

Tourism as a factor in the development of integration processes between countries

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Annotation. *The article reveals the impact of major international events on the development of the hospitality and tourism industry in the Republic of Bashkortostan. This subject of the Russian Federation is located in the Southern Urals, at the junction of Europe and Asia, has unique tourist resources, and thanks to significant political, economic and cultural events, can turn into one of the leading centers of business, event and eco-tourism. The capital of Bashkortostan – Ufa is becoming a platform for international forums that contribute to strengthening business ties and integration processes of the SCO and BRICS member countries. In the summer of 2021, Bashkortostan will become the site of the VI World Folklore Festival CIOFF. Ufa will host creative teams from 56 countries. These events strengthen communication links, activate business processes, expand the international cultural space, and enrich the spiritual potential of the individual and society.*

Keywords: *SCO and BRICS, Bashkortostan, hospitality industry, tourism, VI World Folklore Games*

In July 2015, a landmark event for the Republic of Bashkortostan took place – the summits of the SCO and BRICS countries were held in Ufa, and the heads of 15 states arrived. Holding such a significant event required careful preparation of the infrastructure, creation of a comfortable working area, ensuring the security of the event, and reconstruction of the hotel sector.

For the summit in Ufa, a number of hotels of world-famous brands were built: Hilton Garden Inn Ufa Riverside, Sheraton, Holiday Inn Ufa.Park City, etc. A complete reconstruction was carried out in the hotel complex "Bashkiria", partially reconstructed "AZIMUT Hotel Ufa", the hotel "Ufa-Astoria" and others. Careful preparation for the summit turned Ufa into a center of business forums. The Republic has received the right to hold new forums of global significance.

In 2019 Ufa became the venue for the V Forum of Small and Medium-sized Businesses of the regions of the SCO and BRICS member countries, which was attended by 2,800 participants from more than 30 countries. The forum participants paid much attention to the issue of business security in Russia.

Representatives of the restaurant business of the republic declared themselves at the Forum. A record was set for the Russian Book of Records – "The biggest hashtag from baursak", a folk Bashkir dish. The weight of the structure was 209 kilograms.

From December 8 to 11, 2020, in the context of the pandemic, the International Business Week – a major business forum – began in Ufa in a mixed online and offline format, within the framework of which the VI Forum of Small and Medium-sized Businesses of the regions of the SCO and BRICS member countries was held. One of the main issues of the forum was the issue of tourism development.

As part of the implementation of the project "Eurasian Scientific and Educational Center" discussed at the forum, the authorities of the Republic of Bashkortostan plan to build a new interuniversity campus in the region. We have already allocated 15 hectares of land. These will be both campuses for students and full-fledged housing for invited foreign and other highly qualified specialists of the educational and academic environment. These will also be joint spaces for recreation, conferences, lectures, and sports. These will be laboratories that we don't have yet." The implementation of this project will contribute to the development of educational tourism in the republic [2].

To attract mass tourists, it is necessary to advertise the tourism potential of the republic. In the spring of 2018, the brand "Terra Bashkiria" was created. Its customer was the Bashkiria State Committee for Entrepreneurship and Tourism. There are no "kurai-kumys-neft" motifs familiar to our republic in the logo. The logo is based on a symmetrical and multi-colored geometric shape. Unfortunately, even after the appearance of the brand, it did not become better with the financing of tourism. In order for people to come to Bashkiria on vacation, especially if we are talking about foreigners, we need at least hotels of the appropriate level and high-quality service. No natural monuments and beauty will attract tourists if it is impossible to reach them comfortably, if there are no conditions for living.

On April 29, 2021, a new national project "Tourism and the Hospitality Industry" was presented at the Coordination Center of the Russian Government. It consists of three federal projects.

The first project. "Development of tourist infrastructure and creation of high-quality tourist products". In it, state support measures will include subsidizing the interest rate for the

construction of hotels; grant support for public and business initiatives; subsidies to the regions for providing infrastructure and for the formation of tourist-attractive city centers.

The second project. "Increasing accessibility and awareness of tourism products". In it, the support measures include already developed mechanisms: subsidizing trips to citizens (cashback), subsidizing charters, tour operators, co-financing and promotion of events. The Federal Tourism Agency is working hard to develop digital solutions and expand the capabilities of the national online tourism portal. Already this year, people will have access to information about 40 thousand tourist objects on a single portal.

The third project. "Improving tourism Management" contains such innovations as: the creation of the UNWTO training center and the specialized institute for tourism on the basis of the existing university; the creation of business incubators and accelerators; the transfer of the provision of public services by Rosturizm to a digital format, improving data collection and statistical accounting; the development and launch of digital solutions aimed at protecting consumer rights, increasing the transparency of the industry; the formation of a national project management system, including a departmental project office; reducing the VAT rate and other support measures.

