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Dynamics of border tourism in the Barents Euro-Arctic Region*

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Abstract. The article discusses the main types and characteristics of border tourism in the countries of the Barents region. It provides official statistics on the number of trips, the results of tourist motivation study and reveals the positive dynamics of border tourism development. The materials of the current study include a review and comparative analysis with data obtained during research sessions since 2013 within the framework of the international program *Bachelor of Northern Studies*. According to the survey, the Barents region has a great potential for the development of tourism and positive motivation that contributes to international contacts. An analysis of the border tourism development dynamics has shown an increase in the demand in the tourism services market, the necessity to create programs focused on the needs of the target audience of buyers, and the active promotion of Russian tourism in the international market.

Keywords: *Barents Euro-Arctic region, border tourism, Murmansk region.*

Introduction

The border region is a territory with political and socio-economic integrity and a state border with other countries. At present, the border position is an important factor in territorial development [1, Viken A., Nystedt T., p. 53–72; 2, Haugseth P., p. 154–161]. The current development of cross-border tourism is determined by the interpenetration of global and unique characteristics. The spread of globalization becomes possible when the reasons for global infrastructure are created and when the level of standardization has integrated national and regional organizations into a single global structure on equal terms [3, Odegova O.V., Zabulionite K.A., p. 475–481]. According to M. Castells, in the context of globalization, the dominant social, political and economic processes are organized in the virtual space [4, Castells M.]. According to P. Bourdieu, a key role in the development of social relations is the ability to spread cultural and symbolic practices [5, Bourdieu P.]. Stepin V.S. stressed that the basis for global processes was economics, but since the economy had been a subsystem of culture, it was globalization that penetrated all spheres of the socio-cultural system [6, Stepin V.S., p. 262–275]. Globalization in tourism means combining various tourism practices, accompanied by increased access to information resources, information sharing, increasing the quantity and quality of tourist services. Cross-border tourism is currently a dynamically developing area of social and economic activity. Cross-border Arctic tourism is a unique, rather young direction that requires special competencies, knowledge of the region's natural features, technologies for implementing relevant tourist programs, and the ability to interact with potential consumers. [7, Zhelnina Z.Yu., p. 74–80].

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Cross-border tourism development clusters

In the Strategy for the Development of Tourism of the Russian Federation until 2020, the main goal of tourist activity is: “the strategic role of tourism in the economic and socio-cultural development of regions by improving the quality of life and accede the population with historical, cultural and natural heritage of the Russian Federation”¹.

In the Concept of the long-term socio-economic development of the Russian Federation until 2020, the main problems of the socio-economic development of Russia are: strengthening global competition; a new wave of technological change; the increasing role of innovation; the growing role of human capital as a critical factor in economic development². The Social and Economic Development Strategy of the Murmansk region lists the challenges of modern civilization: the unstable structure of the regional economy, social, humanitarian and environmental problems. “The main problems are common to the Murmansk macro-region and its “Arctic” neighbors, and their solution requires joint efforts, ideas, and actions”³. This document defines the development of the Murmansk region as a strategic center of the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation.

The Government of the Murmansk region is developing departmental programs for the tourism industry. Four years, the main program was the target program “Development of tourism in the Murmansk region for 2012–2015”, and the “Program for the development of the tourism and recreation cluster of the Murmansk region for 2015–2017” has completed. The basic strategic goal of creating a cluster is “the development of branded tourism products of the Murmansk region and increasing the competitiveness of the regional industry of tourist and recreational services in the international market”⁴.

The beginning of the active development of border tourism was the unification of the countries of the Barents region, which began with the creation of the Barents Council on January 11, 1993, and the signing of the Kirkenes Declaration, where the primary goal was to support stability and progress in the region. The main areas of cooperation are areas of ecology, economics, science and technology, cultural links and tourism⁵. A new stage of cooperation began on May 29, 2012,

¹ Strategiya razvitiya turizma Rossijskoj Federacii do 2020 g. [Strategy for the development of tourism in the Russian Federation until 2020] URL: https://www.russiatourism.ru/contents/otkrytoe_agentstvo/strategiya-razvitiya-turizma-v-rossiyskoy-federatsii-v-period-do-2020-goda-332/strategiya-razvitiya-turizma-v-rossiyskoy-federatsii-v-period-do-2020-goda/ (Accessed: 01 November 2018). [In Russian]

