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Lyudmila I. DONSKOVA

*Russian State Social University (Moscow, Russia)
PhD in Economics, Associate Professor; e-mail: donskovaL@yandex.ru*

Mikhail U. MAKOVETSKY

*Moscow Witte University (Moscow, Russia)
PhD in Economics, Associate Professor; e-mail: mmakovetsky@muiv.ru*

Alexander L. BARANNIKOV

*Moscow Witte University; The Russian Presidential Academy
of National Economy and Public Administration (Moscow, Russia)
PhD in Engineering, Associate Professor; e-mail: iu2004@mail.ru*

SOCIAL TOURISM FOR YOUTH AS A DRIVER OF DOMESTIC TOURISM

Abstract. *The study reviews youth tourism as a part of social tourism and a system component characterized by socio-economic features and the influence of various factors and conditions. The relevance of the study of tourism in the youth segment is due to the increasing role and importance of travel for young people, which is associated with such qualities as mobility, the desire for knowledge, as well as modern conditions and opportunities in organizing their leisure and travel. Despite the events related to COVID-19, there is a growing tourist activity of Russians partly owing to the social tourism development and import substitution in the domestic market. The article is aimed at identifying motivation in youth tourism as part of social tourism, the links with territorial factors and conditions of its development. The study is based on theoretical and empirical research of youth tourism. The work applied general scientific methods and content analysis in abstracting scientific publications; a sociological method (a survey conducted among students of universities in the Russian region) including statistical methods (grouping, weighted average) for processing the data obtained. Research findings: referencing of articles of domestic authors on youth tourism, as well as the results of the author's empirical research made it possible to identify preferences in the choice of programs of a socio-cultural nature, due to their motivation to travel, as well as the influence of factors and conditions. At the same time, the conditions are determined by regional characteristics, including the availability of tourist facilities and the activities carried out in the implementation of tourist trips for social groups. When planning youth tourism development, it is necessary for Tour operators to recognize the peculiarities of youth preferences in tourist programs and events, focusing on the socio-cultural components.*

Keywords: *social tourism, social initiative, youth group, conditions and factors, motivation and preferences, sociological poll*



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ДОНСКОВА Людмила Ивановна

*Российский государственный социальный университет (Москва. РФ)
кандидат экономических наук, доцент; e-mail: donskovaL@yandex.ru*

МАКОВЕЦКИЙ Михаил Юрьевич

*Московский университет имени С.Ю. Витте (Москва. РФ)
кандидат экономических наук, доцент; e-mail: mmakovetsky@miuiv.ru*

БАРАННИКОВ Александр Лукьянович

*Московский университет имени С.Ю. Витте; Российская академия народного
хозяйства и государственной службы при Президенте РФ (Москва. РФ)
кандидат технических наук, доцент; e-mail: iu2004@mail.ru*

СОЦИАЛЬНЫЙ ТУРИЗМ ДЛЯ МОЛОДЕЖНОЙ ГРУППЫ КАК ФАКТОР РАЗВИТИЯ ВНУТРЕННЕГО ТУРИЗМА

В исследовании молодежный туризм рассматривается как часть социального туризма и элемент туристской системы, для которой присущи социально-экономические черты и влияние разнообразных факторов и условий. Актуальность исследования туризма в молодежном сегменте обусловлена повышением роли и значения путешествий среди молодежи, что связано с такими их качествами, как мобильность, стремление к познанию, а также современными условиями и возможностями в организации своего досуга и путешествий. К тому же, несмотря на последние события, связанные с COVID-19, отмечается туристическая активность россиян, в том числе за счет развития социального туризма и импортозамещения на внутреннем рынке. Цель и задачи исследования социального туризма для молодежной группы – на основе теоретического и эмпирического исследования молодежного туризма как составной части социального туризма, выявить особенности, связанные с мотивацией этой группы населения и связей с территориальными факторами и условиями его развития. В работе использовались общенаучные методы и контент-анализ в реферировании научных публикаций; социологический метод (опрос, проводимый среди студентов вузов и колледжей), а также статистические методы (группировки, средневзвешенной арифметической) для обработки полученных данных. Результаты исследования: реферирование статей отечественных авторов о молодежном туризме, а также результаты авторского эмпирического исследования позволили выявить предпочтения в выборе программ социально-культурного характера, обусловленных их мотивацией к путешествиям, а также влиянием факторов и условий. При этом условия определяются региональными особенностями, в том числе доступностью туристических объектов и проводимыми мероприятиями в реализации туристских поездок для социальных групп. В будущем, планируя развитие молодежного туризма, туроператорам при разработке туристских программ для молодежи особое внимание следует уделять социально-культурным составляющим.

