

**Subject matter of qualification paper:** AN ANALYSIS OF FUNCTIONING OF TOURISM-EXCURSION SPACE OF THE CAUCASIAN MINERAL WATERS REGION AT THE MODERN STAGE OF DEVELOPMENT

**Author:** Shevtsova Maria Dmitrievna

**Scientific supervisor:** Candidate of Sociological Science, Assistant Professor of the Department of Tourism and Hotel Service E.N. Goncharova

**Information about internship organization:** The tour operator «International academy of Mountain Tourism», Pyatigorsk

**Topicality of the research:** This topic is relevant, since the tourist-excursion space is the basis of any tourist destination, and proper organization and put to good use of its sociocultural potential affect the quality of tourist services and the satisfaction of tourist needs.

At the current stage of development of the tourism industry in the Caucasian Mineral Waters region, the topicality of the research is expressed in the fact that the analysis of the functioning of the tourist-excursion space plays an important role in the practice of forecasting regional development and the territorial organization of tourist-excursion services.

An analysis of the functioning of the tourist-excursion space of the Caucasian Mineral Waters region is necessary to determine the effectiveness of the methods used to organize the tourist-excursion space, to identify the degree of involvement and demand for objects located in the region. In addition, there is a need to obtain new data regarding the development of the tourist-excursion space of the Caucasian Mineral Waters region, which in turn serve as a motivating factor for uncovering the potential and developing alternative directions at the present stage of development.

Caucasian Mineral Waters region is known primarily for its curative mineral and mud resources. However, the territory of the region is not inferior to the richness of tourist-excursion resources. Therefore, the topicality of the

research has a significant place in the development and preservation of the tourist-excursion space of the region at the present stage of development.

**Objective of the research** is to identify particularities of the sociocultural potential of the tourist-excursion space of the Caucasian Mineral Waters region and to determine promising directions for its development.

To fulfill the objective of the final qualification paper, the following **tasks** set:

- to define the concept of “Tourist-excursion space”, to reveal its essence, to consider the structure and main functions;
- to determine the factors affecting the development of tourist and excursion space;
- to outline the role of the tourist-excursion space in satisfying leisure preferences of the population of contemporary Russia;
- to identify the sociocultural potential of the tourist-excursion space of the Caucasian Mineral Waters region;
- to analyze the implementation of leisure needs of the population in the tourist- excursion space;
- to develop promising directions for the development of tourist-excursion space in the Caucasian Mineral Waters region.

**Theoretical significance of the research** is consisting in the possibility of using the results of the study in the scientific purposes as the basis for establishing and developing a theoretical base of a concept of «Tourist-excursion space».

**Practical significance of the research** is consisting in the possibility of using the results to develop new programs and projects that realize the sociocultural potential of the tourist-excursion space of the Caucasian Mineral Waters region. The results of the research can be useful for teachers and students of tourism institutes, as well as researchers in the tourism industry.

### **Results of the research:**

The analysis of the functioning of the tourist and excursion space in the Caucasus Mineral Waters region at the present stage of development has shown that the sociocultural potential of the region is not fully realized as the main focus in the KMV region is still the health-care tourism. The sociocultural potential of the resort is rich and diverse; therefore it is necessary to unlock the potential and to take advantages. The deficiency a wide regional advertising campaign in the Russian tourism market as an tourist-excursion destination and mild interest of local tourism companies in developing new excursion programs in the region do not allow the tourist-excursion space to fully function and attract tourists not only for the purpose of health improvement, but also acquaintance with culture, history, architecture, ethnography and leisure activities.

### **Recommendations:**

The final stage of the diploma research was a sociological online research using the service «Google Forms», which allowed us to assess the main preferences and expectations of vacationers in the Caucasian Mineral Waters region. Preferences of vacationers - this is an important, and sometimes a key indicator that determines prospective lines of development of tourist-excursion space. The results of the diploma research can help in the development of the tourist-excursion space and determine how to effectively use the sociocultural potential of the region for its development in the tourist-excursion direction and the formation of new prospective lines of development.

The result of the research are proposed prospective excursion lines for the tourist-excursion space development, which can update and diversify the excursion base, and the proposed thematic festival will contribute to the diversity of leisure activities in the tourist-excursion space in the Caucasian Mineral Waters region.