawal from vaccination due to medical indications. Consequently, the situation has arisen that many countries have different requirements for visiting tourists. For example, if in the Russian Federation it is required to provide information on vaccination with Russian vaccines (for example, Sputnik V, Sputnik Light, Covi Vac, Epi Vac Corona), then to visit many countries, when leaving the airport, it is required to present a certificate of vaccination with drugs such as Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca and etc. Currently, a certificate of vaccination with Sputnik V is accepted when entering 47 countries of the world. The website of the Federal Agency for Tourism of the Russian Federation provides detailed information on the current restrictions on entry to foreign countries, taking into account the epidemiological situation and the fight against COVID-19. Table 3 provides some examples of restrictive requirements for entering foreign countries.

Table 3: Examples of current restrictions on entry to foreign countries as of November 30, 2021.

Ser. No.	Name	Mandatory requirements when entering foreign countries
1	Austria	Quarantine for 10 days. At option: a certificate of vaccination (Pfizer, AstraZeneca, etc.), a certificate of a previous COVID-19 disease (no more than 180 days from the moment of recovery), a negative PCR test done not earlier than 72 hours before entry, an antigen test done not earlier than 48 hours before entry.

2	Maldives	Negative PCR test in English, done no earlier than 72 hours before departure, health declaration (to be completed 24 hours before departure) – the tourist receives a QR code, which he presents at the airport upon arrival, Vaccination certificate (recognized AstraZeneca, Pfizer, Beijing).
3	Norway	Mandatory quarantine on arrival for 10 days. All tourists over 16 years of age are required to complete a registration form upon entering Norway. Those vaccinated or recovered are not required to quarantine or pass testing. All adult tourists are required to take a PCR test no earlier than 24 hours before entering Norway, as well as another test upon arrival in the country. Confirmation of the availability of a place to comply with the quarantine (the cost of staying in the quarantine hotel is 500 NOK per day).
4	Turkey	Issue a HES code no earlier than 72 hours before arrival. At option: a certificate of vaccination in English ("Sputnik V", entry with a certificate is allowed 14 days after the second component); certificate of illness for over the last 6 months; negative result of an express antigen test done within 48 hours before entering the country, negative PCR test done not earlier than 72 hours before entering the country. All documents shall be submitted in English and issued through the portal of the State Service website.
5	Montenegro	At option: a certificate of vaccination with one or two components of the vaccine ("Sputnik V"), a negative PCR test done no earlier than 72 hours before boarding a flight, a rapid antigen test done no earlier than 48 hours before entry, a certificate of the COVID-19 disease (at least 14 days from the moment of recovery and no more than 180 days from the date of issue).

Source: Restrictions on entry into foreign countries. Federal Agency for Tourism of the Russian Federation.

Many countries around the world are closed for the entry of foreign citizens for tourist purposes, which limits travel opportunities and reduces the options for choosing tourist trips.

As a result of the difference in the requirements introduced in Russia and in other countries of the world, there is a large number of refusals by Russian citizens to carry out tourist trips, participate in congress and exhibition activities, international conferences and symposia. For implementation of international activities, the remote format of international events began to be actively used, which, on the one hand, makes it possible to communicate and participate in the event, and on the other hand, it virtually replaces the format of the usual communication of participants at various events. As for inbound tourism, there are also difficulties with entering the Russian Federation for tourist purposes. To enter the territory of the Russian Federation,

foreign tourists are required to have the following documents with them: "A certificate with a negative test result for COVID-19, a questionnaire arriving in the territory of the Russian Federation, a passport, a visa, a visa application form, an insurance policy, confirmation of hotel reservation, return tickets)" (Holidays in Russia in 2021: from which countries can you come to Russia. Federal Agency for Tourism of the Russian Federation). Restrictive measures, mandatory testing and quarantines introduced by some countries significantly increase the cost of the voucher, which leads to a significant reduction in the outbound tourist flow. Due to the restrictions imposed on holding public events, the closure of many museums, theaters, restaurants, and the obligatory provision of the QR code issued in accordance with all requirements for visiting SPA and other services provided by hotels, many foreign citizens also refuse to enter Russia. At the regional level, between the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, there are also some differences in the requirements for entering citizens from other regions. Therefore, before traveling both through the territory of Russia and traveling to other countries, it is necessary to familiarize yourself with all the requirements of an epidemiological nature that shall be observed when visiting various countries.

5 CONCLUSIONS

One of the consequences of introduction of restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic and transfer of most employees of various organizations to remote work, to a remote format, was a change in consumer behavior, which significantly influenced the processes of arranging the work in restaurants. "In 2020, there is a change in consumer behavior patterns. The main reasons: fear of human contacts, a decrease in the purchasing power of the population, the transition to remote work" (Chernova and Shabalin, 2021).

In the context of the redistribution of tourist flows and an increase in the number of potential tourists who prefer to travel within the borders of Russia, it is necessary to intensify measures to monitor the tourist and recreational potential, to identify new tourist destinations and types of tourist activities that will attract tourists to travel within the country. In the context of increasing competition in the tourism sector, it is necessary to actively introduce innovative technologies, connect to international booking and service systems. It is important to carry out activities for rehabilitation of those who have recovered from

COVID-19 by developing sanatorium complexes and suburban collective accommodation facilities for recovering people after suffering a disease and developing digital technologies in the tourism sector to increase the profitability and competitiveness of enterprises in the tourism industry.

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