

# *Improving competitiveness of tourist and recreational complex of region through mechanism of business activation*

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**Abstract**— Radical reforms of the system of social and economic relations in Russia initiated at the end of the XX century led to the destruction of the existing system of management of the economy, at both the federal and regional levels, including tourist and recreational economy. Traditional and standard methodological approaches to the development of strategic management at different levels are not able to solve the complex problems of the modern period. We need new forms and methods of management, effective in terms of market relations and dynamically changing factors of internal and external environment. The development of a scientific approach to the formation of a system of strategic management of territorial tourist and recreational complexes is extremely important. Nowadays the study of the development problems of the domestic market of tourist and recreational services, the solution of theoretical and practical issues of strategic management of territorial tourist and recreational complexes remain relevant. It should be pointed out that the competitiveness of the tourist and recreational complex of the region depends on the level of development of entrepreneurship, which should be represented by the hotel industry, transport organizations, catering enterprises, travel agencies, organizations providing services of guides, companies for organizing entertainment events, sanatoriums, restaurant facilities, etc. The article proposes a conceptual scheme for assessing the competitiveness of the tourist and recreational complex of the region as a complex system consisting of a variety of elements, including entrepreneurship based on the Chuvash Republic. In the aggregate it allows us to take into account the features of the regional economy through growth targets that determine

the mechanisms of improving the complex. The materials of the article will be useful for entrepreneurs who are focused on the elaboration of a basic strategy of their own development on the basis of improving the quality and competitiveness of services and products, taking into account the indicators of resource provision of the tourist and recreational complex.

**Keywords**— *tourist and recreational complex, conceptual scheme, entrepreneurship, competitiveness, region, organization, evaluation, indicators of resource provision.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

In modern Russia, the mechanism of strategic management is being formed. In many industries, we have the task of systematic growth of target indicators to improve the competitiveness of the relevant sectors of the economy. This also applies to the Russian market of tourist and recreational services, which entered that stage of development, when the lack of a sound strategy for the development of this sector is a serious obstacle to its stability and sustainable development. In this regard, the formation of a qualitatively new basis of management of the tourist and recreational complex becomes particularly relevant and practically significant.

The regional economy is of particular importance for the scientific justification of radical economic reforms in the conditions of formation and development of market relations. The basis of the process of regionalization of Russia's reforms is the recognition of the objective primacy of regional conditions and problems before the industry, the identification of specific interests of the state and regions and the definition of ways to achieve agreement of these interests. Of particular

importance in these conditions is the restructuring of the regional economy. The main purpose of it is to remove the contradiction between the requirements of the market and the established proportions of regional reproduction. One of the conditions for the transition to a socially oriented market economy is the development of the non-production sphere as a socially significant subject of economic relations. Therefore, to correct the existing structural deformations of the region's economy and restore the natural regime of the meso-reproduction process, the regions should diversify their economic activities through the development of services.

In recent years, Russia studies the features of the formation of the service markets and services of the recreational market, in particular, searches for appropriate directions of its development in the field of tourism. The tourist and recreational complex is one of the most important blocks of the non-production sphere of society, its social infrastructure, where entrepreneurship should have high positions. Tourism and recreation in the regions of Russia, along with the agro-industrial complex, belong to the sphere of economic specialization. Tourism has significant potential as a tool of economic development of regions through expansion of entrepreneurship. Taking into account that the restructuring of the economy is accompanied by the elaboration of development strategies based on the results of research of regional markets, that's why the sphere of tourism and recreational services is in need of advanced management methods.

The system, multi-aspect, multi-faceted and multidimensional features of the structural nature of tourism lead to the need to consider recreation as an inter-sectoral socio-economic complex. The activity scope of this complex is not in the usual vertical sectoral plane, and covers a horizontal space, including enterprises and organizations of different industry. The tourist and recreational complex of the region is a set of interrelated industries and industries which are a synthesis of three areas – intermediary, transport enterprises and organizations with the broad development of entrepreneurship.