Ключевые слова: *социальный туризм, социальная инициатива, молодежная группа, условия и факторы, мотивация и предпочтения, социологический опрос.*



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Introduction

For each country, domestic and inbound tourism is of great economic, political and socio-cultural importance. Such types of tourism as family, retirees, youth tourism providing opportunities to meet the needs for recreation and travel of social categories of the population relate to social tourism. Youth tourism is considered one of the most promising. The high tourist activity of young people is explained by many such qualities as mobility, open-mindedness to new ideas, romanticism, their desire for knowledge and communication. Recently, it has been discovered that they earn money independently, have free time due to vacations, and work on individual schedules or using distant technologies. It determines the interest of young people in organizing their leisure, travel, while they are modest in terms of quality and level of service requirements preferring affordable budget tours. For example, in European countries, tour operators offer various vacation options for young people: in terms of duration, level of accommodation comfort, type of food, etc. In Russia, currently, the strategy of domestic and inbound tourism development is aimed at a new, socially-oriented level. To deliver on targets stated in the Russian Tourism Development Strategy by 2035, "it is necessary to identify the potential for a tourist product to meet the expectations of target audiences, ... to identify priority territories and create conditions for increasing the interest of businesses in the systemic tourism development." (Strategy-2035, 2019) [9]. In practice, the share of tour operators involved in domestic and inbound tourism is low, lacking the companies which specialize in the youth segment. Also, it is problematic to single out the share of the youth segment in both international and Russian tourist flows since such monitoring has not been carried out. In planning tourism activities, new knowledge is of great significance, including in the field of statistical observations and empirical research. It is also evident that having been influenced by the recent events in the world, including those related to COVID-19, tourism is

showing high adaptation to the ongoing changes. Despite a slight decrease in purchasing power, the closure of borders for international travel, Russians still show interest in trips, which was proved by 2020. Tourism industry operators need to foster Russian tourist activity, developing social tourism and import substitution in the domestic market. Moreover, it is relevant to update such directions as environmental and recreational, ensuring the availability of tourist products and boosting the incentive to travel.

Content analysis

Analysis of the social tourism and, in particular, the youth segment is presented by quite a lot of scientific publications of foreign authors such as Minnaert, 2014 [8], Jablonska, Jaremko & Timčák, 2016 [4], Kouřilová & Kratochvílová, 2014 [7] and of Russian ones Putrik, 2013 [10], Donskova et al., 2018 [2], Donskova & Redkin, 2018 [3], Artemova & Kozlova, 2004 [1], Sokolenko, 2014 [11], et al. The issues of the socio-economic situation, social sphere describe tourism and its correlation with political, economic, social, and cultural factors. The impact of the political factor, in our opinion, is the most crucial.

In the EU countries, the European Parliament has supported the Calypso social tourism project. The goal of this project is to equalize people's access to travel and support social tourism in the EU countries. There have been identified such social categories of the population as the elderly and retirees, young people aged 18-30, families with a small income, and the disabled (Kouřilová & Kratochvílová, 2014) [7]. Within the project framework, a tour operator SKM 2000 Travel was selected for dealing with the social group of young people. Its main mission is to improve the life quality of young people, students, and teachers by providing discounts on bus and train tickets, organizing student exchanges, running curricula, participating in summer training programs, and individual tourism (Jablonska, Jaremko & Timčák, 2016) [4]. In Russia, the approach to state regulation of social tourism in the context of social policy is considered the most effective where the state is a key

player. At the government level, the draft Law on Social Tourism was rejected, but some regions of Russia are implementing their programs for the development of social tourism. For example, the Law on St. Petersburg Support for the Tourism Development in St. Petersburg (Putrik, 2013) [10], the program of development of social tourism in the Republic of Bashkortostan (2012); the program of Social tourism in the Astrakhanskaya oblast, etc. The practice of evolving social tourism shows the positive experience of recreation organization for social population categories in Moscow, Rostovskaya, and Tyumenskaya oblasts, Khabarovskiy krai, and some other regions (Donskova et al., 2018; Donskova & Redkin, 2018) [2, 3].

