GLOBAL APPROACHES TO DEVELOPING AND OPTIMALLY UTILIZING REGIONAL TOURIST POTENTIAL: STRATEGIES AND BEST PRACTICES

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Abstract:

This article examines the experience and effective measures used by the most advanced countries in the field of tourism for the balanced development of the country's regions. The practices of such countries as France, China, and Turkey are considered. These countries have different climatic conditions and types of tourism.

Keywords: tourism, regional tourism, national tourism strategies, tourism potential.

The main source of income (and, consequently, regional economic growth) is the activity of specialized industries. Within the framework of modern regional economic concepts, two main functional blocks of industries can be distinguished: specialized and service industries.

In reality, the economic importance of specialized industries for the region becomes a strategic factor, especially if domestic demand for regional products is low. For subregional formations, the local market has limited potential. Analyzing various aspects of the regional economy is the basis for developing the strategy and tactics of regional development.

Let us consider the experience of the development and effective use of regional tourism potential in countries where this concept has been successfully developed, bringing both economic and social benefits to the region and the country as a whole.

France. The tourism policy in France is structured in such a way that all participants in the tourism industry, both direct and indirect, are consolidated in the regulation of this sector. Tourism is an important source of income for the French economy. France remains the leading destination in the world in 2019, receiving 89.4 million foreign visitors, a 3% increase from 2017. International tourism receipts in 2018 amounted to 56.2 billion euros, nearly a 5% increase compared to 2017.

The distinctive feature of the tourism management system in France is the group of economic interest (GIE), which unites government, public, and private commercial tourism organizations. This GIE has a flexible management system in relation to state regulation and serves the public interest in the tourism business. The GIE is managed by a board of directors, which includes seven government representatives, twelve qualified individuals, eight representatives of professional tourism organizations, and four supporters.

In legal terms, tourism in France is regulated by specific legislative documents, such as the Tourism Code, which is regulated in four books; an action program developed annually by the National Council, aimed at increasing employment in the tourism sector and developing a plan to eliminate existing problems in the country's tourism sector; the Law on Combatting Exceptions, and the Law on Regulating and Organizing Accessible Recreation for People with Disabilities.

The French government actively implements a long-term regional tourism policy through the creation and implementation of regional programs, as balanced development across all territories in the country is a strategic task for sustainable development and the improvement of tourism. Every five years, regions and the capital develop a work plan that addresses financing, key work directions for the upcoming period, and compliance with the planned goals. Notably, the government encourages regional projects and tourism infrastructure initiatives that aim to attract both foreign and domestic tourists. These initiatives are based on principles of quality, bringing together all stakeholders for successful projects.

Tourists are distributed across different cities in France. According to a UN study, only 16.8% of visitors to France visit Paris, reflecting the government's efforts to evenly distribute tourism across all regions of the country, utilizing existing resources to develop new types of tourism and strengthen traditional ones.

China. After forty years of reforms and openness, China has become the largest global tourist power. The stabilization of the country's social, economic, and political situation, the motivation to make tourist trips, and the availability of time and funds among the population have contributed to the growth of domestic tourism volumes. The country's authorities consider tourism a significant tool for both foreign and domestic policy.

China's domestic tourism policy is aimed at enriching tourism products with ideological content (e.g., through state support for "red tourism" programs). Major foreign players in the cultural and tourism sector must localize their products to access the Chinese market. The main regulator of tourism in China is the government, which runs the tourism sector through well-structured five-year development plans. Each five-year plan includes comprehensive and detailed strategies for integrating tourism into all sectors of the economy and social life. These "five-year plans" focus on expanding and developing specific types of tourism, regions, national ideology, infrastructure, creating jobs, promoting innovation, attracting foreign capital, and generating interest in China through thematic and ideological events both within and outside the country.

China is a world leader in terms of domestic tourists. In 1984, there were 200 million trips within China, which increased thirty-fold to 6 billion by 2019. In 2019, the average Chinese person traveled four times a year, compared to only one-third in 1993. Tourism spending in 1984 amounted to 8 billion yuan. By 2019, it had increased more than 700 times. China's tourism sector is unique because the development and enhancement of domestic tourism is a top priority in China's state policy.

In the framework of the "11th five-year plan" for tourism development, launched in 2015, a new model was introduced, aimed at stimulating the economic development of regions through the construction of tourism clusters (quanyuy lyuyu). These clusters are intended to create a unified tourism brand for a group of attractions, boosting regional visibility and increasing tourist flows. The cluster model created new value-added chains and allowed for resource savings through integration. The synergistic effect of the cluster created new jobs, including in other sectors of the economy, and the profits from local businesses contributed to infrastructure development and the overall economy of the region.

Turkey. Turkey holds leading positions in the global tourism industry. Tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors of the Turkish economy. Turkey's numerous unique historical landmarks, stunning Mediterranean beaches, favorable climate conditions, and advantageous geographical location open up broad prospects for the tourism business. The popularity of Turkish resorts among international visitors is attributed not only to well-developed infrastructure and favorable natural conditions but also to a balanced state policy on tourism.

Considering the diversity of demand in the tourist services market, the Turkish government and businesses quickly respond and expand the scope of recreational services. In 2016, 498 new travel agencies were created in Turkey, and advertising was expanded. According to the Turkish Statistical Institute (TUIK), the number of visitors to Turkey increased by 71% in 2022, reaching 51,387,513 people.

In 1982, Turkey adopted a "revolutionary" law to encourage tourism, and the Ministry of Culture and Tourism gained the authority to determine promising regions for tourism development, order the construction of roads, and provide business loans through its own bank.

The primary incentive the Turkish government offered to investors in the tourism sector was the opportunity to lease land for free in promising tourist areas for up to 49 years. Additionally, future hoteliers were offered discounted rates for electricity, water, and gas, tax exemptions, and preferential loans for construction.

The need for economic regional policies is due to the requirement to manage the process of creating favorable conditions in the region, including modern infrastructure and economic institutions. The successful experience of countries such as France, China, and Turkey demonstrates the importance of proper government regulation and investment in tourism development as a key element in regional economic growth.

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