The notion of competitiveness as an economic category is studied by such foreign and domestic scientists as McConnell Campbell R., Brue Stanley L., Porter M., Bogdanova O.S., Nozdryov R.B., Tsygichko A. I., Litvienko A.N., Tatyanyenko A.M., Tikhonov R.M., Azgal'dov G.G., Zavialov P.S., Fatkhutdinov R.A. [1-7 and others]. It indicates the complexity of the competitiveness concept and, therefore, the absence of a generally accepted universal concept.

The nature, structure and mechanism of management of tourist and recreational complex is considered in the works of such famous foreign and domestic scholars as Evans N., Campbell D., Koch A., Cooper K., Gilbert D., Hall K.M., Voronkova L.P., Kotlyarov E.A., Aliev S.M., Mochalov A.S., Tretyakova T.N., Luk'yanova L.G., Tsybukh V.I., Zorin I.V., Zorin A.I., Krotov E.V., Dunets A.N. [8-14], etc. The difficulty and complexity of this issue are that there are many different theories and models, different look at the problem from the point of view of the tourist and recreational needs.

## II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The analysis of foreign and domestic sources on the study of tourist and recreational complex can offer a conceptual scheme for assessing the competitiveness of tourist and recreational complex of the region (see Fig. 1) as a condition for the formation of an effective strategy for its development.

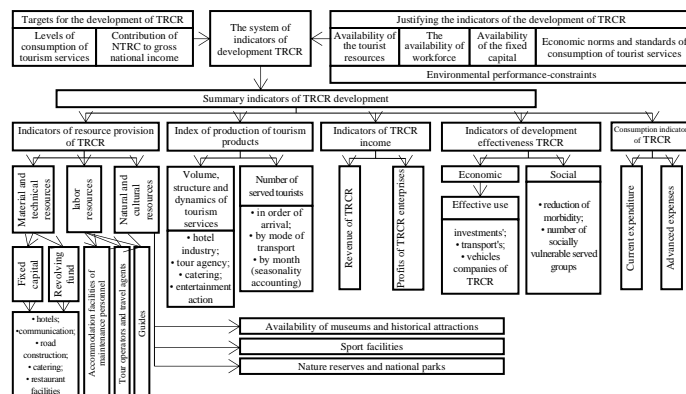


Fig.1. Conceptual scheme of assessment of competitiveness of tourist and recreational complex of region

The core of the conceptual scheme for assessing the competitiveness of the tourist and recreational complex of the region is an assessment of the development degree of intermediary, transport and hospitality organizations and enterprises, which are a system of regional entrepreneurship. Within the functional single task, they are focused on activities aimed at meeting the diverse and constantly growing needs of people in various types of recreation and travel in their free time, with the rational using of all available tourist resources.

To attract tourists the recreational complex of the region must meet certain requirements and it namely must have:

- the tourist and recreational necessary resources: natural and climatic, historical and cultural etc.;
- the services necessary for the acceptance of tourists (tourists want certain quality of the products offered to them). These include primarily delivery (transport) to the tourist and recreational complex and back, providing conditions for accommodation (hotels, campsites) and food (restaurants, cafes, bars) with the appropriate level of service;
- attractions which might be of interest to tourists. They provoke competition between resort and tourist complexes. If interesting places give opportunities to see and learn more, more tourists visit it.

The most important resources of the tourist and recreational complex of the region are:

- historical and cultural resources, which include monuments (religious and secular architecture, archaeological, ethnographic etc.), folk crafts, scientific and technical complexes and facilities, modern cultural and entertainment institutions;

- special tourist and general infrastructure. Specialized infrastructure includes accommodation facilities of different categories, existing tourist routes, special tourist services, transport, tourist organizations. The general infrastructure is based on services of trade and consumer services, roads and transportation, telecommunications and utility systems;

- labour supplies, their numbers, age and sex composition, social and professional composition, their level of education and employment.

Thus, the resort and tourist complex of the region is a geographically fixed complex of properties that causes tourists and locals interest in tourist trips or other actions to get acquainted with the tourist object. In most cases elements of the tourist and recreational complex are small businesses.

