HOSPITALITY INDEX AS A STIMULATING FACTOR IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION REGIONS

INTRODUCTION

The development of the tourism and hospitality industry is accompanied by various innovative approaches in creating incentives and rules for participants in the process of receiving and serving tourists. To do this, it is proposed to implement a hospitality index in the territory of the Russian Federation. Such an initiative was made by the National Union of the Hospitality Industry (NUHI). An important aspect in the development of indicators for the hospitality index is the understanding of the purpose of this initiative, and what is the target audience of these indicators. Given the current development status of domestic and inbound tourism, one of the goals of the implementation of the regional hospitality index is to create a stimulating factor for the heads of regions (the Russian Federation entities). According to G. Babasyan, head of the working group “Development of service and staffing of the tourism sector” of the Coordination Council under the Government of the Russian Federation: “This is an opportunity to take an objective look at Russian regions” (RAMBLER FINANCE, 2020).

Until 2020, the statistics of recent years have shown that domestic and inbound tourism in Russia was significantly inferior to the indicators of outbound tourism, both in terms of number and economic characteristics. However, at present, there is a positive trend towards an increase in the indicators of domestic tourism. This is due to objective factors, such as changes in the economy, and primarily due to restrictions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the geopolitical situation, and the devaluation of the national currency. In this regard, it is quite obvious that there is a need for a comprehensive assessment of the hospitality sector in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

METHODS

The implementation and further compliance with the high indicators of the hospitality index can affect the following (Figure 1):

- the region’s branding that will contribute to increasing the attractiveness of the region and keeping the local population from migrating, as well as attracting new people with the skills and qualifications demanded in the territory;
- positioning the region in the market of domestic and inbound tourism;
- investment attractiveness of the region.

**Figure 1. Objectives of the hospitality index development**

**Source:** Search data.
To develop and implement the hospitality index, it is necessary to understand what is included in the concept of hospitality and what approaches can be used to assess the component indices of the criterion.

RESULTS
President of the Federation of Restaurateurs and Hoteliers (FRH) of Russia I. Bukharov notes: “Now hotels, restaurants, transport and travel companies, as well as guides do not interact with each other, although they are engaged in the same business. Everyone has a different idea of what is included in the concept of hospitality” (TALPEU, 2018). According to E. Dzhandzhugazova (2005), the hospitality industry is an association of all companies and organizations cooperating with each other, of which each performs its specific functions aimed at meeting the needs of guests.

This definition can be supplemented and used to the concept of hospitality, which, according to the authors of the present article, is the reception of guests at a professional level by interrelated organizations that provide services and offer necessary goods to tourists and guests. Thus, the hospitality sector should include accommodation facilities, catering companies, transport and tour operators, tourist information centers (TIC), tour bureaus (guides), MICE1 organizations, parks, museums, souvenir production organizations, etc. (STAKHOVA, DUKHOVNAYA, 2020; WIEGERINK, VAN PROOIJEN-LANDER, 2010).

For a comprehensive approach to substantiating the indicators of the hospitality index, the international experience should be taken into account. An important factor for the formation of the country’s image as favorable for tourism and travel is the assessment by the world community of the cultural potential, the security status, and development of this economic sector. One of the components of the formation of such an image is the assessment by the WEF organizers of the tourism development status in the countries of the world in the form of the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (hereinafter TTCI).

Experts of the WEF first published the TTCI ranking of countries in 2007. This index was developed in the context of the industrial aviation, travel, and tourism program, in close cooperation with major organizations in this subject area, such as the International Air Transport Association (IATA), the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) (DUKHOVNAYA, SKABEEVA, 2018).

The TTCI has a complex structure: it consists of 90 individual indicators distributed among 14 key indicators, which are grouped into four subindices (Figure 2). All indicators used in the report range from 1 to 7. Each component is calculated as a weighted average of the indicators. After that, subindexes are calculated; they are the weighted average of the components that they consist of. The overall TTCI for each country is a weighted average of four subindices (GORBUNOVA, 2018).

Figure 2. Structure of the travel and tourism competitiveness index

Source: Search data.