Social tourism is likewise progressing at the ministerial level. Specifically, the Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs operates tourist trips and health tours for its employees at the expense of the Ministry budget. Youth tourism is principally sustained in the frame of youth policy. For instance, under the instructions of the Russian President Department, a youth tourism development plan in the regions (2008–2011) was generated by the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs. However, examples seem to indicate that youth tourism support in terms of targeted programs has been implemented only by non-state initiatives in the regions.

Thus, (in European countries and Russian regions) while defining the conditions and factors interconnected with tourist trips for social categories of the population, there has been an inefficient assessment of links with the area such as tourist sites, destinations, tourist centers.

Youth tourism research from the point of social and cultural positions in scientific works (Kamenets, 2015) [5], Kolesova, 2017 [6], Teziev & Savkhalova, 2016 [12], Yudina & Balanyan, 2015 [13], et al.) illustrates the involvement of youth in tourism activities, which is confirmed by empirical data of the regions. Tourism activity reveals the potentialities of youth tourism being multiple socio-cultural events. Consequently, it affords a straight contact of adolescents with cultural and historical localities, and also distin-

guishes that young people are more captured by the global spiritual and social experiences accumulated in landmarks, memorials, and numerous tour places (Kolesova, 2017) [6].

Examining youth tourism, it is vital to call attention to the cultural and educational aspects that outstand in tourism (Sokolenko, 2014) [11]:

- as a factor in raising the educational and cultural level of youth;
- as a means of effective management of the cultural inheritance value and creation of an effective country's image.

It is worth emphasizing that changes under the influence of transformations of social, economic, and cultural factors are reflected in the youth group, in particular, their interests and preferences aimed at improving education, gaining new knowledge, practicing foreign languages, sports. All this raises interest in educational, cognitive, and sports tours (Artemova & Kozlova, 2004) [1]. Specifically, relevant tourist offers and their territorial proximity meeting young people's demands make them preferable and accessible. Therefore, youth tourism is considered as a factor of domestic tourism taking into account regional characteristics, in particular, provision and availability of tourist facilities, infrastructure development. Despite the regional distinction in our country, it is crucial to identify the motivation that forms the principal traveling goals.

The purpose of the study of social tourism for a youth group is to classify the main preferences and trends. In this regard, it is required to consistently solve the following tasks: to identify the general and specific in research (theoretical and empirical) of youth tourism as an integral part of social tourism, as well as the features associated with the motivation of this population group and links with regional factors and conditions for its development in the future.

Methodology and methods

The research was based on general scientific methods and content analysis while abstracting foreign and Russian authors' scientific publications. Having proved that the development of tourism for social population groups is

influenced by various factors, including the political one, which is an influential one for its organization. The work contained qualitative and quantitative indicators, in particular, accessibility, tourist activity, tourist goals, and preferences. The before-mentioned indicators are confirmed by the sociological research (a poll among the students of universities and colleges, 861 people, using the example by the Russian region). Statistical methods were applied to process the data obtained. In particular, the grouping method was used to indicate the main and additional travel goals, and the weighted average method was introduced to assess the social rest quality, as well as the quality-price ratio. Based on the results of the social tourism research in the youth segment, a Respondent Database of polled university students was registered, and a Copyright Certificate was obtained (Donskova & Redkin, 2018) [3].

The research methodology is based on the concept and the following provisions. In the view of the aforesaid, youth tourism being an element of social tourism is evaluated as follows:

1) a part of the tourist socio-economic system which performs under the impact of the external and internal environment. (Kamenets, 2015) [5]. Whereas, environmental factors such as economic, political, natural, socio-cultural, scientific, and technical are defined as force majeure, which determines the dynamism and variability of the system. Consequently, certain coordination and regulation are required using specific tools and mechanisms.

2) a part of social tourism is characterized by general socio-economic features and elements, such as goals, the subject of social tourism. Furthermore, social tourism highlights are presented, firstly, by the sources of financial aid, and, secondly, by determining clear criteria for social groups' classification, for example, by age.

Social tourism aims to provide its citizens with real opportunities and accessibility to recreation and travel, which is a consequence of the fundamental human and civil rights and freedoms that are of high importance for the tourism

sector (the right to move freely, choose a place of stay). This is due to the normative system of social tourism, in which the rights of citizens are specified in documents and legal acts.

Social tourism participants (also referred to as 'social tourism subjects') comprise social groups of the population, among which are schoolchildren, students, the disabled, the retired, and extended families, etc.