In general, recreation is considered as a systematic process of restoring vitality, in particular physical, intellectual, emotional potential of a person, reduced or lost in the course of life under the influence of negative environmental factors. The concept of recreation includes the processes of recovery the weak health. Some authors identify the concepts of recreation and rest but it is not quite correct, because recreation is the prevention of diseases, because prevention of diseases is based on the process of leisure, recreation, as well as during the treatment and rehabilitation procedures.

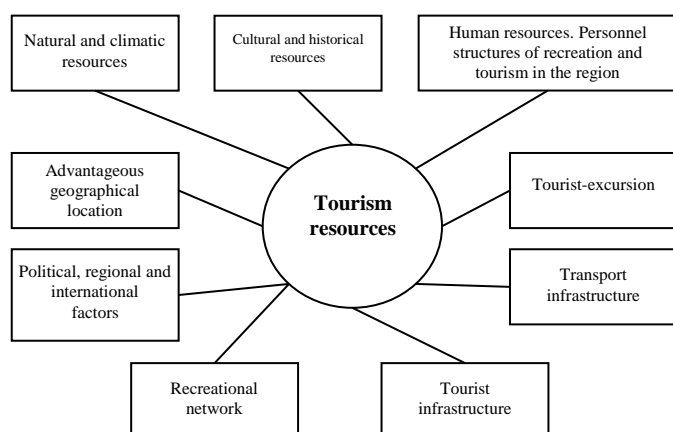


Fig.2. Tourist and recreational resources of the region

A preliminary estimate of the competitiveness of the tourist and recreational complex of the region should be carried out on the parameters of meeting the needs of tourists resources (Fig. 2), which are characterized by the following features:

1. Favorable geographical location of the territory, i.e. the location of the tourist and recreational complex relatively large and well-known rivers, mountains, lakes, seas, climatic zones, protected areas etc.

2. Natural and landscape features that suggest the presence within the tourist and recreational complex of the region:

- networks of small and medium-sized rivers and streams, lakes, ponds, natural mineral springs and therapeutic mud;
- diversity and richness of forests;
- favorable environmental situation;

- federal and regional national parks, nature parks, state and regional nature reserves, etc.

3. Historical and architectural wealth and diversity of tourist and recreational complex of the region, representing the set of historical monuments, architecture, archeology and religious buildings. The presence of historical places of different eras and periods are elements of the tourists attraction.

4. Unique traditions reflected in the origin of life, traditions, culture, the combination of the title people and faith, the preservation in some areas of tourist and recreational complex of the region of pagan beliefs and places of worship.

5. Cultural heritage of the tourist and recreational complex of the region, which is determined by such parameters as:

- intense cultural life, especially song and theatre art;
- cultural events, folk festivals;
- availability of theatres and museums.

6. Political, regional and international factors, such as the zone of stable political situation, expansion of international sports and cultural contacts, cooperation with other states and entities. These factors assess the level of competitiveness of the tourist and recreational complex of the region in the first approval.

7. Transport infrastructure, which determines the unique location of the tourist and recreational complex of the region relative to the railway, water and highways, the presence of airports, which together provide effective access to resorts, tourist companies, places of cultural and historical heritage etc.

The special role in the tourist and recreational complex of the region is a network of sanatorium and resort institutions, which in a special way attract real and potential tourists as a form of health restoration and rehabilitation. Small business organizations should appear around such institutions, which should provide tourists with services of different nature. For example, It is the production of folk art, the organization of tourists visiting cultural, historical and natural sites.

Thus, the development of tourism and recreation infrastructure in these areas is primarily associated with small businesses focused on the further development of recreation (It can be seasonal water parks on the beaches, summer cafes, equestrian stations, animation children's towns, excursions, a variety of one-day recreation, fishing and hunting, game breeding on home farms for hunting, restaurants of national cuisine, etc.). Local people in this activity should be involved initially less business-oriented.

### III. RESULTS

The main purpose of assessing the competitiveness of the tourist and recreational complex of the region is the formation in the Chuvash Republic competitive tourist complex, providing the ability to meet the population needs of the Chuvash Republic, Russian and foreign citizens in the tourist and recreational services. A significant contribution to the socio-economic development of the Republic is provided by increasing the revenue of the republican and local budgets, investment, creating new jobs, improving the population,

preservation and rational use of cultural, historical and natural heritage. In recent years a recreational industry began to develop resort complexes resulting in some administrative territories of the Republic of recreational enterprises are becoming profitable. For example, there is a sanatorium complex "Chuvashia" in Zavolzhsky area, spa-resorts "Solnechnyj bereg", "Volzhanka" and "Volzhskie Zori" in Syukterskogo area [15].