The concept of tourist macro-territories with popular and existing tourist flows, such as the "Big Ural", "Big Altai", "Big Golden Ring", "Big Volga", the Caucasus, Lake Baikal, etc., is also introduced.

The document is aimed at the comprehensive development of the country's tourism industry. By 2030, thanks to the tools of the national project, it is planned to increase the tourist flow by more than 2 times from 65 to 140 million trips around the country per year, double the number of jobs in the industry – up to 4.7 million jobs and export of tourist services – up to 22.5 billion dollars[3].

It is planned to allocate 529 billion rubles from the federal budget for the implementation of the national project until 2030, and another 72 billion from regional funds. It is also planned to attract extra-budgetary private investments for the construction of infrastructure.

The tools of the national project, first of all, are aimed at creating a new modern tourist infrastructure by attracting investors to the industry.

In addition, to solve the problems of promoting recreation in Russia, it is planned to create the ANO "Tourism Development", the founder of which will be Rosturizm. 1.3 billion rubles should be allocated for its events next year[3].

In the national tourist rating of 2019, Bashkortostan entered the top ten leading regions. The tourist flow in the republic exceeded the figure of 2018 by 7% and reached 2.7 million people. The republic is the leader among the regions of the Volga Federal District (fifth place in

Russia) by the volume of health and wellness services. The unique nature of the Bashkir region, the presence of historical and cultural monuments, the dynamically developing infrastructure of sanatoriums, holiday homes and camp sites create all the prerequisites for creating recreational areas and a popular tourist product.

In 2020, despite the pandemic, three times more tourists than usual visited Bashkortostan during the summer, about 2 million people. For us, this is a huge chance, an incentive for the development of domestic tourism. The Republic of Bashkortostan received the Grand Prix of the Russian Event Awards 2020 for holding the All-Russian Investment Sabantuy "Trans-Urals-2020" in the category "Best Tourist MICE Event", and the Gastronomic Festival of Folk Cuisine "Goose and Honey", held on the fields of the Sibay Investment Sabantuy, took a special prize as "The best event in the field of gastronomic tourism". These results can attract attention, and people will come here to try this goose, this special Bashkir cuisine. Events such as the International Business Week raise domestic and business tourism to a new level.

The tourism potential of the Republic of Bashkortostan allows attracting millions of tourists to the region annually due to the development of infrastructure and the holding of new significant events.

"Our goal is to reach the level of about 3-3.5 million tourists a year in the near future, significantly add the percentage of foreign tourists. If now there are about 100 thousand foreigners, this is 5%, then the task is to increase it to 10-15%. We expect that Bashkortostan will be among the top five regions of the Russian Federation in terms of tourism, in terms of the number of tourists, and in terms of the tourism infrastructure that we are currently forming," the Prime Minister of the Republic of Bashkortostan, Andrey Nazarov, set the task [2].

On July 3-10, 2021, the VI World Folklore Festival CIOFF® is scheduled to be held in Bashkortostan and Ufa. About three thousand artists from 56 countries of the world will arrive in Bashkortostan to present their traditional music, dances, folk crafts, cuisine, costumes and stage art to the residents and guests of the republic. At the same time, visitors of the festival will be able not only to act as bystanders, but also to actively participate in various interactive activities – to learn how to play folk instruments, try unusual national dishes, learn traditional arts of different peoples, etc.

During the days of the Folklore Festival, 50 concert events are planned in the republic, as well as an international conference on culture, a photo exhibition of musical instruments of the peoples of the world, an exhibition "Masks of the Peoples of the World", an exhibition of masters and artisans of decorative and applied arts, master classes, venues for traditional folk games from the CIOFF® Youth Committee, charity events in social institutions.

The main events of the Folklore Contest will be held in Ufa – opening and closing ceremonies, a large-scale costume parade of participants, conferences and exhibitions. Also, the participants of the Folklore Contest will be 33 municipalities of the republic, united in 6 festival districts. The festival program includes concerts, exhibitions, the organization of various venues that demonstrate elements of the traditional culture of the peoples of Russia and the world in an interactive format, costume parades and much more.

Ufa is actively preparing for this large-scale cultural event. Teachers and students of the department "Tourism, Hotel and restaurant service", participants of the student club "Excursions and travel" of the Ufa State Petroleum Technical University also actively participated in the process of preparing for the festival. For the guests of Ufa, an audio guide is being developed, including about 50 interactive excursions, guides who conduct excursions in English are being prepared, and trainings on meeting and seeing off guests are being practiced.

Thus, the necessary infrastructure for holding international business forums has been created in Bashkortostan, which contributes to the development of the hotel and restaurant business, excursion activities, which stimulates the development of business tourism. In the autumn of 2022, Ufa is scheduled to host the 47th International Congress on the Use of Beekeeping Products in Medicine-Apimondia, which will further increase interest in this branded product of the republic, increase the honey image of Bashkortostan and will contribute to expanding the range of tourist and excursion services in the region.

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