The Strategy for the Development of Tourism in the Russian Federation for the period up to 2035 represents the idea of youth tourism as tourism for people aged 18 to 35 years. This provision narrows the official scope of this population category (Strategy-2035, 2019) [9].

Organizationally, the forms and tools that determine the consumption of tourism products in this area come in the form of benefits for vouchers to vacation retreats, health resorts, boarding guest houses, as well as discount transport tickets, etc. Experience shows that this is mainly organized, collective tourism within the country with cultural, educational, recreational, restorative, and health recovering purposes.

Research results

According to the empirical studies of social tourism (2017–2019) (Donskova at al., 2018; Donskova & Redkin, 2018) [2, 3], in particular, some positive examples, there are many contradictions in our country. For example, tourist and cultural and educational services are relevant for various social groups, but the possibilities for their consumption are limited, above all, by low profits. In the meantime, there is a lack of need, supply, or even paid leave. The second most important limiting factor is missing awareness of the population about preferential travel vouchers. Some citizens are not aware that they possess a legitimate right to take advantage of this type of tourism, and, in the case of a proposal from work, there is a percentage of the community that is unable to pay even part of its cost. This trend is spreading throughout the territory of our country.

Here is another experience of empirical research among student youth in Russian regions.

The polling results of a youth group, for example, in Kirovskaya oblast, demonstrate their interest in studying the tourist and recreational potential and preferences of recreation activities (Kolesova, 2017) [6]. The results of a poll of juvenile respondents in the stated region designate the value of the travel incentives, namely: in the first place, they are rest, health improvement, sports, and next come communication and meeting new people (Yudina & Balanyan, 2015) [13].

The outcomes of the youth tourism research also introduce the correlation with the factors of border areas, which increases tourist exchange between countries. That raises interest in the history of another country, learning a foreign language, ethnic cuisine, and education. For example, in the Far East, more young people are getting keen on Chinese communication, for business and personal needs, just as on the history, culture, and philosophy of China (Sokolenko, 2014) [11]. Tourist exchange in the border area, along with the major task, solves the problem of changing the stereotypical perception of tourist regions between neighboring countries (in particular, Russia and China).

For a deeper study of the problems of youth tourism, a sociological poll was conducted (861

respondents) among university students (87%), college, and academy (13%) of Altaysky krai (Donskova & Redkin, 2018) [3]. The respondents were represented by students (of both sexes, mainly under 22 years old). 78% of them are Russian students, and 14% are foreign. Most of them are doing bachelor's and master's degrees, and the University League students make up a third of them.

The questionnaire was divided into several sections. Block 1 included the questions that related to information about the rest on social packages, frequency, duration, cost compensation, the purpose of travel (in the last trip). In block 2, questions related to the choice and estimation of accommodation services, the level of satisfaction with social rest (scale: 5 - very satisfied,..., 1 - completely unsatisfied), as well as the evaluation of the price-quality ratio of social rest.

The next section introduces the questions regarding the choice of visiting tourist centers and events (already visited and would like to visit in the future), as well as plans for a future trip. Block 4 enters indicators about promising tourist destinations, in particular, preferences for tourist events, guide work relevance, etc. The last block contains a respondent passport. Calculations were carried out in the Excel system (Fig. 1).