To assess the competitiveness of the health resort complex in the region, we used an expert assessment based on the following factors of competitiveness: infrastructure, transport accessibility, profile, natural factors of treatment, basic types of treatment, food, services, entertainment, price factor, product promotion, availability of marketing research, professional training, the image of the resort.

The methodology for assessing the competitiveness of health resort services includes the following steps:

- Determination of the list of indicators of quality of resort services and on a 5-point scale is given an expert assessment of indicators for individual resorts. As experts were the heads of health resorts and heads of marketing departments.
- The basic model "etalon" was chosen for comparison in terms of sales and competitiveness indicators. The "Sanatori Chuvashiya" has the largest volumes of sales and high levels of competitiveness of sanatorium and resort services.
- The weighting factors are calculated for each indicator of competitiveness.
- The unique indicators of competitiveness are assessed according to the following formula:

$$g_i = P_i / P_{i\sigma}$$

where  $g_i$  is the estimate value of the  $i$  comparable indicator of competitiveness;  $P_i$  is the value of  $i$  indicator of the estimated services;  $P_{i\sigma}$  is the value of  $i$  index of a basic product.

- The group competitiveness index is calculated on the basis of single comparable indicators of competitiveness according to the next formula:

$$I_{cn} = \sum_{i=1}^n q_i \varphi_i$$

where  $I_{cn}$  is a group competitiveness index on quality of care;  $q_i$  is the value to assess the comparative index;  $\varphi_i$  is the weighting factor that takes into account the importance of the  $i$  parameter;  $n$  is a number of single comparable indicators.

The results of expert assessments are given in table. 1.

According to experts, the sanatorium "Chuvashia" has competitive advantages due to its location in the protected area, and along with traditional methods of treatment, the resort also is dominated by climate.

TABLE I. EXPERT ASSESSMENT OF RESORT COMPLEX QUALITY OF CHUVASH REPUBLIC

№	Indicators characterizing the quality of resort services	Weight index	Sanatorium					Average
			"Chuvashia"	"Solnechnyj bereg"	"Volzhskie Zori"	"Volzhanka"	"Nadezhda"	
1.	The quality of treatment	0,20	4,5	4,5	4,8	4,0	4,0	4,36
2.	The quality of food	0,20	4,5	4,2	4,1	4,0	4,0	4,16
3.	The quality of accommodation	0,15	4,3	4,2	3,9	4,0	3,9	4,06
4.	The quality of entertainment programs	0,07	4,1	4,0	3,1	4,2	3,5	3,78
5.	Promotion of services	0,07	4,5	4,1	4,0	3,9	3,6	4,02
6.	Image of the sanatorium	0,09	4,9	4,8	4,5	4,0	3,9	4,40
7.	Availability of marketing service	0,09	4,2	4,0	3,3	3,2	3,2	3,58
8.	The quality of the staff	0,08	4,4	4,2	3,6	3,7	3,5	3,88
9.	Location	0,05	4,9	4,5	4,1	4,2	3,9	4,32
Average		-	4,47	4,27	3,93	3,91	3,72	4,06

The health resort "Solnechnyj bereg" is considered as a health resort with modern methods of treatment. "Volzhskie Zori" is a balneological resort based on natural mineral waters. "Volzhanka" has a wide range of entertainment programs that attracts tourists for a short (2-3 days) rest. Sanatorium "Nadezhda" provides mainly treatment on a preferential basis.

The relative indicators of the quality level of sanatorium and resort services are calculated on the basis of expert assessments, in relation to the basic model and their complex indicator of the quality level is determined taking into account the weighting factors.

On the basis of the calculated indicators of competitiveness, the quality levels and economic indicators of the integral indicator of competitiveness of individual health resorts are found out (table. 2).