1 Organizations involved in organizing meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (MICE)
Two-thirds of the data used to compile TTCI are statistics provided by partners. Among them are industry associations and alliances (for example, IATA, IUCN, UNWTO, WTTC, etc.), as well as large companies (Booking.com, Corporación América, Deutsche Lufthansa, Emirates Airline, Expedia Group, Intercontinental Hotel Group, Jumeirah Group, Marriott International, Swiss International Air Lines, and Visa). Besides, statistics used include data from Bloom Consulting, STR, IATA, ICCA, ILO, ITU, IUCN, UNESCO, UN Statistics Division, UNAIDS, UNWTO, WHO, World Bank, World Resources Institute, World Road Statistics, CIA World Factbook, WTO, WTTC, WDPA, and Yale-CIESIN Environmental Performance Index. The remaining third is the data of a proper annual survey, in which 16,000 CEOs of the largest companies assess the countries’ industries based on various indicators, giving them ratings from one to seven (BLOKHINA et al., 2020).

The objectivity of assessing countries and compiling a travel and tourism competitiveness rating is achieved through widely diversified criteria that are combined into sections (subindices) and subsections (subscripts). Some parameters are assessed as a composite index, whose ranking is determined depending on this parameter (e.g., the sustainability of tourism and travel industry development), while others are assessed by quantitative metrics (e.g., number of active regional trade agreements). Sections are created and formed according to the estimated parameters that according to experts of the WEF play the most important role in shaping the competitiveness of countries in the tourism and travel sector. In each section, for each criterion, countries are awarded a rating according to the calculated index or quantitative indicator. Subsequently, after summarizing the data, an overall rating of countries is compiled. It should be noted that determining the development level of the hospitality sector in the particular region is strongly influenced by the quality of service, assessed by the following components:

1. The quality of material and technical resources, as well as characteristics that include qualitative and quantitative indicators. These indicators are strongly influenced by the general factors of the investment climate. For example, the TTCI assesses the status of the business environment and considers the cost and time required to obtain construction permits, the effectiveness of the legal framework, and others. The Ministry of Economic Development of the Russian Federation noted that according to the results of calculating the TTCI competitiveness index in 2019, “Russia is still lagging in almost all indicators.” Most indicators accurately reflect the situation in the industry: assessment of the priority of tourism, including “prioritization of the tourism industry by the state, budget expenditures on tourism, promotion, and brand of the country, tourism statistics” (AZAROVA et al., 2019; SHILOVA, 2019). The lowest indicators of the Russian Federation in 2019 in the ranking of countries (out of 140 countries) were the following:

   - business-friendly environment – 92nd place;
   - security – 98th place;
   - priority of tourism – 86th place.

Also, the quality indicators of the hospitality sector development are affected by the assessment of environmental sustainability. According to data for 2019, Russia was ranked 82.

2. The humanitarian component, which includes the ability to host guests by the staff of hospitality organizations, provide due service level, as well as the hospitality of residents and their identity (belonging) to their region (territory).

It should be noted that basically all indicators, in general, depend on the policy of the state in creating favorable conditions for the development of the tourism and hospitality industry. However, for the development of the components of the hospitality index of the region, there are assessment criteria that will help to highlight the competitive advantages of a particular entity of the Russian Federation. For example, “Favorable environment” indicators include:
“health and hygiene” (six indicators) are important for the comfort and health of travelers and make up the following estimates: the quality of drinking water and sanitary conditions, the level of health care, which is measured by the availability of doctors and hospital beds.

“Human resources and labor market” (nine indicators): measuring the education level and training of industry specialists, the availability of highly qualified specialists in customer service.

The indicators “Tourism policy and favorable conditions for travel” include:

“environmental sustainability” (ten indicators): strictness and compliance with state environmental standards that assess the state of water resources, forest resources, and the state of the seas, fish stocks, as well as the degree of sustainable development.

The “Infrastructure” indicators include:

tourist service infrastructure (four indicators): availability of a sufficient number of high-quality resorts and entertainment facilities; the level of tourist service infrastructure is measured through the number of hotel rooms, and is supplemented by the services, such as car rental and availability of ATMs.

Indicators “Natural and cultural resources” include:

“natural resources” (five indicators), besides UNESCO sites, the total number of known animal species and percentage of protected areas;

cultural resources and business travel (five indicators), also besides UNESCO sites, a new indicator of digital demand for cultural and entertainment events, namely the number of Internet searches related to the country’s culture. These resources allow concluding the level of interest to a particular country. The number of meetings of international associations held, and business trips in the country.