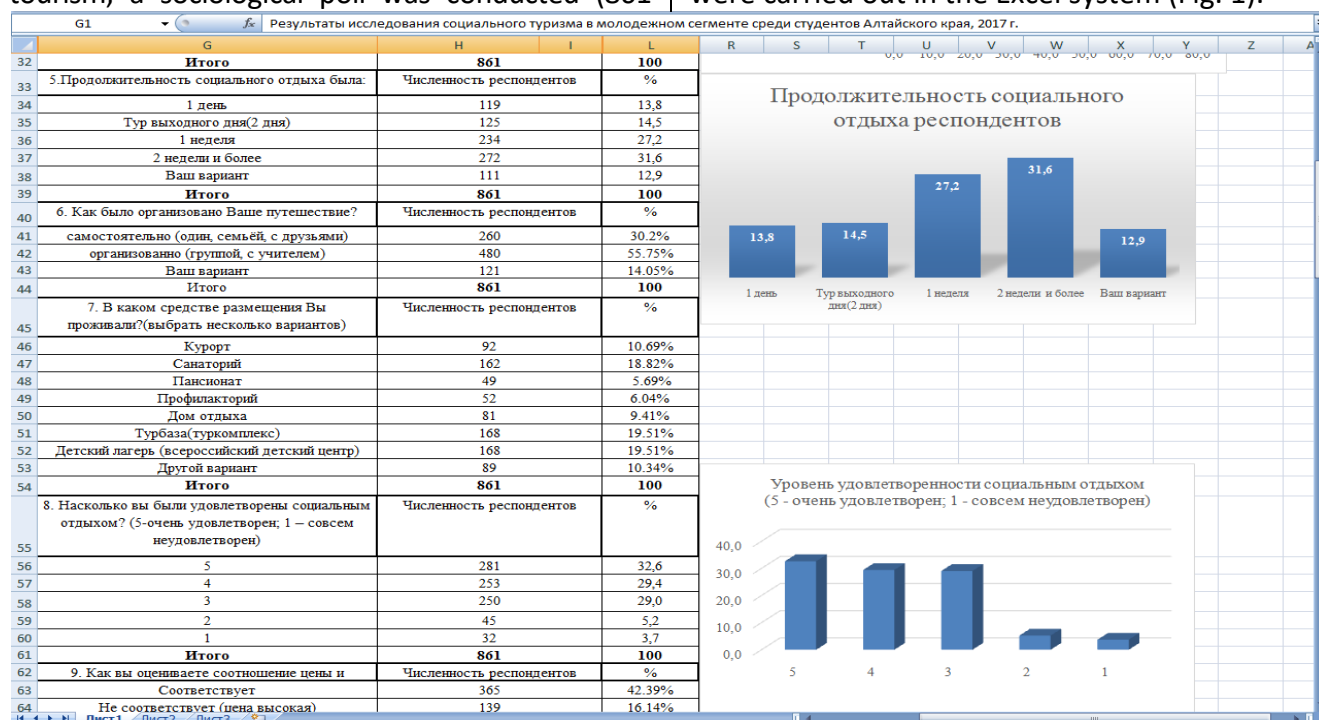


Fig. 1 – Survey calculations fragment (Source: Compiled by the authors)

According to the summary, the calculation results showed that 90% of the respondents had a vacation on a social package at least once in their lives, while the trip had been organized by a group / with a teacher, with partial or full compensation as well as during training practic-

es, participation in conferences. The survey aims to define the main purpose of the trip, which is caused by its motive. According to the answers, the travel goals are grouped as basic (target) and extra ones, and the following rating is compiled (Fig. 2):

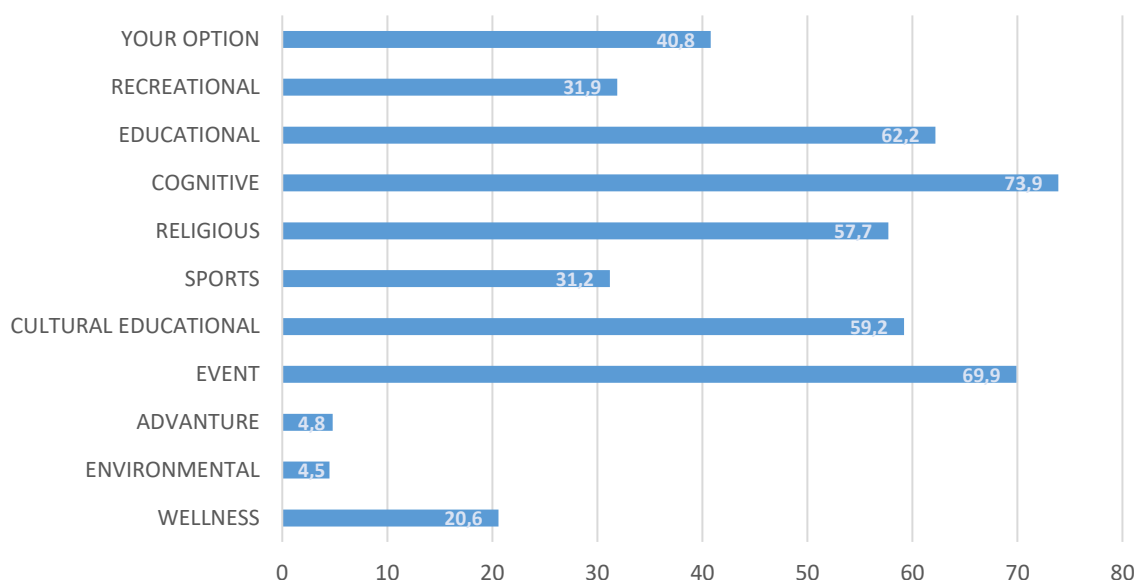


Fig. 2 – Structure of respondents by the purpose of travel (Source: Compiled by the authors)

- basic goals: cognitive, event, educational, cultural-cognitive, religious (73.9–34.8%);
- extra goals: sports, recreation, health, adventure, environmental (34.7–4.5%).