TABLE II. INTEGRATED INDICATORS OF COMPETITIVENESS OF HEALTH AND RESORT ENTERPRISES

Indicators	Value of indicator competitiveness				
	"Chuvashia"	"Solnechnyj bereg"	"Volzhanka"	"Nadezhda"	"Volzhskie Zori"
Comprehensive indicator of the competitiveness of services ( $I_{ky}$ )	1,0	0,96	0,70	0,69	0,74
Comprehensive economic indicator of competitiveness ( $I_e$ )	1,0	0,93	0,80	0,80	0,83
Integral indicator of the competitiveness of health resorts	1,0	1,03	0,88	0,86	0,89

When assessing competitiveness, we can conclude that when  $K < 1$  sanatorium-resort product is inferior to the basic one, while  $K > 1$  it exceeds it. With equal competitiveness,  $K = 1$ .

The calculated indicators of competitiveness indicate that the health resorts "Volzhanka", "Nadezhda" and "Volzhskie Zori" are inferior to the basic sanatorium "Chuvashia" by 12, 14, 11% respectively. The sanatorium "Solnechnyj bereg" is superior to the basic model by 3 %.

The competitiveness of health resort enterprises is based on competitive advantages, which determine the factors of growth of attractiveness of recreational and resort region complex.

Competitiveness affects both positive and (more) negative factors. The impact of many negative factors can be mitigated



or neutralized with some effort on the part of both the authorities and the local community of the region. The most important factor of competitiveness is a unique combination of recreational and therapeutic natural resources, and developed functioning tourist and recreational complex.

It should be noted that each resort has unique features that attract a large number of tourists and vacationers based on the profile of their disease.

The analysis of the competitiveness of enterprises of the sanatorium and resort complex of the region allows one to determine the sustainable competitive advantages and to develop an algorithm for assessing the competitiveness of the tourist and recreational complex of the region (see Fig.1).

#### IV. DISCUSSIONS

In economic literature the tourist and recreational complex is considered as a part of the national economy (E.A. Kotlyarov, V.S. Preobrazhensky, L.A. Galachieva, N.A. Sidorova, etc.), and as a form of organization of recreational activities in a certain area (A.A. Koblov, T.V. Klochkova, T.V. Nikolaenko, etc.). Kotlyarov E.A. introduced the concept of "territorial and recreational complex" and defined it as a part of the overall economic complex of territories of different levels, which is a combination of recreational organizations and related infrastructure enterprises, united by close production and economic relations and the joint use of geographical location, natural and economic resources of the occupied complex territory [16].

Klochkova T.V. considers the recreational and tourist complex as a set of industries that provide production of tourist products. It is formed as a result of the integration of three groups of industries: sanatorium, tourist and excursion, sports [17].

Chudnovsky A.D., Zhukova M.A. understand the tourist and recreational complex as a set of accommodation facilities, vehicles, catering facilities, entertainment, educational, business, health, sports, organizations that provide excursion services and services of guides translators [18].

Voronkova L.P. defines the tourist and recreational complex as an economic and territorial association of tourist group enterprises (hotels, restaurants, camp sites, etc.) [8].

Strek P.A. treats the tourist and recreational complex as a set of economic relations and institutions that determine the nature of the functioning, interaction of economic objects. They provide production and implementation of tourist and recreational services [19]. In this case, there is an infrastructural approach of the author to the content of the tourist and recreational complex.

Malysheva G.M. defines the tourist and recreational complex as a new form of cooperation of recreational and related industries, a combination of recreational institutions and related infrastructure enterprises, united by close production ties and the joint use of geographical location, natural and economic resources of the complex territory [20].

Nowadays we see a high degree of competition in the field of the tourism and recreation complex. The degree of

development of the market, the complexity of work on it is largely dictated by the characteristics of the competitive environment of the recreational enterprise. Being the most sensitive indicator of the activity of the enterprise it determines many marketing characteristics: volume and conditions of sales, prices, methods of advertising, sales promotion. However, it should be noted that the competitiveness of a service or enterprise can be determined only by comparing competitors with each other [21] i.e. by assessing competitiveness.