The Ministry of Economic Development considers this study, published every two years by WEF experts, to be one of the keys to assessing the global ranking of Russia in the tourism industry. Nevertheless, as noted by the Ministry of Economic Development, “Most of the indicators accurately reflect the situation in the industry; however, it should be taken into account that some of the indicators may reflect the personal attitudes of experts, which are significantly influenced by the news background”.

In 2019, Russia ranked 39th (WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM, n.d.). For comparison, in the report for 2017, Russia ranked 38th (SCHWAB, n.d.), in 2015 – 45th (WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM, 2015). Russia receives the highest rating for “Natural and cultural values”. Thus, in 2019 the country ranked 20th in the world by this indicator. Evidence of the attractiveness of natural and cultural resources of the Russian Federation is the research conducted in 2017 with the support of the “Visit Russia” national tourist offices in China, Europe, the Middle East, as well as Southeast Asia. More than 70% of potential tourists are interested exactly in Russian nature. “The most popular topic that arouses the interest of foreign guests was that associated with a unique natural phenomenon, such as the flowering of rhododendron in the Altai Territory or the end of the polar night in Murmansk. Next, by a small margin, the interest of tourists is associated with famous landmarks. Folk culture (holidays, rituals, crafts), culture (literature, theater, music), cuisine, history, people, historical reconstructions, and sports events” are next in the priorities (EventsInRussia.com, 2017).
DISCUSSION

Despite the positive assessment of this rating, there are also controversial points. Sergey Shpilko, President of the Russian Union of Travel Industry (RUTI), points out the methodological inconsistencies of TTCI: “Frankly speaking, this rating causes confidence neither in terms of the methodology used nor in terms of the results obtained. The assessment of the business climate in the country is carried out based on 12 indicators, while the assessment of the tourist infrastructure - based only on four.”

In Russia, the Eurasian Institute for Competitiveness and the Strategy Partners consulting company collect and process data for the TTCI report. Alexey Prazdnichnykh, the partner at Strategy Partners and coordinator of the WEF International Competitiveness Program in Russia, explained that the survey-based assessments of the conditions for the development of the tourism and travel sector rather reflected the needs of business managers and business owners as consumers of specialized resources (for example, labor). Hence, there is a noticeable difference between the survey results and publicly available statistics, which often reflects only the state of the supply side (the seller’s position).

As for the assessment criteria that raised questions, for example, the small number of indicators reflecting “Cultural environment and business travel” (which includes stadiums and does not include museums, theaters, galleries, etc.), the WEF experts answer that a comprehensive tool, such as the TTCI index, is not intended to assess individual types of tourism. Prazdnichnykh recaps: “The division of tourist assets of countries into natural and cultural and business is only because natural beauty is more of an unchanging objective reality, an inherited advantage, while cultural and business assets can be created. The ranking of countries is also not a beauty contest of national museums or hotel infrastructure. Competitiveness in the tourism and travel sector is a combination of many factors” (SHILOVA, 2019).

Several articles by A.V. Shipov and O.K. Ermishkina (SHIPOV, ERMISHKINA, 2015a, 2015b; SHIPOV, SHIPOVA, 2019) propose a methodology for assessing the level of hospitality in the Russian Federation entities based on a comprehensive integrated indicator, namely, the hospitality index. In order to identify regularities in the hospitality industry, given its stability and variability, belonging to a particular period, a particular development stage, it is proposed to explore two subsystems of indicators - positive (e.g., the number of beds in hotels and similar accommodation facilities at the end of the year), whose growth characterizes the increased level of hospitality, and negative, whose increase indicates a decline in this level.

To convert indicators to indices with a scale from zero to one, minimum and maximum values or targets are set. This system of indicators is not universal. It can be adapted to reflect the priorities and problems of specific regions, social and ethnic groups, as well as urban and rural populations by including additional components that characterize the development level of the hospitality industry. Reducing indicators to a single scale can be carried out using the value standardization, which allows transforming value to a single dimensionless form based on the formula:

\[ y_{ij} = \frac{x_{ij} - \min(x_{ij})}{\max(x_{ij}) - \min(x_{ij})}, \]  