² Konceptii dolgosrochnogo social'no-ehkonomicheskogo razvitiya Rossijskoj Federacii do 2020 goda. [The concept of long-term socio-economic development of the Russian Federation until 2020.] URL: http://www.consultant.ru/document/cons_doc_LAW_82134/28c7f9e359e8af09d7244d8033c66928fa27e527/ (Accessed: 01 November 2018). [In Russian]

³ Strategiya social'no-ehkonomicheskogo razvitiya Murmanskoj oblasti do 2020 goda i na period do 2025 goda i plan meropriyatij po ee realizacii. [The strategy of socio-economic development of the Murmansk region until 2020 and for the period up to 2025 and an action plan for its implementation] URL: https://minec.gov-murman.ru/activities/strat_plan/sub02/ (Accessed: 01 November 2018). [In Russian]

⁴ Turistsko-rekreacionnyj klaster Murmanskoj oblasti. [Tourist and recreation cluster of the Murmansk region] URL: <http://murmantourism.ru/turklaster> (Accessed: 01 November 2018). [In Russian]

⁵ Initially, the northern regions of Russia entered the Barents region: the Arkhangelsk and Murmansk regions, the northern regions of Scandinavia and Finland (the provinces of Lapland in Finland, Troms, Finnmark and Nordland in Norway, Norrbotten in Sweden). Later it was joined by the Republic of Karelia (1994), the Nenets Autonomous District

when Russia and Norway established a visa-free regime in the border areas of Finnmark and the Murmansk region. The following factors are essential for the development of cooperation in the Barents region: the border position (the Barents region geographically connects North Europe and Russia); political, economic and social stability (the Barents region is a relatively safe territory with a fairly low crime rate, high efficiency of international economic and socio-cultural programs); a common history (in ancient times, in the north, the historic-cultural area of Lapland was formed). And today we see that the Barents countries have the opportunity to cooperate, despite the various federal and regional approaches to international law.

Statistics

Statistics allow us to estimate the dynamics of cross-border tourism over the past decade⁶. The number of Russian citizens traveling to Norway, Sweden, and Finland is consistently high, as well as the number of foreign visits to Russia. According to the Federal Agency for Tourism of the Russian Federation, about 3 million people leave Russia for Finland annually, about 40 thousand people go to Sweden, and about 100 thousand people go to Norway. The number of citizens of Norway and Sweden who annually visit Russia is about 40 thousand people, and the citizens of Finland — about 1,200 thousand people (Table 1, 2).

Table 1

The number of tourist trips of Russian citizens to foreign countries, 2015–2017 (thousand people)

	2015	2016	2017
Norway	111	103	115
Sweden	37	41	56
Finland	3,066	2,894	3,333

Table 2

The number of tourist trips of foreign citizens to Russia, 2015–2017 (thousand people)

	2015	2016	2017
Norway	48	45	51
Sweden	37	36	34
Finland	1,415	1,319	1,017

In general, the number of citizens at collective accommodation facilities of the Murmansk region in 2017 was about 300 thousand people, providing a 30% increase compared to 2009 (Table 3).

Table 3

The number of citizens in the collective accommodation facilities of the Murmansk region, 2009–2017 (thousand people)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Russian citizens	190.1	191.5	165.3	175.7	186.7	177.9	179.7	214.09	266.05
Foreign citizens	17.5	17.7	17.2	16.7	18.3	15.7	15.1	26.0	36.1

(1997), the district of Oulu (Finland) and Västerbotten (Sweden, 1998). The associate members of the BEAR are Denmark, Iceland, and the EU. Also, Canada, France, Japan, Great Britain, Poland, and Germany received observer status.

⁶ Federal'noe agentstvo po turizmu. Oficial'nyj sajt. [Federal Agency for Tourism. Official site] URL: <https://www.russia-tourism.ru/contents/statistika> (Accessed: 01 November 2018). [In Russian]

Accounting the total volume of tourist visits deals with collective and individual means of accommodation. The number of citizens at hotels and other accommodation makes it possible to compare international tourist flows in the Murmansk and Arkhangelsk regions and the Republic of Karelia. Thus, in 2017, the number of foreign citizens in collective accommodation facilities amounted to 36.1 thousand people in the Murmansk region, 38.9 thousand people in the Republic of Karelia, and 7.3 thousand people in the Arkhangelsk region. It indicates rather high popularity of northern tourism. In 2009-2017, the number of foreign tourists at hotels in the Murmansk region increased by 18.6 thousand people, in the Republic of Karelia - by 20.4 thousand people, and in the Arkhangelsk region — a slight decrease by 1.5 thousand people. These indicators show visiting the famous tourist destinations, incl. the Solovetskiy monastery in the Arkhangelsk region and the Vaalaam archipelago in Karelia (Table 4).