Competitiveness means being able to be ahead of others in achieving goals. There are many definitions and ways to measure competitiveness. At the same time they distinguish the competitiveness of goods, firms, countries and entire regions [22]. Issues of regional competitiveness become particularly relevant in the conditions when the subjects of the country have the opportunity to independently solve a number of economic issues. As we know the region is a community of people living in a certain geographical space, endowed with certain material resources and organized into interacting links to achieve certain social and economic goals. Such a system we should consider only with reference to a specific administrative and territorial division [23]. Recent researches suggest that the competitiveness of the region depends on the capabilities of its economy and the effective use of number conditions. For example, it is the providing the region with factor resources and their effectiveness. Competitiveness is a complex concept, so to interpret the concept it is necessary to establish its categories as definitions of basic concepts [24].

Categories of competitiveness allow us to interpret and carry out for a specific example of the production the adequate policy of competitiveness.

A well-known specialist in the field of competitive advantages M. Porter in his work about competitiveness argued that there is no universal recipe for accelerating economic growth. However, the success of competitiveness development policy largely depends on the stage of economic development [7].

From the economic point of view, competitiveness is "the ability of goods to ensure commercial success in a competitive environment" [21], so for a long time it was believed that only products, goods, services could have competitiveness. These approaches we can find in the works of modern economists [24,25,26, etc.].

Zelenskaya O.A. describes the methodology of the organization of state support for the development of clusters. In particular it is the algorithm for determining the competitiveness of the cluster, which determines the point of no return for the participants of the cluster. She characterizes the method of classifying the cluster as innovative, which can be directly reflected in the study of the competitiveness of the tourism and recreational industry [27].

A.M. Vetitnev in his works reveals the balanced assessment of the competitiveness of health resort organizations [28] and management based on a comprehensive analysis of the resort competitiveness [29]. These works fully reflect the need to

research competitiveness of health resort organizations as an integral part of the tourism and recreational industry.

As we can notice that in the tourism and recreational industry, we have a new type of tourism. It is an agricultural complex, but it is already under pressure because of competition. That is why we should explore competitiveness in this direction. Researches of Bojkova M.A. reveal the problems of improving existing and developing new approaches, methods and models in the field of agrotourism, which would, on the one hand, take into account the existing general theoretical developments of the solution of this problem, and on the other it could allow one to find their practical application in specific macro, micro and subject conditions [30].

Thus, we have a lot of books, works of different researchers to assess the competitiveness of the tourist and recreational complex, which reveal the mechanisms and features of approaches to its assessment. The proposed algorithm for assessing the competitiveness of the tourist and recreational complex of the region focuses not only on assessing the level of development of its standard elements, but also it takes into account the sphere of entrepreneurship, which is the basis of region settings. The use of the expert method allows us objectively assess the level of competitiveness and smooth the complexity of the calculation of a very complex object.

## V. CONCLUSIONS

Tourism is one of the largest and most dynamic sectors of the economy. Various sectors of the economy are under the influence of high rates of its development, large amounts of foreign exchange earnings. It contributes to the formation of its own tourism industry. Half of the territory of Russia is a tourist destination. If the health resort institutions want to survive in a market economy, they should enter the market with competitive tourist service. Competition can be considered as a necessary and decisive condition for the normal functioning of a market economy. Competition is a force for the interaction of demand and supply of tourism services.

The analysis of the state of the resort and tourist complex of the region showed that the Chuvash Republic has a significant number of sanatorium and resort organizations and recreation, where business activities in the field of the tourism and recreation complex is characterized by a high degree of competition.

The opinion of consumers in a competitive market when choosing a strategy for the management of the resort and tourist complex is the most important because they determine the demand. We should solve such problems as a clear definition of the strategy of using recreational potential, improvement of the relevant legal framework, establishment of an economic mechanism for improving the efficiency.

The main tactical task of tourism development in Russia and in the regions is the formation of a modern marketing strategy for the promotion of tourism products in the domestic and international markets, including regular campaigns in the media, organization, holding international tourism exhibitions and participation in such exhibitions abroad. We should pay

special attention at the local level to the improvement of the activities of tour operators and travel agencies to promote domestic tourism, including recreational institutions in the region.

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