where \( y_{ij} \) is the standardized value of the j-th indicator for the i-th research object; \( x \) is the value of the j-th indicator for the i-th research object. This method was proposed by scientists of the Oscar Lange Academy of Economics (Wroclaw, Poland) Prof. M. Cheslyak and E. Oktabskaya. The method is widely used in international statistics on the population's standard of living (in particular, it is used to calculate the human development index). This method has certain drawbacks: it is assumed that the comparison of objects based on all indicators occurs in relation to a certain specimen, and all indicators are considered to be equivalent. At present, however, this method is the most efficient to calculate the general indicators in statistical studies. When determining a generalized assessment, it should be taken into account that a transformation of the form (1) \( y_{ij} \) is used as a standardized value of negative indicators, since the known forms of indices, for all their diversity, have a common property: they require qualitative uniformity of their constituent indicators.
Based on the selected values (reduced by formula 1), a generalized synthetic indicator to assess the hospitality sector for each research object (the Russian Federation entity) is calculated by the formula:

\[ y^{(e)}_i = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^{m} y^{(p)}_{ij} + \sum_{j=1}^{k} y^{(n)}_{ij}}{m + k} \]  

(2)

where \( y^{(p)}_{ij} \) is the standardized value of the \( j \)-th positive indicator for the \( i \)-th object; \( y^{(n)}_{ij} \) is the standardized value of the \( j \)-th negative indicator for the \( i \)-th object; \( m \) is the number of positive indicators; \( k \) is the number of negative indicators. This synthetic generalizing indicator can be used as a hospitality index. Continuous monitoring of these integral indicators makes it possible to monitor the hospitality sector of the Russian Federation entities (SHIPOV, BELIKHIN, 2015).

To develop criteria for the hospitality index, various methods of assessing the attractiveness of the region should be used. For example, to assess the investment attractiveness of the region, O.E. Afanasyev, M.S. Oborin, E.Yu. Shman (2017) proposed the following assessment criteria (together with popular ones, such as the average income of hotels and other accommodation facilities in the region; the number of tourists accommodated in hotels and other accommodation facilities in the region as a percentage of the total number in the country, etc.):

- the level of economic crimes per 100 thousand inhabitants of the region;
- the proportion of unprofitable and environmentally unfriendly enterprises in the total number of enterprises in the region;
- the development degree of regional infrastructure (AFANASYEV; OBORIN; SHMAN, 2017).

Also, when developing the hospitality index, it is necessary to take into account the criteria proposed by O.I. Vapnyarskaya (2014) in her studies dealing with the methodology of hospitality standard development in the region. The main assessments include the following components:

- security standard of tourists’ and holiday-makers’ stay in the particular territory;
- standard on the formation of an accessible environment for a comfortable stay in the territory;
- standard of comfortable accommodation for tourists;
- standard of high-quality tourist and excursion service;
- information accessibility standard.

In this regard, the relevance of the development and implementation of regional standards regulating the service of tourists, taking into account the stage of the life cycle of a particular destination, increases (KULGACHEV, TISHINA, 2018; POLYAKOVA, ERMAKOVA, 2015). Residents should also be more aware of their role in the city’s welcoming image since these are residents that create together a welcoming city. Hotelschool The Hague hospitality business school, as a result of the development of the Urban Hospitality model, concluded that residents influenced the feeling of hospitality in the city, particularly, in public places, museums, shops, public transport including taxi drivers (SHIPOV, ERMISHKINA, 2015a).

The Republic of Tatarstan is a good example of the application of foreign practices in creating hospitality standards of a tourist destination. “Tatarstan will attract tourists with pleasures and Tatar hospitality” – this is the main message of the Visit Tatarstan concept, which was developed by order of the republican authorities. It is aimed at increasing the tourist flow by five times. As a result, not only the concept, corporate brand, logo, but also the code of hospitality of the
Hospitality index as a stimulating factor in the development of the Russian Federation Regions

The Code of Hospitality can be used to form the image and reputation of a hospitable region. It should be noted that forming the image and reputation associated with the tourism and hospitality infrastructure will have positive impact on the overall development of the branding of territories, and will contribute not only to tourist influx but also to the overall investment attractiveness in all economic sectors. It is proposed to assess the following criteria when determining the region’s hospitality index:

- Availability of authentic historical objects; literary and historical facts; traditions, crafts, outstanding local figures of the cultural life of the region. In the absence of historical artifacts, one can use any interesting social significant idea, spiritual doctrine, health-improving psychophysiological methodology, gastronomic feature, society development trends represented by a thematic area with quests, programs, master classes, art therapy, etc;
- Creating thematic spaces (not attractions), museum-like objects, small architectural forms, installations, etc. operating permanently.
- The presence of infrastructure components interrelated by the same service standards, following the example of international hotel chains which include both technical standards and behavioral standards. At that, accommodation facilities, in addition to hotels, can be represented by guest houses, eco-estates, etc. but having common standards of service, food, housekeeping, etc;
- The presence of the code of hospitality of the region, which would include a mandatory program (subject) for school students on local history and the basics of hospitality and emotional intelligence;
- Training of all staff involved in the tourist’s service process (including taxi drivers, shop assistants, etc.) in terms of both the hospitality standards and also the knowledge of the tourist attractions of the region. This can be a story and poems, for example, of S. Yesenin for residents of the Ryazan Region, or the history and origins of the Arkaim mystery in the Chelyabinsk Region, etc.;
- Availability of specialized education in tourism and hospitality of employees and staff;
- Availability of tourist police;
- Availability of eco-programs;
- Availability of gastronomic tourism programs;
- Promoting (or creating) attractive crafts, applied arts, developing souvenir organizations, etc.;
- Developing corporate identity elements and activities to promote the image of the region in the Internet space.

It should be noted that it is impossible to achieve immediate results just by adopting a hospitality program in the region. This is a fairly long preparation of all components, starting with the inspiration of residents, supporting their civic position, promoting creative projects aimed at the revival of cultural traditions and crafts. It is recommended that calculations of indicators are carried out per 1,000 inhabitants. At that, it is necessary to use a method, such as a secret guest with a developed checklist.

Competition is one of the necessary elements of the tourist market and the most important factor in its effective performance. An adequate assessment of competitiveness will determine

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2Arkaim Is An Archaeological Site Of An Ancient Fortified Settlement, Situated In The Steppe Of The Southern Ural, Russia.
the status of the region in the hospitality market. The hospitality index can be an indicator of the industry development reflecting the main trends and phenomena inherent in this sector.

CONCLUSION
Thus, the hospitality index should include criteria that should be assessed based not only on the material and technical resources of the region, such as infrastructure, hotel, and restaurant enterprises, the service quality of the entire hospitality sector of the region, but also on the friendly attitude of residents of the region to guests, which can be formed through awareness and formation of a hospitality culture.

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The purpose of the present article is to review published studies on the competitiveness of destinations and hotels, to determine the future research areas on the competitiveness of tourism and hotels. Also, this article considers the hospitality index as a factor for the development of the Russian Federation regions. The report and the TTCI, published every two years, compare competitiveness in 140 countries and measure a set of factors and policies that ensure the sustainable development of the hospitality and tourism sector, which, in turn, contributes to the development of the country and its competitiveness. Further, the article studies and substantiates the purpose of development and implementation of the hospitality index of the Russian Federation regions. Based on a comparative analysis of approaches to assessing the quality of services in the tourism and hospitality industry in the Russian Federation region, the main indicators and criteria that should be included in the list of the hospitality index are presented.

Keywords: Hospitality index. Performance indicators. Competitiveness indicators. Hospitality code.

El propósito del presente artículo es revisar los estudios publicados sobre la competitividad de los destinos y hoteles, para determinar las futuras áreas de investigación sobre la competitividad del turismo y la hostelería. Además, en este artículo se considera el índice de hospitalidad como un factor para el desarrollo de las regiones de la Federación de Rusia. El informe y el TTCI, que se publica cada dos años, comparan la competitividad en 140 países y miden un conjunto de factores y políticas que aseguran el desarrollo sostenible del sector hotelero y turístico, lo que, a su vez, contribuye al desarrollo del país y su competitividad. Además, el artículo estudia y corrobora el propósito de la elaboración y aplicación del índice de hospitalidad de las regiones de la Federación de Rusia. Sobre la base de un análisis comparativo de los enfoques para evaluar la calidad de los servicios en la industria del turismo y la hostelería en la región de la Federación de Rusia, se presentan los principales indicadores y criterios que deberían incluirse en la lista del índice de hospitalidad.

Palabras-clave: Índice de hostelería. Indicadores de desempeño. Indicadores de competitividad. Código de hostelería.