It should be highlighted that the goal of cognition is most often noted (73.9%), therefore among young people, the concern for new knowledge, new information is dominant. The low rating of the goal of health improvement (recreation in camps), in our opinion, is contradictory since you practically will not meet a child who has not been to school camps. The preference to travel in a group or with friends is indirectly showed up in communications.

According to the research results, a high level of satisfaction in the ratio of price and quality indicates that, on the one hand, the requirements for the quality of service among young people are not overestimated, and on the other hand, it can be assumed that social rest is presented at a good level.

In the long term, when young people plan a trip, the factor of free time is in priority. Thus, more than 50% of the respondents do not intend to rest due to lack of time or for personal reasons. Lack of finance is in the third place as a reason. This indicator characterizes that financial and material support is not always an influential factor among young people when intending to rest and travel.

As follows from the research, the most attractive tourist sites and activities were determined with the questions: 'what have you already visited' or 'what would you like to visit.' The results showed that young people are most interested in such activities as excursion, weekend tour, winter weekend tour in the tourist complex", etc. On the one hand, the choice can be explained by the geographic accessibility of tourist sites, especially beneficial on short-term trips. On the other hand, tourist centers and ongoing activities can also raise the interest of

young people in this area.

Discussion

The social tourism research results of youth groups are generally of interest to a number of parties.

For the youth group, the dominant position is occupied by cognitive and communication motives. In this case, the concept of cognition is characterized as, on the one hand, cognition of new places, territories, cities, and acquaintance with new people; on the other hand, as cognition of oneself, which is manifested in sports and active types of tourism. For example, there are opportunities for testing oneself in overcoming difficulties, forming endurance, and steadiness of character. The youth communicative incentive is caused by the necessity in relation while traveling in groups, making and meeting friends, contact with contemporaries of different culture and language. Survey and social work prove that adolescent tourism is affected not by social rank, profit level, knowledge but by impulse, which determines travel goals.

When planning a vacation and a journey, the decisive factor for them will be considered free time; on the contrary, material wealth will not always be crucial. The tourist activity of young people is defined by the provision of tourist facilities and activities, which can increase their interest, as well as by their availability.

In the future, it is relevant for researchers to solve not only social and economic problems but to analyze the variety and challenges of social group interactions, to examine participants' behavior paying attention to recreation and travel. Enhancing research and evaluation in tourism can raise its impact on the integration of various social groups.

A better understanding of the characteristics of the tourist social groups can help tourism service providers and intermediaries adopt their tourist products to the needs and requirements

of tourists, with an emphasis on the socio-cultural elements of youth group tours. In the future, when making decisions, young travelers should be considered significant, as they are the next generation of tourists.

Conclusion

Thus, based on the results of youth tourism research, the following has been resumed:

Socially oriented tourist products for young people are relevant due to the emphasis on the social and cultural aspects, such as moral, spiritual and scientific, and educational.

We believe that there will be demand for trips in groups including those with foreign students, based on the principle of zero economy, i.e., affordable tours without big financial investments, where social initiatives of participants in tourist activities and youth groups become the main resource. Tourist programs for young people of different nationalities are becoming a unifying factor and a means of forming developing tourism in different regions of Russia.

In the interaction of educational organizations (of top and middle level), it is especially important to take into account the growing trend of foreign students as well as students from other regions of Russia. In this case, representatives of specialized departments of leading regional universities can become coordinators.

The local policy for young people and provincial grant program stipulates the necessity to focus on natural, cultural, and historical perspectives, Altai Krai advancement level, and other regional components.

The problem of availability of tourist recreation for young people, improvement of social tourism system especially concerning social initiatives is educed and highly required a solution. To do this, through the system of benefits, entrepreneurs should be interested in the formation and implementation of socially oriented low-cost tours to the regions and around Russia.

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