Table 4

The number of citizens in the collective accommodation facilities (thousand people)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
The Republic of Karelia	18.5	27.0	40.2	38.0	34.5	31.9	27.1	40.8	38.9
The Murmansk region	17.5	17.7	17.2	16.7	18.3	15.7	15.1	26.0	36.1
The Arkhangelsk region	8.7	7.9	6.9	6.6	6.1	5.2	6.1	7.2	7.3

The development of border tourism has some advantages for the BEAR countries. First, the expansion of the tourism industry contributes to attracting investment for international projects and programs. Secondly, the transport is developing. Thirdly, social and cultural exchange between the BEAR countries is intensifying. Fourth, cross-border tourism contributes to the expansion of the innovation sector of the economy, the introduction of new technologies and industries, the modernization of the tourism infrastructure [8, Kulturnie industii kolskogo severa, p. 23–30].

Currently, northern countries are actively developing ethnographic, recreational, sports, marine, research, cultural, educational, and event tourism [9, Zhelnina Z.Yu., 10, Stammer F., Sidorova L., p. 1–14]. The peculiarity of the northern landscape and fauna, unique cultural monuments contribute to attracting tourists. Famous monuments of ancient (petroglyphs, labyrinths) and medieval (temples, monasteries) culture can be an attractor for ethnographic travel or folklore festivals. In recent decades, recreational and educational programs of the theme parks have been in great demand. They are in demand, as they combine natural, cultural, historical and service services (in Sweden — the Skansen Museum, in Russia — Ki-Zhi and Malye Korely, and in Finland — Santa Claus Village). Great opportunities are presented for sea tourism: cruise or scientific expeditions. The region has preserved the history of polar expeditions and natural landscapes. Journeys to the North Pole are an exclusive Russian tourist product⁷. This fact indicates that the development potential of cross-border tourism is multilayered. It covers a broad and complex con-

⁷ Since 1993, the “Yamal” nuclear-powered icebreaker was the main carrier of cruise tourists to the North Pole. Currently, it is the “50 let Pobedi”. The cruise routes: Murmansk — Svalbard — Northern Pole or Murmansk — Franz Josef Land — the North Pole — Novaya Zemlya. In 2009, the research and tourism base of Borneo, located about 100 km from the North Pole was opened.

text of “culture — tourism”. The general trend in the development of tourism in the Barents Region is the expansion of the range of tourist services targeted at the individual user. It contributes to the constant updating and expansion of tourist offers. Particular attention is paid to the significant international projects in the framework of the increase of the tourism industry in the Barents region (in particular, the Kolarctic Border Cooperation Program 2014–2020 aimed at maintaining the viability of the economy and increase the attractiveness of the area⁸). An example of effective cooperation in the Barents region is the transboundary park “Pasvik-Inari”⁹.

Tourists motivation analysis

The BEAR tourism potential consists of several components: natural and cultural heritage, service infrastructure, and information support. One of the factors that have a positive effect on the dynamics of tourism is tourist motivation.

Fifty students from the Murmansk Arctic State University (FSBEI HE "MAGU"), aged 20-35, were surveyed to identify the reasons for trips to the BEAR countries and the offers in the tourism services market. At first, students were asked to name the travel motives. 30% of respondents put cultural and cognitive motifs in the first place (local traditions, lifestyle, and participation in festivals), 25% recreational (unique views of the northern nature, recreation, and entertainment), 22% — research (new routes, discoveries for themselves and society, new cultural and natural objects), 15% — environmental (volunteer and expeditionary programs), 10% — communication motives, 8% — coping motives (travels of varying difficulty: Alpine skiing, or diving).

The purpose of the second stage of the survey was to determine the attitude towards the BEAR countries (or the number of real and potential tourists). According to the study, 60% of students have already visited one of the countries in the Barents Region and have plans to visit these countries in the future, 20% of respondents have never visited the BEAR countries, but have plans to visit in the future, the rest — gave priority to other countries.

At the third stage of the survey, the most popular and accessible routes were identified. The study was completed in 2013 among students who have already visited the BEAR countries. As a result, 90% said that they visited Norway, Sweden, and Finland in the framework of cultural and educational trips, 9% were participants of recreational trips, 1% — ecological. A re-survey in 2018 did not reveal significant differences: cultural and educational routes remain leading among the young people. Among the reasons for choosing these trips, students named economic attractiveness and affordability.

⁸ Programma prigranichnogo sotrudnichestva «Kolarctik». [Kolarctic Border Cooperation Program]. URL: <https://kolarctic.info/ru/kolarctic-2014-2020-ru/> (Accessed: 01 November 2018). [In Russian]

⁹ The park was created in 2008 with the goal of controlling and managing biodiversity, developing natural tourism and implementing the Memorandum of Understanding on the Green Belt of Fennoscandia in the adjacent specially protected natural area between Russia, Norway and Finland. The vast territory in which the three states carry out trilateral cooperation is protected and includes the Viatsari wild nature area in Finland, the Upper Pasvik National Park, and the Upper Pasvik protected landscape area, the Natural Reserve Pasvik in Norway and natural reserve “Pasvik” in Russia. URL: <http://pasvik.org.ru> (Accessed: 01 November 2018). [In Russian]

Thus, cultural, educational and recreational tours are the most popular and accessible. At the same time, the study of travel motives showed that 45% of respondents would like to choose research, environmental, volunteer, sports, expeditionary trips. The results of the survey show great opportunities to promote cross-border tourism programs. We should also look at the stereotypes related to the national character. Cultural stereotypes are ideas about typical features that characterize people. Autostereotypes reflect a stable and simplified image of their social group. Heterostereotype — an image formed about other people.

Both types of cultural stereotypes develop and take root in society as traditional public attitudes. Stereotypes characterize a social group as a whole, but at the same time apply to a specific representative of this group and predetermine the specificity of intercultural contacts.

Fifty students of the MASU were surveyed to determine the autostereotypes and heterostereotypes of the population of the Barents region.

At first, students were asked to compile a list of 60 national characteristics of Norwegians, Finns, Swedes, and Russians in three groups (personal, communicative and business traits). In particular, the students named the following personal characteristics: serious, purposeful, modest, proud, optimistic, and others; communication characteristics: hospitable, sincere, polite, non-friendly, discreet, humorous, and others; business skills: irresponsible, pragmatic, aggressive, patient, hardworking, enterprising and others.

At the second stage, it was necessary to select fifteen features of a national character of Norwegians, Finns, Swedes, and Russians (5 in each group). The survey results are presented in the table. 5.

Table 5

*Cultural stereotypes of national character
(results of a survey of students of the Murmansk Arctic State University)*

	Personal skills	Communication skills	Business skills
Norwegians	serious, hardy, proud, sluggish, self-confident	self-respecting, closed, friendly, emotional, persistent	conscientious, conservative, precise, polite, patient
Swedes	purposeful, independent, arrogant, chained, honest	cheerful, unshakable, humane, polite, sincere	prudent, economical, pragmatic, pedantic, disciplined
Finns	optimistic, purposeful, relaxed, kind, sluggish	friendly, polite, unshakable, closed, competent	conscientious, trusting, accurate, thrifty, patient.
Russians	hardy, self-confident, strong, passive independent	hospitable strong, emotional self-respecting, impulsive	with the desire for success, enterprising, wasteful, adaptable, trusting

The survey results show a general understanding of the national character of the inhabitants of the Barents Region. It is interesting that the survey results contain no extremely negative qualities (embittered, cruel, indifferent to others, or aggressive). It might have positive effects on the development of cross-border tourism. The survey results are due to the young age of the re-

spondents, relatively personal contacts and positive information that is broadcast by the media on the effects of the intercultural interactions of Russia and other countries in the Barents Region.

Conclusion

An analysis of the dynamics of cross-border tourism in the Barents region showed an increase in demand in the tourism market. Tourist demand and tourist supply depend on a number of constantly changing social, economic, political factors: the development of border areas, the availability of qualified personnel; involvement of the territory in international economic integration; availability of a regulatory framework for the development of cross-border cooperation; participation in the joint socio-cultural programs in the context of international cross-border collaboration.

Cross-border tourism, united geographically, is built on different technologies of staying in the destination. At the same time, cultural-cognitive programs enjoy the most stable demand, which forms a request for an in-depth understanding of cultural codes and visual symbols, which in turn influence the formation of positive national cultural stereotypes.

Cross-border tourism is a fairly new direction in the tourism industry. The achievement of concrete and long-term results is promoted by the creation of interstate tourist and recreational territories; implementation of international projects and programs aimed at the promotion of tourist brands (events, routes), providing comprehensive advertising of the Barents region; inclusion of cross-border tourism in general development strategies of territories.

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